



Ohio National Guard Centers No Longer “Gun-Free Zones”

On the Friday before Christmas, Major General Mark Bartman, adjutant general of the Ohio National Guard, restored some common sense [by announcing that](#) all 72 of the state’s guard facilities will allow members to carry firearms. According to the *Columbus Dispatch*, the shift to common sense followed a “security review” ordered by Governor John Kasich following the July 16 shooting at a Naval Reserve center in Chatanooga.



In that incident Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez committed a drive-by shooting at a recruiting center and then drove seven miles to a U.S. Naval Reserve center to continue his attack. Four marines were killed before the attack was stopped by local police.

In a staggering understatement, General Bartman admitted that “We must take necessary action to protect our members.”

Because members of the Ohio National Guard work on state property, they were not allowed to carry firearms under state law. But now, thanks to Kasich, they are.

The cultural momentum toward sanity started perhaps with the November 5, 2009 Fort Hood, Texas, shooting by Major Nidal Hasan, who shot and killed 13 soldiers and injured more than 30 others, none of whom was armed. The concept that soldiers trained to defend freedom were not allowed (by laws passed during the Clinton administration) to defend themselves was, and remains, ludicrous.

Even more unbelievable is the fact that though the shooter was sentenced to death more than three years after his attack, he remains alive today. On August 23, 2013, Hasan was found guilty on 13 counts of premeditated murder and 32 counts of attempted premeditated murder, and was sentenced to death on August 28, 2013.

But, thanks to the intricacies and political motivations of the military service, Hasan remains confined to the Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, where he is likely to remain, at taxpayers’ expense, until he dies of natural causes.

Those barracks also house five other soldiers on Death Row waiting out their sentences. But the military hasn’t executed anyone since 1961, and it isn’t likely to make an exception for Hasan. As Christopher Swift, an adjunct professor of national security studies at Georgetown University, explained: “Hasan will probably spend his life on death row because there’s no incentive [to carry out his sentence]. I haven’t seen any indication that the Army posture is such that they want to expedite this one.”

The reason? The Army doesn’t want to make him a martyr: “Executing him ... [would suggest] that someone who engages in this kind of self-mobilizing criminal act for terrorist motives can become a soldier for Islam, and it’s not something [they] want, creating propaganda opportunities.”

On the other hand, absent the Clinton administration ruling that military bases are now “gun free



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 30, 2015

zones,” if just one of Hasan’s victims had been armed, it’s reasonable to assume that the massacre would have been nipped in the bud. But thanks to those gun-free zones, taxpayers enjoyed the privilege not only of continuing to pay Major Hasan his salary while he was appealing his sentence (estimated at some \$300,000), but also of providing housing, nutrition, and medical support (he lives in a wheelchair, having suffered permanent damage when the police finally intervened to end the massacre) for him for the rest of his life.

That gun-free zones don’t work has now been established beyond all doubt, thanks to the work of John Lott, founder of the Crime Prevention Research Center (CPRC). In July 2014 Lott published *The Myths about Mass Public Shootings*, in which he revealed the results of his study: “Since 2009, only 8 percent of mass public shootings have occurred in places where civilians are allowed to defend themselves.”

Translation: 92 percent of mass shootings take place in “gun-free zones.”

Ohio Governor John Kasich is to be commended for allowing National Guardsmen in his state to carry while on duty. May this be the first olive out of the bottle, and other governors awaken to their responsibilities to protect those who are trained to protect them.

What they’re likely to find is that the more guns are allowed to be carried, the less likely any of them will be needed.

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