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MAJORITY INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Homegrown Terrorism: The Threat To Military Communities Inside The United States

More than 2.3 million Americans in the military have volunteered to go into harm's way overseas to combat terrorists since 9/11. But these heroes "who shall have borne the battle," as President Lincoln called war veterans, also have been in danger here at home – where they should be safe and secure. The threat is real. The Department of Defense considers the U.S. Homeland the most dangerous place for a G.I. outside of foreign warzones – and the top threat they face here is from violent Islamist extremists. While our troops at overseas bases train their weapons outward to prevent armed enemies from getting "inside the wire," one way militant Islamists are penetrating our defenses is through enlistment in the U.S. Armed Forces. A significant and growing number of military personnel, such as alleged Fort Hood mass murderer Army Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, pose a serious danger to their brothers and sisters in arms who wear the same uniform.

At least 33 threats, plots and strikes against U.S. military communities since 9/11 have been part of a surge of homegrown terrorism which Attorney General Eric Holder has said "keeps me up at night." After Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden was killed May 1, the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation and Defense Intelligence Agency warned thousands of U.S. law enforcement and security agencies about possible retaliatory attacks by Al Qaeda, its allies or unaffiliated homegrown terrorists on our military. Weeks after the Pakistan raid, two radicalized U.S. citizens allegedly plotted to attack military personnel in Seattle.

The Majority Staff of the House Committee on Homeland Security has been conducting an investigation, which finds that 70% of the plots against military targets occurred since mid-2009 – including the two successful homeland attacks since 9/11. Other key findings:

- More than five terror plots have been disrupted involving U.S. military insiders in the past decade and at least 11 or more cases involved veterans or those who attempted to join law enforcement and intelligence agencies. *The likelihood of another deadly attack by a trusted insider is a severe and emerging threat, which the Pentagon is aggressively investigating to identify perpetrators;*
- Two successful attacks against the military outside of Afghanistan and Iraq were perpetrated by radicalized soldiers assigned to U.S.-based Army units: at Camp Pennsylvania in Kuwait in 2003 and at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009;
- At least 16 external terror plots targeting military personnel stationed inside the U.S. Homeland have been disrupted or investigated;

- At least nine other external plots were thwarted involving U.S. Persons in the homeland who traveled or planned trips overseas to kill G.I.s in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere;
- A growing number of terrorist threats are directed at families of military personnel. Particularly at risk are relatives of troops in units involved in counterterror operations.

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM TARGET: U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITIES

Since the 9/11 attacks, at least 33 or more public cases have been prosecuted or probed in which homegrown terrorists living and operating in the United States – and even inside the military itself – posed a grave threat, plotted to carry out attacks or perpetrated violence aimed at America’s Armed Forces in the homeland or deployed to overseas warzones. Twenty-three of these military-targeted plots, or 70% of the total, have unfolded over the last 30 months as part of the broader surge of homegrown Islamist terrorism.

At least 6,024 U.S. service members who declared Islam as their faith have served honorably in overseas war deployments since the 9/11 attacks, and 14 Muslim-American troops have been killed in action, all in Iraq, the Pentagon informed the Committee’s Majority Staff. We honor these American heroes, four of whom are buried in nearby Arlington National Cemetery, for making the ultimate sacrifice in service of our nation.

But a particularly insidious aspect of the homegrown terror threat remains radicalized troops who target their fellow brothers and sisters in arms, without regard to their faith. The Committee’s Majority Staff has determined that nine or more Muslim-Americans who are current, former or would-be military insiders have been convicted since 2001 or stand charged with national security crimes.¹ An additional two Muslim-Americans convicted of planning terrorist attacks against military targets inside the U.S. had earlier tried and failed to join police departments or the FBI and CIA.

Assailants such as Camp Pennsylvania attacker Army Sgt. Hasan Akbar, alleged Fort Hood killer Army Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan and Army Pvt. Naser Abdo, who stands accused of hatching a subsequent terror plot targeting the Fort Hood community, committed betrayals with dire consequences. Radicalized insiders – who have access to training and weapons – erode trust and morale within the ranks because they have unfettered access to their intended targets, military and terrorism experts told the Committee’s Majority Staff.

The Committee’s Majority Staff has reason to believe that the actual number of radicalized troops is far more than publicly realized or acknowledged.

These cases represent the leading edge of Al Qaeda’s ongoing effort to infiltrate the U.S. military and to recruit or radicalize vulnerable servicemen to commit future acts of terror.

