

The Washington Post

Pentagon inquiry: Supervisors discounted Fort Hood suspect's worrisome behavior

By Craig Whitlock
Washington Post Staff Writer
Saturday, January 16, 2010; A03

A Pentagon review of the Fort Hood shootings has found that several officers failed to intervene in the career of the suspect, despite widespread signs of his religious radicalization and his shortcomings as a soldier.

The review determined that supervisors of Maj. Nidal M. Hasan, the Army psychiatrist charged in the Nov. 5 attack at the Texas military post, bungled his performance reviews by excluding instances of erratic behavior in treating patients and signs that he might be growing sympathetic to suicide bombers.

The leaders of the review, former Army secretary Togo D. West Jr. and retired Adm. Vernon E. Clark, a former chief of naval operations, recommended in a report released Friday that the Army examine whether "several officers" should be disciplined in the Hasan case.

The report did not name the officers or specify how many should be held accountable. But West said that "we have no doubt the Army will be able to isolate any

individuals" who could face disciplinary action, based on detailed information about Hasan's career that was included in a confidential addendum to the report.

The report also said that Hasan was granted a top-level security clearance in February 2008 but that his background check did not include interviews with co-workers, supervisors or Hasan himself.

"If a more thorough investigation had been accomplished, his security clearance might have been revoked and his continued service and pending deployment would have been subject to increased scrutiny," the report concluded.

At a news conference, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said the review found that military supervisors are often slow to act when personnel under their command exhibit suspicious behavior outside the realm of their official duties. He also said the military's ability to guard against

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each

**with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints**

This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.




9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84



http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/15/AR2010011502010_pf.html

Print Powered By 

The Washington Post

Pentagon inquiry: Supervisors discounted Fort Hood suspect's worrisome behavior

internal threats is still geared toward uncovering Cold War moles instead of detecting religious radicals.

Gates said the military needed to be alert to perceived signs of danger and deal with them "openly and honestly."

"Failure to do so, or kicking the problem to the next unit or the next installation, may lead to damaging -- if not devastating -- consequences," he added.

Meanwhile, an independent review of the FBI's actions before the attacks has identified four areas for "immediate" improvement, officials said Friday. FBI agents have put in place a process for sharing information with the Defense Department; set up another layer of review at headquarters for certain threats that "involve equities outside" the bureau; begun to improve some information technology functions; and strengthened training for members of its Joint Terrorism Task Forces.

Unlike the Pentagon's review, the FBI report does not call for possible disciplinary measures against any Army officers. Those steps, among others, remain under consideration by retired Judge William H. Webster, named by FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III last month to lead the inquiry.

Military authorities have charged Hasan, a loner who was awaiting deployment to

Afghanistan, with 45 counts of murder and attempted murder in the Fort Hood shootings. Thirteen people were killed; 43 were wounded. Hasan was shot by police but survived.

Hasan, the son of Palestinian immigrants, joined the Army Medical Corps in 1997 and served at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington from June 2003 to July 2009 as an intern, resident and psychiatry fellow.

Last May, he was promoted to the rank of major despite concerns expressed about his handling of patients, his increased tendency to proselytize to fellow soldiers about his Muslim faith, and his outspoken opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said commanders

Advertisement

GEVALIA® Home is where it happens

**3 Boxes, 3 Bucks,
No Kidding!**

for ONLY **\$3** plus **FREE SHIPPING!**

ORDER NOW!

CoffeeClubValues2.com

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/15/AR2010011502010_pf.html

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Pentagon inquiry: Supervisors discounted Fort Hood suspect's worrisome behavior

throughout the military needed to pay more attention to the overall behavior of their personnel instead of dismissing unorthodox beliefs or personal behavior.

Staff writer Carrie Johnson contributed to this report.

"I think the issue of self-radicalization is one that we have really got to focus on because there is clearly more and more of that going on," he told reporters. "And how much of that we have in the military is something that we ought to really understand."

In hindsight, military officials said, there were other obvious signs that Hasan's personal views had taken a worrisome turn, including his correspondence with a radical Yemeni American cleric, Anwar al-Aulaqi, in which Hasan not only sought the latter's advice on religious matters, but also discussed his growing discomfort with serving in the U.S. military.

West, the co-author of the Pentagon review, said the military needed to strike a careful balance between keeping a judicious eye out for troubled soldiers and intrusive monitoring.

"Do we want commanders in the mosque? No," he said. "What we want is commanders' awareness of what's going on in their unit. . . . Sometimes there are warning signs that need to be paid attention to and passed along the chain of command."

Advertisement

An advertisement for health insurance. It features a photograph of two female healthcare professionals, one in a white lab coat and one in blue scrubs, smiling. The text is arranged in a clear, bold layout. At the top, it says "Get Health Insurance As Low as \$49/mo". Below that, it says "Get The Inside Scoop At:" followed by a large orange button with the text "HealthQuoteInsiders.com". At the bottom, it says "Get Your Free Quote Now & Save!".

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/15/AR2010011502010_pf.html

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™