

Review of Fort Hood shootings says military not well-suited to flag internal threats

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The U.S. military's ability to guard against internal threats is still geared toward ferreting out Cold War moles instead of detecting religious radicals such as the Army major accused of killing 13 people at Fort Hood in November, Defense Secretary [Robert M. Gates](#) said Friday.

As the Army completed its review of the Nov. 5 shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Tex., which also injured 43 people, defense officials said several mid-ranking officers could face punishment for failing to properly supervise Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, 39, the military psychologist charged in the shootings.

At a news conference, Gates said the review found that military supervisors are often slow to intervene when personnel under their command exhibit suspicious behavior. He said supervisors frequently fail to note such behavior in formal reviews.

In general, Gates said the military's personnel and promotion systems are not well equipped to flag officers such as Hasan, who adopted increasingly radical religious and ideological views in the months leading up to the Fort Hood killings.

"This department is burdened by 20th-century processes and attitudes mostly rooted in the Cold War," Gates said. "Our counterintelligence procedures are mostly designed to combat an external threat such as a foreign intelligence service."

The Army's review of the shootings, led by former Army Secretary Togo West and Adm. Vernon Clark, a former chief of naval operations, were scheduled to be made public later Friday.

Gates said a portion of the report included recommendations for accountability measures against some of Hasan's supervisors. He declined to comment on details but said he would forward the recommendations to the Army for further action. The Associated Press reported that as many as eight supervisors from various points in Hasan's career could face reprimands.

Hasan, 39, has been charged by military authorities with 45 counts of premeditated murder. He was promoted to the rank of major last year, despite concerns expressed by fellow officers about erratic behavior in working with psychiatric patients and an increased tendency to proselytize to other soldiers about his Muslim faith.

In June 2007, for instance, Hasan gave a lecture on Islam and suicide bombers that prompted some colleagues at Walter Reed Army Medical Center to question his competence to serve. Instead of being drummed out of the Army, however, Hasan was promoted and sent to Fort Hood, where he was supposed to be preparing to deploy to Afghanistan.

Hasan's performance evaluations did not mention concerns about his behavior. Gates and the Army report both cited this failure as part of a broader problem, in which officer evaluations often cloak personal deficiencies that could otherwise derail the officers' careers.

Gates said the system of performance reviews needed to flag such deficiencies instead of "kicking the problem to the next unit or the next installation."

Hasan served at Walter Reed, in Northwest Washington, from June 2003 to July 2009 as an intern, resident and then as a psychiatry fellow. He was promoted to major in May 2009, and moved to Fort Hood in July.

A second military inquiry, which is ongoing, is examining an exchange of e-mail between Hasan and a radical U.S.-Yemeni cleric, Anwar al-Aulaqi, in late 2008 and 2009.

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