This strategy, which Al Qaeda initiated during the first Gulf War², mirrors the enemy’s recent successes placing operatives inside Afghan and Iraqi security forces to turn their weapons on NATO troopers assigned to train and advise.³

¹ Derived from Department of Justice filings, staff interviews of national security officials, and Congressional Research Service reports on plots against the U.S. military.

² “Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in The Name of Islam,” by J.M. Berger (2011) at Pgs. 51-54, 61-63, 71-73.

The only successful U.S. Homeland Islamist violence resulting in fatalities since September 11, 2001 have been against the military: at Fort Hood, where 13 were murdered in an active-shooter attack allegedly by Maj. Hasan, and at a Little Rock recruiting center, where Army Pvt. William Long was fatally shot point-blank by radicalized homegrown Islamist Carlos Bledsoe, who calls himself “Abdulahkim Mujahid Muhammad.” According to the arresting officer’s report:⁴

Mr. Muhammad stated that he was mad at the U.S. military because of what they had done to Muslims in the past... Mr. Muhammad further stated that he drove around in the vehicle and saw the Army Military Recruiting Station and two U.S. soldiers smoking outside the building... Mr. Muhammad stated that he fired several rounds at the soldiers with the intent of killing them. Mr. Muhammad further stated that he would have killed more soldiers if they had been on the parking lot.

Both incidents also demonstrate the contradiction of the Obama administration regarding homegrown terrorism: The administration has steadfastly refused to say these cases are evidence of violent Islamist extremism.⁵ In several bulletins to federal, state and local law enforcement and security agencies since May 1, the Fort Hood and Little Rock tragedies were referred to as examples of homegrown violent extremism by lone offenders targeting the U.S. military, who might launch retaliatory attacks for Bin Laden’s death. But the bulletins did not use the word “Islamist” in describing those behind the general threat, or that those homegrown violent extremists may be motivated by a twisted and violent interpretation of their religion.

The heroic soldiers killed and wounded in the Little Rock and Fort Hood shootings have not received Purple Heart medals⁶, despite pleas by their survivors that their loved ones fell in the line of duty in the war on terror.

The Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense generally agree that the security of off-base military personnel and dependents is the responsibility of state and local law enforcement and they have sounded the alarm of the overall threat with several bulletins this year to thousands of law enforcement agencies nationwide. These joint messages – also signed off on by the FBI – have asked police officers to be on the lookout for suspicious activity by lone offenders targeting military communities.

Most of the more than 200 major military installations and 3,500 small to medium-sized military facilities inside America are adjacent to, or within, civilian communities. These include specific targets of past plots against Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington State, Fort Dix in New Jersey, Stewart Air National Guard Base in New York, Quantico Marine Base in Virginia and many others.

³ At least 52 ISAF troops have been killed by assailants in Afghan military or police uniforms since 2005 alone: http://articles.cnn.com/2011-06-15/world/afghanistan.nato.attacks_1_afghan-soldier-afghan-troops-afghan-border-policeman?_s=PM:WORLD

⁴ City of Little Rock, Arkansas, Police Department disposition report, June 1, 2009.

⁵ Testimony of Hon. Michael E. Leiter, director National Counterterrorism Center, before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Feb. 9, 2011, http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20110209_testimony_leiter.pdf

⁶ See Office of Rep. John Carter press release, “Carter Pushes Combat Status For Fort Hood Casualties,” Apr. 14, 2011: <http://carter.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=40.6&itemid=1376>

Also considerably at risk are more than 5,000 military recruiting centers nationwide⁷, which typically are within sizeable civilian communities. These vulnerable symbols of America's military have repeatedly been targeted for attack – from New York City's Times Square to facilities in Little Rock, Los Angeles and the Virginia and Maryland suburbs of Washington.

Despite meaningful improvements in information sharing between law enforcement communities since the Fort Hood tragedy, serious gaps remain in our military's preparedness for attacks against its personnel, dependents and facilities two years after that deadly strike – such as a lack of adequate and clear training in spotting indicators of violent Islamist extremism in individuals who wear the same uniform as those they may target.

The emergence of this threat should not be surprising. Nearly 14 years ago, Al Qaeda founder Osama Bin Laden in his declaration of war against the United States⁸ emphasized that civilians and military personnel were legitimate targets:

The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies – civilians and military – is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.

“Among the potential targets” the 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed discussed with Al Qaeda operatives, President George W. Bush told U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduates at their 2007 commencement, were “United States military academies such as this one.”⁹

Al Qaeda emphasized the importance of the military as a U.S. Homeland target as recently as last month in a new video by Bin Laden's successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri¹⁰, who boasted of the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon before mentioning the more lethal strike on the World Trade Center:

The Sheikh [Bin Laden] used to mention with goodness and gratitude, and become emotional upon their mention, the 19 brothers who attacked the idol of our time, America, in the Pentagon, the headquarters of its military command, and in New York, the symbol of its economic power. The fourth plane was on its way either to the White House or Congress.

