

Shock: Dept. of Defense Vindicates Fort Hood Killer

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U.S. Army tacitly endorses a religiously bigoted position: it is fine for Muslim service members to kill non-Muslims, but killing Muslims is grounds for an honorable discharge.

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A shocking decision made by the secretary of the Army last month — in the case of an U.S. Army soldier with the 101st Airborne at Fort Campbell who refused to deploy to Afghanistan claiming that Islamic law prevented him from killing other Muslims — vindicates Fort Hood killer Major Nidal Hasan. He made identical claims and threatened that “adverse events” would occur if military officials didn’t accede to shariah principles.

The subject of the Fort Campbell case is PFC Nasser Abdo, who was granted conscientious objector status last month, only to be brought up on charges last week — two days after being informed of the secretary of the Army’s decision — after child pornography was found on his government-issued computer. The news reports about Abdo’s arrest were the first to mention the Army recognizing him as a conscientious objector. After his arrest, Abdo is now claiming that the child porn charges are the Army’s way of retaliating against him.

Abdo’s case has been championed by a number of media outlets, including Al-Jazeera and CNN. According to the Associated Press, in his claim for conscientious objector status, Abdo cited a number of Islamic scholars and Koranic verses in his defense:

I realized through further reflection that God did not give legitimacy to the war in Afghanistan, Iraq or any war the U.S. Army would conceivably participate in.

Abdo told Al-Jazeera:

I don’t believe I can involve myself in an army that wages war against Muslims. I don’t believe I could sleep at night if I take part, in any way, in the killing of a Muslim.

He also told ABC News:

A Muslim is not allowed to participate in an Islamicly unjust war. Any Muslim who knows his religion or maybe takes into account what his religion says can find out very clearly why he should not participate in the U.S. military.

In a perverse twist, the ABC News report noted that a website dedicated to his cause operated by his friends claimed that Abdo:

... will be at danger of harassment and even death from his fellow soldiers, many of whom will be resentful of PFC Abdo's religious beliefs and his desire to be discharged from the military.

No mention was made by ABC News of the potential of harassment and death for non-Muslim soldiers if Abdo wasn't granted conscientious objector status, as was the case at Fort Hood with Major Nidal Hasan.

In Major Hasan's case, the Washington Post reported just days after the Fort Hood massacre that he had warned his Army colleagues and supervisor at Walter Reed of "adverse events" if Muslims were not granted conscientious objector status. The warning occurred during a June 2007 Power Point presentation that was part of his psychiatric residency program. Major Hasan cited previous cases of Muslims murdering their fellow soldiers, spying against the U.S., deserting their units, and refusing to deploy as examples of the kinds of "adverse events" that would follow if the Army didn't bow to the precepts of Islamic law.

Some Muslim groups have disagreed with Major Hasan and PFC Abdo, such as the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, run by retired Navy Commander Zuhdi Jasser. And Muslim soldiers at both Fort Hood and Fort Campbell, as well as in Iraq and Afghanistan, are serving without any qualms.

But as veteran Pentagon reporter Bill Gertz reported in the Washington Times in March 2010, groups such as the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA) have issued fatwas prohibiting Muslims from even serving as military contractors aiding U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. And the notorious Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) even went so far as to write a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates on behalf of another Muslim Army soldier stationed at Fort Hood claiming conscientious objector status on the same grounds as Hasan and Abdo.

By granting PFC Abdo's conscientious objector claim, the Army may have created trouble for themselves in the court martial of Major Hasan for the murder of his thirteen fellow soldiers at Fort Hood. Hasan's attorney can now claim that by refusing to acknowledge Major Hasan's claims under Islamic law as a conscientious objector and granting him an honorable discharge, the Army created irreconcilable conflict that prompted the Fort Hood massacre. And they can use the secretary of the Army's decision in the Abdo case as proof.

But they have also created a greater problem. By bowing to the dictates of Islamic law, which defines the killing of a Muslim by another Muslim without right as terrorism, the U.S. Army has tacitly endorsed a religiously bigoted position that it is perfectly fine for Muslim service members to kill non-Muslims, but killing their co-religionists is totally out-of-bounds and is grounds for an honorable discharge. Is any other religion granted such accommodation? Will this decision help or discredit those Muslims serving honorably with both their fellow soldiers and the Muslim community?

Despite years of protestation by the U.S. government to the contrary, this decision vindicates all of these who have claimed that America is engaged in a war against Islam (including Osama bin Laden). The position that the Army now takes would also appear to acknowledge the classic Islamic doctrine of jihad that states that any incursion by non-Muslims into the lands of Dar al-Islam makes it an incumbent duty upon all Muslims everywhere to resist the “occupiers” — the position taken by al-Qaeda and every Islamic terrorist group on the planet.

How did the United States Army arrive at such a convoluted, ill-informed, contradictory, and self-defeating policy? By listening to the very Islamic “outreach” partners they have falsely assumed are operating in America’s best interests.

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