

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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Free to Deployed Areas

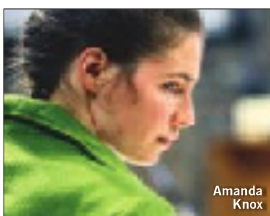


## CONVINCED?

**Titans QB Young** reviving career with poise in pocket **Back page**

Addict learns he can't counsel others until he comes clean

**Perspectives, Page 20**



Amanda Knox

U.S. student in Italy seeks comfort from family a day after her murder conviction **Page 7**



HEATH DRUZIN/Stars and Stripes

**Staff Sgt. Eric Madsen, 26, of Newportville, Pa., negotiates a sewage-filled creek after checking a culvert for bombs in Kandahar.**

By HEATH DRUZIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

**A**KANDAHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan's armored vehicles improve, killing soldiers with roadside bombs becomes increasingly difficult. So insurgents do what they can to separate the two.

Roadside bombs are still effective in stopping a convoy. If the insurgents can disable a vehicle, they can force U.S. troops out of the protective vehicles to investigate,

exposing them to secondary bombs — increasingly a weapon of choice in the badlands of southern Afghanistan.

Soldiers with the 4th Engineer Battalion's 2nd Platoon, 569th Engineer Company are well aware of the risks of dismounting vehicles along Highway 1, the main road connecting Kandahar and Kabul.

Land mines are strewn across the area, and picking them out of the darkness and uneven soil off the road is difficult. Insurgents have also started using booby traps to target foot patrols.

The bombs are  
**NUMEROUS**  
The roads are  
**DANGEROUS**

Their mission is  
**CLEAR**

But on a paved road — where culverts are the favored place to plant bombs, many of which include hundreds of pounds of explosives — an on-the-ground peek is sometimes the only way to check when cameras attached to hydraulic arms can't get a clear view.

"This is kind of a last resort," Sgt. 1st Class John Teets said. "If you can't see it, sometimes you've got to get there and take a look."

**SEE ROAD ON PAGE 3**

## Missed signs puzzling as Hasan picture emerges

By LEO SHANE III  
AND MEGAN McCLOSKEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

**I**n hindsight the warning signs all look so obvious.

An Army doctor in medical school who preferred offering militant political screeds about Islam in place of assigned papers on scientific topics.

A psychiatrist who sought to have some patients charged with war crimes for

their actions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

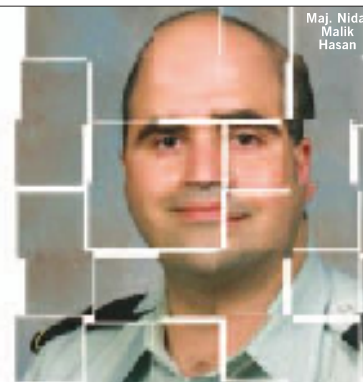
A devout Muslim who engaged in an extensive e-mail dialogue with a radical Yemeni-American religious cleric infamous for encouraging extremist attacks against Western targets.

None of that behavior exhibited by the accused Fort Hood shooter, Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, in the weeks and months before the deadly Nov. 5 rampage went unnoticed. But much of it went unreported, and no single individual or agency appears to have possessed more than

slivers of the bigger picture.

Now, as the results of the first of several federal probes into missed signals in the Fort Hood case circulate inside the White House, outside experts are coming to their own conclusions. They believe excessive political correctness, a lack of understanding of Islam and holes in Army guidelines for spotting extremists in the ranks all contributed to the failure to identify ominous warning signs in Hasan's case.

**SEE HASAN ON PAGE 4**



Maj. Nidal  
Malik  
Hasan



Courtesy of the U.S. Army

First responders use a table as a stretcher to transport a wounded soldier to an ambulance at Fort Hood, Texas, after a gunman opened fire Nov. 5. Questions are being raised over possible warning signs about Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, the Army psychiatrist accused of the shooting.

## Hasan: Did diversity breed reluctance?

HASAN, FROM PAGE 1

"With 20/20 hindsight it's easy to say there should have been indicators," said Zachary Lockman, professor of Middle Eastern studies and history at New York University. "But some people may have been reluctant because others would see it as going after him for being Muslim. Others might have identified all of Islam with extremism, so they didn't see anything unusual."

The reluctance to voice concerns about Hasan's behavior "suggests we need a better understanding of the difference between mainstream Muslims and the more radical, extreme elements," Lockman said.