Despite Al Qaeda's guidance to kill civilians and military alike, many homegrown violent Islamist extremists in recent years have turned away from eyeing civilians and gravitated toward military symbols as primary targets, according to terrorism experts and officials who have briefed the Committee's Majority Staff on the threat. The killing spree at Fort Hood on November 5, 2009 was not an anomaly; it was a tragic indicator of an upward trend in homegrown terrorism.

On the eve of Veterans Day last year, Antonio Martinez, an accused homegrown terrorist prosecuted for plotting to detonate a car bomb near a Baltimore, Maryland, military recruiting center, allegedly expressed views in line with this shifting homegrown terrorism strategy. According to the Department of Justice, Martinez was recorded telling an FBI source:¹¹

⁷ Government Accountability Office report on military recruiting, January 2010:

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10254.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-fatwa.htm>

⁹ <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/05/20070523-4.html>

¹⁰ SITE Intelligence Group translation of Ayman al-Zawahiri video, Nov. 15, 2011.

¹¹ See *United States v. Antonio Martinez*.

We are gonna go...to their stations, to their bases, to everywhere... to everywhere a soldier is. Every soldier that we see in uniform will be killed on the spot.

In the post-9/11 world, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) external operations *emir* Anwar al-Awlaki's online "magazine" *Inspire* eclipsed Bin Laden and his As-Sahab propaganda machine as a megaphone urging individual "lone wolf" terrorism. Awlaki effectively used his sermons and *Inspire* to champion stay-at-home attacks, hailing as a role model Maj. Hasan for allegedly striking fellow G.I.s destined for deployments or returning from overseas: "Who would object to that?"¹²

The influence of Awlaki and *Inspire* is evident in dozens of cases. On November 19, 2011, the New York City Police Department collared Muslim convert Jose Pimentel, who blogged about his adoration for Al Qaeda and was charged with building a pipe bomb – from a recipe he found in *Inspire* – intended to kill U.S. troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, prosecutors in New York have alleged.¹³ Despite the links between Awlaki, a Yemeni-American, with military insider attackers and plotters, his how-to magazine *Inspire* – which also reportedly provided Pvt. Naser Abdo with the recipe for building the bomb he allegedly planned to detonate outside of Fort Hood to kill fellow soldiers¹⁴ – is not universally banned from military barracks, the Committee's Majority Staff has learned.

This homegrown and foreign terrorist threat also has extended to family members of those serving in uniform, including those affiliated with sensitive units involved in counterterrorism operations, according to online militant Islamist chatter and government officials interviewed by the Committee's Majority Staff. The public identification of units involved in counterterrorism missions is a break from previous sound practices and should not be repeated in the future.

Two other recent terrorism cases – in Seattle, where Joint Base Lewis-McChord and a military processing center were allegedly targeted for attacks by extremists radicalized to violent Islamist ideology; and in the Washington, D.C., suburbs, where an Ethiopian-born U.S. Marine Corps Reservist and alleged Al Qaeda sympathizer has been charged with firing a gun at Marine Corps recruiting stations and the National Museum of the Marine Corps – demonstrate that the homegrown terror threat to our military forces is real and must be aggressively countered.

The nation owes a supreme obligation to those who volunteer to serve, as well as to our honored dead, who occupy patriot graves in communities such as Virginia's Arlington National Cemetery – which itself was targeted in a bomb plot last year by a homegrown terrorist.¹⁵

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM: THE THREAT FROM THE INSIDE

The most unifying violent Islamist terrorist event for militant Islamists since the 9/11 attacks was the killing of 13 and wounding of 32 at Fort Hood on November 5, 2009, allegedly by Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, a radicalized Army psychiatrist.

¹² SITE Intelligence Group translation of May 22, 2010 Awlaki interview by al-Malahem (AQAP media arm) released on militant Islamist forums, May 22, 2010.

¹³ Complaint by NYPD Det. Robert Roloph, People of the State of New York against Jose Pimentel, Nov. 20, 2011.

¹⁴ "Naser Abdo, AWOL soldier, charged in Fort Hood bomb plot," Washington Post, July 29, 2011:

<http://wapo.st/r8iJ1t>

¹⁵ See *United States v. Farooque Ahmed*.

