



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on January 6, 2010

## Major Nidal Hasan: An Officer and Jihadist

Since the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, a number of American Muslims have grown increasingly radical in their adherence to a violent strain of Islam and have tried with varying degrees of success to prove the sincerity of their devotion by killing American soldiers and civilians.

The headlines document the tale of treason: “Five American Muslims from Virginia were detained in Pakistan while on a mission to train for a jihad against American soldiers in Afghanistan.” “The Federal Bureau of Investigation reckons that up to twenty young American Muslims have left Minnesota to fight alongside terrorists in Somalia.” “A group of six Muslims plotted to kill as many soldiers as possible at the U.S. Army installation at Ft. Dix, New Jersey.” “John Mohammad, the sniper convicted of murdering several innocent people in the D.C. area a few years ago, was executed for those crimes.” And finally, “Army Major Nidal Hasan shouted praises to Allah as he sprayed a hail of gunfire inside an Army readiness center where soldiers were prepped for deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan, killing 13 and injuring 32 others.”



There is an easily discernible thread running through this tapestry of terror: Americans manifesting allegiance to radical Islam by murdering or attempting to murder their countrymen. However, there is one distinct difference in the case of Nidal Malik Hasan: Hasan was an officer in the United States Army, commissioned by the Congress to uphold a sacred oath and stand ready to defend his country. Hasan violated this oath, an oath held sacred and inviolable by thousands of Hasan’s fellow officers who are also gentlemen. The words of the oath taken by Hasan, one sworn by every American military officer, provide poignant insight into the depth of depravity of Nidal Hasan’s murderous rampage of November 5.

I, Nidal Malik Hasan, having been appointed a major in the U.S. Army under the conditions indicated in this document, do accept such appointment and do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.



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These were the words spoken by Nidal Hasan in May of 2009 after being promoted from captain to major, just prior to being assigned to his new duty station at Fort Hood, Texas.

### **“Against All Enemies, ?Foreign and Domestic”**

Immediately after the massacre at Fort Hood on November 5, investigations began into the motives of the accused shooter, Major Nidal Hasan. Hasan, a psychiatrist educated at Virginia Tech University and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, was born in Virginia to immigrant parents from the West Bank. As a Muslim, Hasan’s piety and devotion to radical Islam have increased, as evidenced by his own rantings, conversations, and e-mails with a known supporter of al-Qaeda, Anwar Al-Awlaki.

By any metric, Anwar Al-Awlaki is an enemy of the United States, and as such, he should have been an enemy of Nidal Hasan. The investigation into the Fort Hood shooter’s motives have revealed quite an opposite relationship, however. Al-Awlaki was Hasan’s prayer leader at the Dar al-Hijra mosque in northern Virginia. Notably, three of Al-Awlaki’s congregants at the mosque were terrorists who participated in the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. In the aftermath of the attacks, the FBI began questioning Al-Awlaki as to his relationship to the hijackers, and he consequently fled to his ancestral home of Yemen. Since arriving in Yemen, the controversial cleric has set up a website espousing the principles of jihad against the West and heaping praise on the most notorious and homicidal terrorists around the globe for their murderous and cowardly attacks on civilians in the name of Allah. After learning of Major Hasan’s attack on fellow servicemen at Fort Hood, Al-Awlaki described him as a “hero” and encouraged other Muslims in the American armed forces to follow his lead.

### **“Bear True Faith ?and Allegiance”**

Despite being an American army officer sworn to be true to the Constitution of the United States, remarkably, Hasan listed his nationality 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 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 Awlaki and other Muslim teachers of extreme interpretations of Islamic scripture.

Apart from his devotion to the precepts preached by Awlaki, 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 Fort Hood that he hoped that someday soon his fellow Muslims would unite and rise up against American “aggressors.” A Muslim soldier also stationed at Fort 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. Multiple sources have indicated 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 Fort Hood.

Other examples of Hasan’s behavior while employed at Walter Reed unequivocally foreshadowed a violent and treasonous streak. Co-workers and supervisors who worked with Hasan at Walter Reed have told several news agencies that beginning in spring of 2008 during Hasan’s training there, a “series of



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meetings” were convened to discuss “serious concerns” about Major Hasan’s disturbing topics of conversations held with colleagues and patients, bizarre statements made to supervisors, and how such behavior was affecting his work. Unnamed officers present at the meetings claim that based on evidence presented at these meetings there was reasonable suspicion that if Hasan were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan he might betray his country and offer aid and intelligence to the enemy, to the point of killing fellow servicemen as a Muslim sergeant had in 2003.