Those who worked and studied alongside Hasan described him as combative but not violent. They said his religious tirades, often centering on the conflict Hasan perceived between Muslims in the U.S. military and their combat roles in Iraq and Afghanistan, were uncomfortable but not obviously treasonous.

Thus, in a military service that espouses diversity — last April Army officials issued a memo reiterating the importance of "culturally astute" units with an "inclusive environment" — there might have been a reluctance to raise concerns that Hasan's behavior constituted anything more than cultural differences.

"Political correctness does play a role here," said Amotz Brandes, a managing partner at Chameleon Associates, a security consulting firm that works with Defense Department agencies.

People are often fearful of reporting concerns that could be viewed as culturally ignorant or insensitive, Brandes said.

"You have to be educated to be able to tell if something is cynicism, sarcasm or really an indication of hostile intent," he said.

If soldiers knew little about Islam — if



Lieberman



Casey

*Sen. Joe Lieberman wants to determine if Army guidelines for identifying extremism need to be updated. Gen. George Casey Jr. has ordered a review of security at U.S. bases.*

they wondered whether the mainstream Muslim community was opposed to the war in Iraq, for example — Hasan's comments might have seemed reasonable, Lockman said.

The Army does have guidelines for identifying "extremist" elements within its ranks. But retired Gen. John Keane, a former Army vice chief of staff, told Congress last month that the guidelines gloss over religious extremists, focusing instead on gangs and white supremacist groups.

"Radical Islam, in my opinion, is a transformational issue and the most significant threat facing our country today," he told a Senate panel. "We must espouse diversity, but at the same time we must know what

the threat looks like, too."

Brandes said that even though diversity is properly embraced, the Army needs to recognize it might "create a problem of allegiance."

Soldiers who are conflicted about their role in the U.S. military and another aspect of their identity — in this case, religion — might feel as if they are in a position where they have to choose sides, he said.

Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Vt., as chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee has pledged to examine whether the Army extremism guidelines — last revised in 2000 — need to be updated.

The current Army directive instructs all soldiers to be on the lookout for signs that colleagues might be affiliated with gangs, wearing questionable tattoos or discussing violent actions.

"In many instances, soldiers who oppose or disagree will not confront the extreme views of another," the document reads. "They either do not feel directly affected by these views or fear damaging the unit's working environment. The unit, however, will usually divide into opposing factions and the team concept is gone. Time and effort are now required to deal with the situation."

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said last month that existing Defense Department directives mirroring those Army guidelines spell out the role of service commanders in identifying extremist or potentially violent action, and that new regulations are not needed.

Still, he conceded that balancing free speech and vigilance among servicemembers is a difficult task, and one of the Pentagon's Fort Hood review panels will be discussing over the next month.

**SEE HASAN ON PAGE 5**

## Shortage of caregivers scrutinized

By MEGAN MCCLOSKEY  
Stars and Stripes

The Army is severely short of enough mental health professionals to properly attend to soldiers after eight years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the Pentagon and Congress are asking whether that shortage may have played a role in the ability of the accused Fort Hood shooter, Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, to elude detection despite a spotty work record and suspicious behavior.

Hasan's competence and radicalism stirred concern among his fellow students and superiors and he was counseled for proselytizing to his patients, but he nevertheless progressed in his schooling and his military career throughout his six years at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

He was promoted to major in May and transferred to Fort Hood in July.

As part of the Pentagon's review of the Fort Hood incident, Defense Secretary Robert Gates has ordered an assessment of whether Hasan was properly retained and promoted in the Army Medical Corps, and whether anything interfered with Army procedures for discharging a soldier found "not to be fully qualified or unsuitable for continued military service."

Sen. Susan Collins, a Republican member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, said she believes "there was a reluctance" to question Hasan's service "because of the shortage of psychiatrists in the Army."

The committee will investigate whether that shortage meant "numerous warning signs were ignored," she said.

It's a charge Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, surgeon general of the Army, flatly denies. He said the Army would never promote sub-par officers simply to keep up with demand for mental health doctors.

"Quality is always the first priority," he said at a media roundtable last month.

Schoomaker added there is no connection between those who are responsible for providing enough caregivers in the field and those who evaluate the individual officers.

**SEE SHORTAGE ON PAGE 5**



Collins



Schoomaker



Chiarelli