Al Qaeda leaders called the Fort Hood shootings “heroic”¹⁶ and a “wonderful example.”¹⁷ In reality it was part of Al Qaeda’s two-decade effort to infiltrate the U.S. military for training or for terrorism – an effort that is increasing in scope and threat.

The first major penetration by Al Qaeda was achieved by Egyptian-American Ali Abdelsaoud Mohamed, a former Egyptian Army officer who enlisted in the U.S. Army in the 1980s as an operative of future top Al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. Mohamed rose to become an influential lecturer at Fort Bragg, North Carolina’s John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center. “Ayman al-Zawahiri’s trusted spy was now educating the U.S. Army about the Middle East,” recounted author J.M. Berger in his 2011 book, “Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam.” Before his September 1998 arrest, Sgt. Mohamed fought the Soviets in Afghanistan with the knowledge of his Fort Bragg superiors, stole classified Army files, wrote the unparalleled terrorist how-to manual “The Encyclopedia of Jihad,” and was involved with or trained militant Islamists who perpetrated the 1993 World Trade Center and 1998 East Africa embassy bombings.¹⁸

But it was the Fort Hood tragedy that finally forced the Army to confront the insider threat, and its leadership ordered a new Threat Assessment and Reporting Program (TARP) 14 months ago. An Army regulation widely posted on U.S. Army websites¹⁹ explained that the program was in response to the “Army as a target” for terror from within:

The Army also faces threats from persons on the inside (the insider threat), those with placement and access in an organization who may compromise the ability of the organization to accomplish its mission through espionage, acts of terrorism, support to international terrorist organizations, or unauthorized release or disclosure of classified or sensitive information. The potential of the insider threat to cause serious damage to national security underscores the necessity for a focused and effective TARP.

However, training on threat reporting only recently began in the Army, Department of Defense officials told the Majority Staff – yet counterterrorism reporting by soldiers is already up 30% this year, and most of those reports pertain to suspected violent Islamist extremism.

Unresolved disagreements and communications deficiencies remain between the counterintelligence, intelligence and investigative branches of the military, which concern the nature of the insider threat from disciples of AQAP’s late leader Anwar al-Awlaki, such as Maj. Hasan, and the steps that should be taken to identify and neutralize radicalized Islamists within the ranks, the Majority Staff has learned from multiple officials.

Awlaki claimed in a news media interview that he met Maj. Hasan in Virginia and communicated with him leading up to the 2009 attack.²⁰ In AQAP propaganda, Awlaki hailed the Army officer under arrest for allegedly killing fellow soldiers and called on other Muslim-Americans in the military to emulate Hasan.²¹

¹⁶ Adam Yahye Gadahn tape, As-Sahab media wing, Oct. 23, 2010.

¹⁷ Anwar al-Awlaki statement, Nov. 9, 2009:

<http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/nefaawlakiforthoodshooting.pdf>

¹⁸ “Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in The Name of Islam,” by J.M. Berger (2011) at Pgs. 22-28.

¹⁹ Example: <http://www.stewart.army.mil/tenants/902MI/docs/MARNE-CI-AWARENESS.pdf>

²⁰ “Cleric says he was confidant to Hasan,” Washington Post, Nov. 16, 2009: <http://wapo.st/4qRtoX>

²¹ Anwar al-Awlaki statement, Nov. 9, 2009:

<http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/nefaawlakiforthoodshooting.pdf>

Any decent Muslim cannot live, understanding properly his duties towards his Creator and his fellow Muslims, and yet serve as a U.S. soldier... How can there be any dispute about the virtue of what he has done? In fact the only way a Muslim could Islamically justify serving as a soldier in the U.S. Army is if his intention is to follow the footsteps of men like Nidal.

In May 2010, Awlaki added:

I support what he did, and I call upon anyone who calls himself a Muslim, and serves in the U.S. Army, to follow in the footsteps of Nidal Hasan. Good deeds erase bad ones. In addition, I call upon [all] Muslims to follow in his footsteps, and to wage Jihad by speech or by action.²²

The drumbeat continued the summer of 2010 in the online magazine *Inspire*, which Awlaki oversaw for AQAP.²³

And we call on every soldier working in the crusader armies and puppet governments to repent to Allah and follow the example of the heroic mujahid brother Nidal Hasan; to stand up and kill all the crusaders by all means available to him, supporting the religion of Allah and to make the word of Allah most supreme on Earth.

