

Letters on the shooting at Fort Hood

12 November 2009

On “US Army major kills 12 at Fort Hood, Texas”

What is interesting about these sorts of stories is not the bloodbath itself. We only have to look at the bloodbaths in Afghanistan and Iraq, often committed by US troops, to find similar examples. But these stories expose in sharp relief the ideological commitments of the television and radio pundits. Listening to them lie for their bosses, twisting and distorting the facts, is akin to watching a rat eat its own tail. To avoid damaging US imperial designs on the Middle East, the pundits will avoid stating the obvious. That multiple deployments have brought many soldiers to the breaking point and that this is just one bloodbath among many. What is different is that the victims this time just so happen to be US soldiers. Tragic, yes. But certainly no more tragic, nor disgraceful, than extrajudicial killings by unmanned drone attacks. Isn't it interesting how selective President Obama is in what things “horrify” him?

Keith K
6 November 2009

It is too bad to hear of the loss of innocent lives in Texas, USA. Europe and the USA are fighting a futile war in the Middle East and Afghanistan, have poked their nose in the internal issues of Pakistan and made the world at large an unsafe place. The money that could have been used for food, education and health is being wasted on explosives and bloodshed. This life is too short, and for heavens sake leave a name and work for the generations to come to cherish it and not to regret it. At the moment everything is regrettable.

Ijaz A
Pakistan
7 November 2009

On “Mass shooting at Fort Hood: collateral damage from Iraq and Afghanistan wars”

Excellent analysis David, just the clarity I'm not finding—nor expecting to, to be sure—in the MSM. Keep up the great work,

Owen F

7 November 2009

Thank you David Walsh for putting into perspective many details left unmentioned in the major media.

In the days following 9/11, a Buddhist monk and lecturer was asked the meaning of the event. Succinctly, and not without shock to some, he replied: Karma. So it is that actions produce reactions, and the incident at Fort Hood is no exception.

As the media has gained for itself a “big story” to spin, explain, investigate and lavish upon with senseless coverage, commentary and sensational headlines, should the full truth be told in explaining the incident it must include the fact that Fort Hood is the epicenter from which aggression and carnage is done to the people of Iraq, Afghanistan and countless other nations unfriendly to America's self-interest. Should another truth be told, Fort Hood is an incubator for warriors. Warriors do, in my book, commit the crime of murder also, though they call it war.

Would the story be as large and compelling if the assailant were a white, Christian private born of parents from South Carolina and not Maj. Nidal M. Hasan, a Muslim born of Palestinian parents? Would President Obama and the nation's media corp attend a memorial service for the numbers of US soldiers killed by suicide from being warriors in America's great armies—her killing machines? Can war itself ever be removed from the safety of moral sanction and be understood for what it is—*murder!*?

The headlines speak of “heroes” and “national mourning”, but all readers should only mourn the million Iraqis killed by many of these same “brave soldiers” who now are elevated by this tragedy.

War is murder, and murder is murder. To grieve and mourn the death of thirteen soldiers is compassionate but entirely incomplete until one also mourns the millions of deaths in the Middle East and Asia from American hands

emerging from Fort Hood. To do otherwise is “selective morality” at best; and utterly hypocritical.

Michael B

Maine, USA

7 November 2009

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While in both a graduate mental health counseling and a Master of Social Work program I got a lot of information about the kinds of people who work in these programs that counsel active duty military as well as VA services and such. Within the mental health counseling field, one of the big areas that has a lot of clout with the profession these days is “Christian” Counseling. Needless to say, it is neither Christian nor does it really give people the kind of genuine counseling experience that they need. There is a big push within the military to bring in more social workers, which I think is really a very good idea. Although social work has its own issues these days, I think that within both the active duty and the VA, social workers have maybe a lot more to offer. In regard to the Army psychiatrist allegedly involved in these shooting, it is the first time on record that I know of that a psychiatrist went berserk. However, after doing some background reading on the individual in question, I think that based upon what I know, he was a very poor candidate for that particular medical specialty. As I understand it, he chose psychiatry because he could not cut the mustard in another area, including general practice. That, of course, proves the point that society as a whole does not really place the proper values on what these people should be doing. However, here in Florida, supposedly non-profit mental health outfits offer PT jobs for shrinks that start at \$147,000.00/yr. plus a percentage of the take in regard to patient billing. Not a bad deal for a PT job! Go figure!

Dear SEP:

You’ll no doubt get more feedback on your Ft. Hood Massacre article than most of what you’ve reported on this year. It’s interesting that you used the term “collateral damage” to describe Major Hasan’s act. One could also use the term “blow back”—although that might imply some US and/or South Asian intelligence agency(ies) involvement in the affair.

I’m beginning to wonder if the definition of “blow back” might be up for review. Maybe it doesn’t necessarily have to involve the Ops World to be called “blow back.”

And “blow back” might even be a product of the subliminal—rather than conscious—mind. Considering how much we’ve still yet to learn about PTSD and its after effects, that shouldn’t be ruled out. There’s no telling when Maj. Hasan—or anyone else, for that matter—had “left us” for the other side. We’re fighting two and a half wars: where even embedded journalists become yet another set of intelligence agents.

I don’t want to make this tragedy even murkier and its causes more speculative than the *Baltimore Sun* has already. How somebody gets “eye time” in the Op-Ed with a line like, “Is post-traumatic stress disorder something you can catch from your patients like a virus?”—is beyond me.

Even its author doesn’t know. In Vietnam there were so many things to catch besides PTSD. In Korea, at Bastogne, and especially at Stalingrad, soldiers found out that if it was a virus you could at least freeze it. But we all know that PTSD is not—per se—something you “catch” like the common cold.

My heart goes out to the victims of this tragedy, and, strangely even to Major Hasan. What my heart doesn’t go out to is the Army’s initial labeling of the shootings as an “isolated incident.” No wonder people think they might have missed the warning signs.

Charles K

9 November 2009



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