



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on November 9, 2009

## Ft. Hood Gunman Suspected of Having Ties to Al-Qaeda

Suspected Ft. Hood gunman Army Major Nidal Hasan attempted to contact suspected al-Qaeda collaborators, and the Army may have known about it for months. This is the alarming story being reported today by ABC news. According to the account published on abcnews.com, intelligence officials familiar with the classified details of the investigation confirmed to reporters that Hasan was known to be using “electronic means” to contact radical Islamists sympathetic to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.



Remarkably, Hasan’s radical roots run even deeper than first suspected. In fact, the leader of the mosque where Major Hasan worshipped and where his mother’s funeral was conducted was known since 2001 by the FBI to be the “spiritual adviser” of three of the 9/11 hijackers. Indeed, among Hasan’s fellow congregants at the Dar al-Hijrah mosque in Great Falls, Virginia, while he attended in 2001 were two of the 19 9/11 hijackers.

Anwar al-Awlaki was the fire-eating imam at this controversial mosque in suburban D.C. Awalaki is an American of Yemeni extraction and was so intimately connected with Islamic terror organizations that he was forbidden by the English government from addressing a conference in England because of voluminous credible reports that he advocated attacks on British soldiers and provided financial aid to various terrorist factions associated with al-Qaeda and the larger global *jihad* proclaimed by the radical Islamist movement. According to reports published over the weekend in the *Telegraph* newspaper in London, Hasan was such a devout admirer of Awlaki and so completely awed by his teachings that he was known to “light up” at even passing mention of the cleric’s name.

FBI investigators are looking into how much interaction there may have been between Hasan, Awalaki, and the September 11 terrorists at the mosque they all attended. Information gained through interviews conducted with those knowledgeable about the goings-on at the mosque during that time period may provide crucial insight into the ingredients of the cocktail of unholy fellowship and radical beliefs that may have led Major Hasan to murder 13 and wound 30 of his fellow servicemen.

Journalists have learned that Awalaki emigrated to Yemen as scrutiny of his teachings and radical affiliations by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies heated up in the aftermath of 9/11. Awalaki was not scared straight, however, as from his home in Yemen he continues to write a blog wherein he praised Hasan’s actions as those of a “hero” and a “man of conscience who could not bear living the contradiction of being a Muslim and serving in an army that is fighting against his own people.”

Hasan’s parents were Palestinians who immigrated to the United States from the West Bank and ran several restaurants in Virginia. Hasan was born and raised in Arlington and graduated from Virginia Tech University with a degree in biochemistry. Despite being an American, Hasan was known to list himself as “Palestinian” on forms requesting his nationality. Hasan’s adherence to the dogma of fringe elements of his faith increased markedly after the death of his parents in 1998 and 2001, according to relatives. His



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uncle Rafiq Hamad said that “after he lost his parents he tried to replace their love by reading a lot of books, including the Koran.” Reading was not fulfilling Hasan’s quest for something to fill the void he felt and he turned to the teachings of Awalaki and other Muslim teachers of extreme interpretations of Islamic scripture.

Apart from his devotion to the precepts preached by Awalaki, there were other signs that Hasan had adopted a dangerous attitude toward his army, his country, and the war on terror into which he might soon be called as a combatant. He is suspected of having written various posts on online forums comparing the selfless acts of soldiers who jump on grenades to save the lives of comrades to those of suicide bombers. He allegedly told a co-worker at Ft. Hood that he hoped that someday soon his fellow Muslims would unite and rise up against American “aggressors.” A Muslim soldier also stationed at Ft. Hood and acquainted with Hasan told reporters that Hasan railed against the war on terror, calling it a war against Islam that was financed by Jews. There are additional reports that Hasan did not try keeping these opinions to himself. In fact, Hasan was reprimanded for having preached his warped doctrines to patients under his care at both Walter Reed Medical Center and at Ft. Hood.

For six years prior to arriving at his duty station in Ft. Hood, Major Hasan worked as an intern and resident at Walter Reed. He graduated in 2001 from the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences (USUHS) with a medical degree. He was specializing in the psychiatric treatment of veterans suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder. Classmates at the USUHS remember Hasan as a quiet man diffident of his position, but one with unusually strong convictions about the war on terror. Some recall Hasan informing his classmates that he was “a Muslim first and an American second.”

Relatives and friends of Hasan claim that it is common knowledge that for years Hasan had repeatedly sought discharge from the army to the point of offering to reimburse the army for having financed his medical education. He complained of increasing harassment by other soldiers on account of his Muslim faith and lamented that soon, despite all his attempts to thwart it, he might be called into action in a war against his brethren. For this reason, he is known to have argued frequently with other soldiers as to possible reasons for what he considered President Obama’s broken promise to remove U.S. armed forces from Iraq.

It was reported on November 9 that Major Hasan’s medical condition had improved and that he was now awake and communicative. It is unknown at this time whether he is cooperating with law enforcement. Agents of the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security have removed computers, files, and trash from the apartment where Hasan lived in nearby Killeen, Texas, but sources have so far refused to comment on the content of the confiscated materials.

*Photo: AP Images*



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