Al Qaeda's core leadership through its American mouthpiece Adam Yahiyeh Gadahn praised the Fort Hood shootings and called such military bases "high-value targets in America," but reminded violent Islamist extremists that killing Western civilians was also justifiable.²⁴

Online Islamists, however, continued to focus on the military and Muslim-American troops' loyalties in particular, exemplified by the views of one militant Islamist on the Ansar al-Mujahideen forum days after Fort Hood.²⁵

...[N]o covenant exists between Muslims in the U.S. and the U.S. government and army. If there was initially some covenant, that covenant is now void due to the various crimes the United States has committed to break it... We hope other "Muslims" in the US army repent from their apostasy and take him as a role model, instilling fear in the enemies of Allah and taking them by surprise wherever they may be.

INSIDER HOMEGROWN TERROR ATTACKS

June 2011

U.S. Marine Corps Reservist LCpl. Yonathan Melaku, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Ethiopia, was allegedly motivated by Al Qaeda propaganda and ideology, has been charged with destruction of property and firearm violations after a series of five shootings at military installations in the Washington, D.C. area.

²² SITE Intelligence Group translation of May 22, 2010 Awlaki interview by al-Malahem (AQAP media arm) released on jihadist forums, May 22, 2010.

²³ See President Obama's Sept. 30, 2011 statement on death of Awlaki: <http://1.usa.gov/vywYm2>

²⁴ Adam Yahiyeh Gadahn statement distributed by As Sahab media wing, Mar. 7, 2010.

²⁵ SITE Intelligence Group.

November 2009

Army Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, a psychiatrist, killed 13 and wounded 32 during an attack on the Soldier Readiness Center at the Army's Fort Hood, where he was stationed. AQAP leader Anwar al-Awlaki said in a news media interview that he communicated with Hasan.²⁶

March 2003

Army Sgt. Hasan Akbar, in an attack at a U.S. Army camp in Kuwait, killed two Army officers and wounded 14 others by tossing grenades into the tents of his fellow troops and then ambushed them with an M4 rifle as they ran out. The attack took place two days after the U.S. invasion of Iraq at a base located 25 miles from the Kuwait-Iraq border.

INSIDER HOMEGROWN TERROR PLOTS AND THREATS

July 2011

Army Pvt. Naser Abdo, a U.S. citizen, was arrested near Fort Hood, Texas, after allegedly plotting to attack soldiers in the area. The Muslim convert has claimed he was *Inspired* by Maj. Hasan and also planned to kidnap and execute a high-ranking officer involved in the Afghanistan campaign at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Authorities said Abdo was in possession of *Inspire*, the English-language propaganda magazine developed by Anwar al-Awlaki.

October 2010

Abdel Hameed Shehadeh, a U.S. citizen, was charged with "making false statements in a matter involving international terrorism" after he attempted to enlist in the U.S. Army, where his alleged goal was to desert and join the insurgency to fight U.S. military forces. He failed to disclose that he had previously attempted to travel to Pakistan to join a terrorist organization. Shehadeh was allegedly motivated by an Awlaki sermon he was exposed to.

February, 2007

Abdulhakeem Nour, an Arabic translator for the U.S. Army, who had used false identification to obtain U.S. citizenship and a top-secret security clearance, pleaded guilty to unauthorized possession of classified documents on the U.S. military and Iraqi insurgency, which he obtained in 2004 while working in his capacity as a translator. The documents were recovered in his New York residence in 2005.

December 2006

Hassan Abu-Jihaad and Derrick Shareef were Muslim converts who discussed attacking a Phoenix, Arizona, recruiting station in 2003 and a sniper attack on a San Diego, California military installation in 2006, according to Justice Department filings. Abu-Jihaad, a Navy veteran born Paul Raphael Hall, was convicted in 2009 of giving classified information on his former ship, the missile destroyer USS Benfold, to Azzam Publications, which is suspected of terror ties. Shareef pleaded guilty in 2007 to plotting to bomb an Illinois shopping mall.

September 2004

Army Spec. Ryan Anderson, a Muslim convert, was arrested after attempting to join Al Qaeda and purportedly offering the organization information on U.S. military capabilities.

²⁶ "Cleric says he was confidant to Hasan," Washington Post, Nov. 16, 2009: <http://wapo.st/4qRtoX>

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM: THE THREAT FROM THE OUTSIDE

The bull's eye of homegrown violent Islamists has increasingly been trained on our heroes in uniform as part of the surge in homegrown terrorism cases since 2009 which Attorney General Eric Holder has said alarms him.²⁷

There has been one external attack and 16 disrupted outside plots since 2001 by terrorists operating inside the U.S. Homeland, and nine plots involving U.S. Persons here who sought to kill American G.I.s in overseas warzones. Most of these cases occurred since 2009.