Despite regarding Major Hasan as a potential traitor to his country and one with perceived capacity for killing countrymen in the name of his religion, commanders at Walter Reed chose not to dismiss Hasan from the program because of how “cumbersome and lengthy” such a process is. Also, because Hasan is a Muslim and the terrorists with whom the United States is at war are Muslim, directors of the program were concerned that any disciplinary action could be interpreted as discriminatory and motivated by religious intolerance and profiling.

### **With No “Mental Reservation or Purpose of Evasion ... I Will Well and Faithfully Discharge the Duties”**

In the year and a half before Hasan mercilessly murdered 12 of his fellow servicemen and one civilian, Hasan’s public behavior betrayed the increasingly violent bent of his radical religious leanings, as well as his apparent detachment from the moorings of restraint and reason. Beyond the e-mail messages exchanged with a known al-Qaeda ally, Hasan’s behavior evinced a conflict of loyalties that was demonstrably inconsistent with the duty of an Army officer and citizen of the United States.

While completing his residency at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Major Nidal Hasan told an audience of fellow physicians that the Army should excuse Muslim soldiers from serving in combat zones where they would be fighting others of their faith. If Muslims in the U.S. Armed Forces were not thus afforded conscientious objector status, then there could be “adverse effects,” Hasan warned.

These astonishing remarks are even more incredible considering the inappropriateness of the time, place, and manner of their delivery. In the summer of 2007, Hasan and his fellow residents were assigned by their superiors at Walter Reed to prepare a presentation on any topic of medical relevance. They were then to present their work to a group of senior psychiatrists as part of their final student evaluation.

As Major Hasan stepped to the podium and began his address to the 30 or so medical professionals in attendance, instead of confining himself to the assigned topic, for over an hour he showed 50 slides and lectured on suicide bombers, general principles of Islam, and the potential harm that the Army could expect from Muslim soldiers torn by conflicting loyalties to God and country. “It’s getting harder and harder for Muslims in the service to morally justify being in a military that seems constantly engaged against fellow Muslims,” Hasan told the undoubtedly perplexed crowd.

Eerily, Hasan’s presentation, which he entitled “The Koranic World View as It Relates to Muslims in the U.S. Military,” ended with a final slide that read: “We love death more then [sic] you love life!”

### **“So Help Me God”**

Among the red-flag personal effects found during a forensic inventory of Hasan’s apartment in Killeen, Texas, conducted by law enforcement were business cards that Hasan ordered from an online marketing site. Printed below Hasan’s name on these cards were the letters “SoA (SWT).” According to published accounts, “SoA” is an acronym commonly used by Islamic jihadists and stands for “Soldier of Allah.” SWT is an acronym for Subhanahu Wa Ta’ala, or Glory to God. These cards and the indications



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he had printed on them leave little room for misinterpretation of Major Hasan's most sacred allegiance. Despite having sworn to uphold the Constitution and defend it against all enemies, foreign and domestic, Major Hasan enlisted in an army whose openly declared aim is the absolute annihilation of Americans.

As blatantly alarming as is the official record of Major Hasan's public and private behavior, the federal agents monitoring Hasan's communication, contacts, and conduct since late 2008 inexplicably determined that none of the evidence they were gathering on Hasan's open espousal of religious principles contrary to his oath of service merited further consideration. The group carrying out the investigation into Major Hasan's activities was an alliance between the FBI-run Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Pentagon's Defense Criminal Investigative Service. Despite being created as a result of the alleged intelligence-sharing breakdown that contributed to the September 11 atrocities, the two components claim that neither shared crucial data with the other, and for its part, the Army claims it never received any intelligence reports that would have justified official reprimand or discipline. In spite of their claim of ignorance with regard to his e-mails and association with known terrorist advocates, the Army was aware of Hasan's unsatisfactory performance while at Walter Reed and the potentially harrowing content of his presentation and conversations while employed there.

As of the date of the writing of this article, Major Hasan lies paralyzed from the chest down in a San Antonio hospital recovering from gunshot wounds he sustained after his murderous attack was halted by civilian police officers called to the scene. He has been formally charged with 13 counts of murder and 32 counts of attempted murder and will be tried according to the procedures promulgated by the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The UCMJ does provide for the death penalty as punishment for enumerated crimes, one of which is murder. The man that once declared himself on business cards to be a SoA (Soldier of Allah) will soon be held accountable by a military tribunal for the cold-blooded and most diabolical murder of one civilian and 12 soldiers of the United States of America.

— *Photo: AP Images*



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