

McHugh assumes duties as Secretary of the Army

John McHugh assumes duties as 21st Secretary of the Army



John McHugh is sworn-in as the 21st Secretary of the Army during a Pentagon ceremony, Sept. 21, 2009. Joyce Morrow, Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, administers the oath of office as Anne LeMay, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, holds the Bible.

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Sep. 21, 2009) -- John McHugh was sworn in as the 21st Secretary of the Army today following his nomination by President Barack Obama and confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

As Secretary of the Army, McHugh has statutory responsibility for all matters relating to the U.S. Army: manpower, personnel, reserve affairs, installations, environmental issues, weapons systems and equipment acquisition, communications, and financial management.

McHugh is now responsible for the Department of the Army's annual budget and supplemental of over \$200 billion. He leads a work force of more than 1.1 million active duty, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve Soldiers, 221,000 Department of the Army Civilian employees, and 213,000 contracted service personnel. Also, he provides stewardship over 14 million acres of land.

Also sworn in at the Pentagon ceremony was Dr. Joseph Westphal who assumed duties as the 30th Undersecretary of the Army. Westphal has served in distinguished positions within academia, private, and public service, including a brief tour in 2001 as Acting Secretary of the Army. He served as the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works from 1998 to 2001.

McHugh has served over 16 years as a member of Congress representing northern and central New York. During his service, he forged strong ties to Fort Drum and earned a reputation as a staunch advocate for Soldiers and their families, working tirelessly to ensure they had proper facilities, training, and the quality of life necessary to carry out wartime missions while caring for those at home.

Over the last eight years, McHugh made 10 official visits to Iraq and four visits to Afghanistan and other deployed locations to visit U.S. forces.

During his nomination hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee July 30, McHugh said that he was excited, humbled, and honored at this new opportunity to serve, but also that he understood the challenges facing the Army.

"They are strained by the frequency of constant deployments and stress by the pressures levied against their families," he said. "Too often - far too often - they return home to only to be disappointed by a network of support systems that, despite high intentions and constant effort, continue to fall short of the level of support they so richly deserve and each and every one of us so deeply desire."

As Secretary, McHugh will draw on his years of previous experience as the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) which oversees the policies and programs for the Department of Defense and each of the Armed Forces. Prior to becoming the ranking member of the HASC, Mr. McHugh served as the ranking member of the HASC Military Personnel Subcommittee and previously as its chairman for six years.

In addition, at the time of his nomination, McHugh was co-chair of the House Army Caucus, a bipartisan organization that works to educate fellow House members and their staffs about Army issues and programs, and a 14-year member of the United States Military Academy Board of Visitors.

Secretary McHugh was born in Watertown, New York, where he began his public service career in 1971 as the Confidential

Assistant to the City Manager. In 1976, he joined the staff of New York State Senator H. Douglas Barclay, with whom he served as chief of research and liaison with local governments for nine years. Succeeding Senator Barclay in 1984, McHugh served four terms in the legislature's upper house before his election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1992.

McHugh received a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Utica College of Syracuse University in 1970, and earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the State University of New York's Nelson A. Rockefeller Graduate School of Public Affairs in 1977.

In his concluding statement July 30, McHugh stated that he was inspired by the wounded warriors he'd met. "I have been so struck how these heroes, facing pain and loss and uncertainty, ask one question: 'What else can I do to serve?'"

He continued, "We can ask no less of ourselves."

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