Emerson Winfield Begolly articulated Islamist thought about the legitimacy of military targets over civilian on English-language forums where American and foreign Al Qaeda sympathizers congregate. Begolly, a young Pennsylvania-born radicalized Muslim convert who befriended convicted homegrown terrorist Colleen “Jihad Jane” LaRose on the Internet, has pleaded guilty to soliciting attacks on the U.S. military through his online writings. In July 2010, Begolly urged action on the Ansar al-Mujahideen forum:²⁸

Real terrorism, but on a small scale. Attacks of civilians or police or government agents or military. Best as single shot, drive by, hit and run, beat down. Who are the best targets? Off duty police, off duty soldiers, gang member, family members of soliders [sic], government agents, workers at ammunition factory, white supremacists or black supremacists.

Begolly also posted the exhortation, “Allahu Akhbar” (“God is Greatest” in Arabic), in October 2010 about reported shootings at Marine Corps recruiting stations and the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Virginia later linked to an accused radicalized “insider,” Marine Reserve LCpl. Yonathan Melaku.

A poster on the same Ansar al-Mujahideen discussion forum once frequented by Begolly urged his brethren earlier this year to strike military funerals for Our Fallen, where security “is almost non-existent,” he wrote.²⁹ The terrorist supporter further stated:

Preparations to bury these bodies are done in an official manner by the military institution, and a large number of officials in the army attend the funerals, most of whom are from the same state where the dead recruit lived. They are also usually attended by the state governor and his assistants, and a number of prominent figures in American military and political society, so as to honor the dead soldier... Therefore, it is possible and very easy to target these figures at the time of burial, taking into account that the martyrdom-seeker could camouflage himself in military uniform so as not to attract attention to himself. In that case, he can approach the target without any obstacles or problems. The effect of this action on the American military institution in particular and the American people in general will have no limits. The operation of Nidal Hasan is not far from [our memories]. The situation will then surpass that of just targeting general Americans or sensitive areas, and will reach to the level of targeting prominent and influential figures in American society.

²⁷ “Attorney General's Blunt Warning on Terror Attacks,” ABC News, Dec. 21, 2010: <http://abcn.ws/tTola0>

²⁸ United States v. Emerson Winfield Begolly indictment, July 14, 2011.

²⁹ SITE Intelligence Group Monitoring Service, Aug. 14, 2011.

EXTERNAL HOMEGROWN ATTACKS ON MILITARY TARGETS INSIDE THE U.S.

June 2009

Abdulahakim Muhammad, born Carlos Bledsoe, a U.S. citizen and Muslim convert, was arrested and charged with killing Army Pvt. William Long after attacking an Army recruiting office in Little Rock, Arkansas. Bledsoe allegedly specifically targeted the U.S. military to avenge its mistreatment of Muslims and he has claimed to be an AQAP operative.

EXTERNAL HOMEGROWN PLOTS AND THREATS TO MILITARY TARGETS INSIDE THE U.S.

November 2011

Jose Pimentel, a Dominican-born naturalized U.S. citizen, was arrested for assembling pipe bombs to attack U.S. Postal Service facilities and to assassinate troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the Manhattan District Attorney's Office and the NYPD. He learned to make the bomb by reading the how-to article "Make A Bomb In The Kitchen Of Your Mom" in AQAP's online magazine *Inspire*, prosecutors allege.

September 2011

Rezwan Ferdaus, a U.S. citizen, was arrested on terrorism charges after allegedly plotting to attack the Pentagon and the U.S. Capitol using explosives-laden remote-controlled airplanes, as well as plotting to harm U.S. soldiers abroad by providing Al Qaeda with modified cell phones to use as detonators for improvised explosive devices.

June 2011

Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif and Walli Mujahidh were arrested on terrorism and firearms charges after they allegedly plotted to attack a Seattle military processing center. The defendants initially targeted Joint Base Lewis-McChord, a combined Army and Air Force Base in hope this would spur other violent Islamist extremists to emulate similar attacks on the U.S. military.

February 2011

Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, a citizen of Saudi Arabia and resident of Texas, was charged with attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction after he attempted to create an Improvised Explosive Device with several selected targets, including American soldiers who had been stationed at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

January 2011

Emerson Begolly, a U.S.-born homegrown Islamist extremist in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, pleaded guilty in August 2011 to encouraging attacks on public and military facilities in collusion with convicted homegrown terrorist Colleen "Jihad Jane" LaRose.

December 2010

Antonio Martinez, a U.S. citizen from Baltimore, Maryland, and a recent Muslim convert, was charged with attempting to use a WMD to attack an Armed Forces recruiting station in Maryland.

October 2010

Farooque Ahmed, a naturalized U.S. citizen of Pakistani descent and Virginia resident, was charged with planning simultaneous bombings at Washington, D.C.-area Metro stations frequented by military personnel, with the ultimate aim to "kill as many military personnel as possible." Ahmed picked a specific metro stop in a community hosting many defense offices. He also made attempts to join the FBI and CIA, according to a law enforcement official.

July 2010

Paul Rockwood, a U.S. citizen and Muslim convert, was charged after allegedly plotting to attack a specific list of targets he had developed, which included members of the military. Rockwood, a U.S. Navy veteran, was allegedly inspired by the teachings of Awlaki.

May 2010

Barry Walter Bujol Jr. was convicted last month for attempting to provide material support to AQAP after he provided a confidential human source he believed to be an Al Qaeda operative with manuals and articles on military unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), while advising that AQAP should attack the human operators at U.S. Homeland bases who pilot drones on overseas missions rather than attacking the actual aircraft. Bujol's case also revealed that he had been in contact with Awlaki.

September 2009

Hosam Maher Husein Smadi, a Jordanian citizen residing in Texas, "had become radicalized on his own, through the Internet," FBI Director Robert Mueller said in a speech last month. Inspired by Carlos Bledsoe's murder of Pvt. Long in Little Rock, he initially eyed attacks on military recruiting centers and then cased the Dallas National Guard Armory before settling on a bomb attack on an office building.

August 2009

Betim Kaziu foreign fighter plot involved a U.S. citizen from Brooklyn, New York, Kaziu, who was convicted on charges of attempting to join Al Qaeda-linked groups. In February 2009, Kaziu and U.S. citizen Sulejah Hadzovic traveled to Cairo, Egypt, where they unsuccessfully attempted to join either the Somali extremist group al-Shabaab or other terrorist organizations in Iraq, Afghanistan or Pakistan for the purpose of killing U.S. troops.

July 2009

Daniel Patrick Boyd, a U.S. citizen who trained in terrorist camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan, along with six other U.S. citizens and a U.S. legal permanent resident, were charged with plotting to attack the U.S. Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia. Three of those charged in the plot were U.S. military veterans.

May 2009

The "Newburgh Four" involved three U.S.-born plotters – James Cromitie, David Williams and Onta Williams – and a Haitian immigrant were arrested after plotting to attack Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York and Jewish sites in New York City.

May 2007

"Fort Dix Six" Plot involved six men guilty of plotting to use assault rifles and grenades to attack and kill soldiers at the Fort Dix army base. Several of the men were allegedly inspired by Awlaki's sermons. Defendant Serdar Tatar earlier had tried but failed to join the Oakland, Philadelphia, New York City, Nassau County and Temple University police departments, the Committee's Majority Staff learned.

April 2006

Ehsanul Islam Sadequee and Syed Haris Ahmed, both U.S. citizens and residents of Atlanta, Georgia, were arrested after plotting to attack targets including the Pentagon and Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Georgia.

August 2005

Kevin James of Jamiyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh (JIS) led a jailhouse plot inside California's New Folsom prison involving three U.S. citizens and a legal U.S. resident from Pakistan, who pleaded guilty to targeting a U.S. military recruiting office and a Jewish temple in Los Angeles for attacks.

EXTERNAL HOMEGROWN PLOTS AND THREATS TARGETING TROOPS OVERSEAS

September 2011

Agron Hasbajrmi, a U.S. legal permanent resident, was arrested while attempting to fly to Turkey as part of a plan to join a foreign fighter group in Pakistan and target U.S. soldiers.

November 2010

Mohamed Osman Mohamud, a naturalized US citizen of Somali descent, is alleged to have contemplated travelling to Pakistan to engage in terrorist activity targeting U.S. military forces. Ultimately, Osman was arrested after attempting to blow up a van filled with explosives at a Christmas tree lighting in Portland, Oregon.

December 2009

The "Five Guys" plot involved five men from Northern Virginia who were arrested in Pakistan after traveling there to allegedly join a terrorist organization and battle U.S. troops in Afghanistan, including allegedly planning to attack an air base.

October 2009

Tarek Mehanna, a U.S. citizen, was arrested after plotting to travel abroad to attack U.S. forces in Iraq, in addition to planning to assassinate two U.S. politicians and attacking shopping malls within the United States.

September 2008

Bryant Neal Vinas, an American Muslim convert and Al Qaeda recruit who received terror training in Pakistan, admitted firing rockets at a U.S. base in Afghanistan in 2008 in an attempt to kill U.S. troops, then returned to the U.S. to plot an attack on New York's Long Island Railroad.

November 2006

Houston foreign fighter Taliban plot involved four men – an American Muslim convert and three foreign national students – who allegedly met at shooting ranges and campsites in Texas in preparation for ultimately joining the Taliban in Afghanistan to fight against U.S. military forces in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq.

February 2006

Toledo, Ohio foreign fighter plot. Three men, including two U.S. citizens and a U.S. legal permanent resident, were charged with conspiracy to kill or maim persons in locations outside the United States, including U.S. military forces in Iraq, after discussing their intentions with an undercover informant and participating in weapons training.

June 2003

Virginia foreign fighter "Paintball Jihad" Network involved 11 men from Northern Virginia charged after allegedly planning to wage attacks against the United States and other nations considered hostile to Islam. The men engaged in military training in pursuit of this mission.

October 2001

The “Portland Seven” involved six men who met in the Portland area and plotted to travel to Afghanistan with the aim of fighting against U.S. military forces. The men conducted military training and were advanced funds in pursuit of this plot. Defendant Jeffrey Battle joined the Army Reserve after being radicalized.

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM: TARGETING MILITARY FAMILIES

In the wake of the Fort Hood shootings, in which civilians were shot alongside soldiers in uniform, violent Islamist extremists elevated their discussions about a new target for terror: Military families. The military responded with operational security bulletins for families of uniformed service members, such as an Army guide for Family Readiness Groups:³⁰

Army Families, because of their direct association with the U.S. military, present a lucrative target for terrorists. Moreover, many Army families endure periods of extended separation from their military member, which presents unique vulnerabilities to their safety.

The Marine Corps posted a similar notice for their families on its Pacific Forces website:³¹

In December 2009, Al Qaeda gave instructions to all their operatives to target military personnel and their families. They were told to search for personal information, find out where their families live, and find the easiest way to target their workplaces.

The warning likely was in response to information such as a posting on the Al Qaeda-affiliated al-Fallujah and Shamoukh al-Islam forums several days after AQAP underwear bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to blow up a Detroit-bound jetliner on Christmas Day 2009.³² An Islamist extremist on the forums urged sympathizers to obtain crew lists of U.S. Navy ships and “specify their family status and location of their family’s residence (wife-children).”

Two government cases illustrating this threat to military families involved Emerson Begolly, 22, and an online alleged co-conspirator, a 17-year-old Pakistan-born U.S. lawful permanent resident whose online moniker was “Mohammed K.”³³ According to the Department of Justice, the two homegrown Islamist extremists chatted online about killing military families. Mohammed K. allegedly told Begolly he was contemplating a “Columbine”-style attack on his suburban Maryland high school and, citing AQAP’s *Inspire*, explained that his classmates were the children of National Security Agency employees at nearby Fort Meade:

*Where I live is a hotbed of U.S. agencies like NSA, FBI, so I would expect their parents work there and hate Muslims.*³⁴

³⁰ http://www.tradoc.army.mil/pao/Web_specials/iWATCH_2010/iWATCHsupport.html

³¹ <http://www.marines.mil/unit/marforpac/fro/Pages/opsec.aspx>

³² SITE Intelligence Group.

³³ “Teen tied to Jihad Jane allegedly plotted school shooting,” Philadelphia Inquirer, Aug. 8, 2011: http://articles.philly.com/2011-08-28/news/29938534_1_jihad-jane-mohammed-terror-cases

³⁴ See *United States v. Emerson Winfield Begolly*.

The Committee's Majority Staff also has been reliably informed that there are concerns over the vulnerabilities of families of some U.S. military personnel involved in counterterrorism operations since the 9/11 attacks. These operators' identities are protected to some degree from disclosure by unit secrecy and by news media ground rules forbidding identification of units, last names and recognizable faces in photographs. But government officials do not always follow the ground rules they impose on the media and some have recklessly identified units involved in sensitive missions to the news media, along with details of those units' justifiably secret tactics, techniques and procedures.

On May 12, 2011, then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, said units involved in the May 1 raid resulting in the killing of Bin Laden in Pakistan³⁵ had directly raised concerns for their loved ones' safety:

I think there has been a consistent and effective effort to protect the identities of those who participated in the raid, and I think that has to continue. We are very concerned about the security of our families – of your families and our troops, and also these elite units that are engaged in things like that. And without getting into any details – and I would tell you that when I met with the team last Thursday, they expressed a concern about that, and particularly with respect to their families. And so we're – I – as you say, I can't get into the details in this forum, but we are looking at what measures can be taken to pump up the security.

³⁵ <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4822>