A Perpetual Travesty of Justice – The Fort Hood Massacre

By COL (Dr.) Kathy Platoni
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The scales of justice continue to slide further into the abyss for the wounded, the families of the fallen, and the survivors of the Fort Hood Massacre. Truth and justice remain elusive and as has been the case for the duration, in our disfavor. One-month shy of the seventh anniversary of the Fort Hood Massacre, the worst of all mass shooting incident on any military installation in US history, this horrific and deadly event continues to be labeled workplace violence and the act of a disgruntled employee. Benefits and entitlements due the families of those systematically assassinated and for those who suffered multiple gunshot wounds, have not been awarded in full to date. Many have been forced to bear the enormous costs of lifesaving medical intervention out of their own pockets. The list of abuses and denials that have befallen all of us is endless.
The following letter, was mailed to 18 senators and two Congressmen in January of 2016. To date, there has not been a single response from these 20 elected officials. This amounts to a national disgrace and a most accurate reflection moral erosion of our culture at the hands of current administration. Moral integrity and ethics seem to have disappeared from the psyche of the American populace and certainly, from those responsible for this enormous travesty of justice.

“Dear Congressman/Senator,

It is my sincerest hope that you will consider introducing legislation for the victims, wounded, and survivors of the Fort Hood Massacre of 5 November 2009. As you are aware, I have been an ardent advocate for everyone involved in this tragic event for the last 5.5 years, as well as the families of the deceased. I have made it my life’s mission to assure that righteousness is done by the many suffering souls who were involved in and affected by acts of terrorism on that fateful day.

In the interest of all of those of us who wear the uniform and in particular, on behalf of the all those most affected by the Fort Hood Massacre, I wish to submit this request for the following legislation:

Be it resolved by the Congress of The United States of America that the shooting executed by Nidal Hasan on 5 November 2009 is classified as a domestic terrorist attack in time of war; that the 13 Soldiers and DOD civilian massacred and 33 Soldiers wounded are entitled to all honors, benefits, and appropriate care extended to anyone who is killed or wounded in direct combat due to the fact that the United States of America, at the time of the terrorist attack, was at war under the 14 September 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists, Public Law 107-40, first termed the “Global War on Terror” and at the time of the massacre, an “Overseas Contingency Operation”.

That the terrorist attack of 5 November 2009 shall be officially termed a terrorist attack and never again referred to as “workplace violence” or “the act of a disgruntled employee”, as the evidence overwhelmingly points directly to an inspired and coordinated terrorist attack consistent with other known terrorist attacks, in all official capacities of the various agencies and departments of the United States of America, and that it is the official policy of the Republic to always refer to the terrorist attack in that language and to former MAJ Hasan, as a”terrorist”, due to his conviction in the commission of the terrorist attack.

Therefore be it resolved that the terrorist attack of 5 November 2009 is categorized as a terrorist attack in time of war, and that all victims of the terrorist attack be termed as such and entitled to all appropriate honors and benefits that accompany U.S. Military personnel in time of war, as this attack occurred when the nation was officially at war against terrorism as outlined by P.L. 107-40. This should include all entitlements, retroactive to the date of this terrorist act and not to the date of the awarding of the Purple Heart Medals (10 April 2015), to include:

- Special Compensation for Assistance with Activities of Daily Living (SCAADL)
- Traumatic Injury Protection Under Service Member’s Group Life Insurance (TSGLI)
- Social Security Disability
• TRICARE benefits  
• Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP)  
• Education and Training Benefits

Additionally, the families of the deceased should receive all entitlements due them, retroactive to 5 November 2009, to include:

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• Full reimbursement for burial benefits for deceased Service Members killed in this terrorist attack, which include a grave site in any VA national cemetery with available space, perpetual care of the grave at no cost to the family, a government headstone or marker, Presidential Memorial Certificate, and provision of the American burial flag.
• Dependency and Indemnity Compensation at the monthly rate of $1,154 for surviving spouses, with additional benefits for dependent children.
• Life insurance carried at the highest level of $400,000.
• Access to Tricare benefits for surviving spouses and dependent children.
• Refund in full of Service Members’ unused portions of GI Bill benefit contributions.
• Educational assistance through the VA’s Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance Program (Again, my computer would not allow me to line this up. Please assist.)
• VA-guaranteed home loan accessibility for surviving spouses and children.

Finally, those Soldiers who placed their lives on the line continuously in the face of mortal danger and who engaged in heroic actions in the very finest traditions of military service and furthermore, who rendered emergency medical assistance under fire, must be acknowledged and made eligible for the awarding of the Combat Action Badge and the Combat Medical Badge. It is shameful that although the heroes of the attacks on the Pentagon on 9/11 were awarded these badges in rapid succession and deservedly so, the awarding of the CAB and CMB have never been considered for the valiant acts of bravery engaged in by the many heroes of the Fort Hood Massacre, some of them injured themselves.

It is most significant to note that French President Hollande presented the Legion of Honor to 3 Americans less than 72 hours after they subdued a terrorist and prevented terrorist acts aboard a train in France. This is France’s highest recognition. It took the United States, the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army more than 5 years to award the Purple Heart to the victims of the Fort Hood Massacre.

It is very long past due time for the truth to be disseminated across the land, that the Fort Hood Massacre was unequivocally and indisputably, as stated by Nidal Hasan himself during his court martial, an act of terrorism. We cannot afford to continue to downplay the dangers inherent in these United States, as the enemy rages within our borders, nor to ignore those who live the Warrior Ethos to protect and defend; their solemn promise to die for this nation and the freedoms we once cherished. Failing to do so constitutes yet another national disgrace.”
Currently, “legislative efforts to provide common sense aid and appropriate commendations and full special compensations to the victims and those who thwarted and were wounded in Hassan’s terrorist attack, as well as an effort to label the terrorist attack what it actually is, are pending as an amendment due to the ongoing efforts of Congressman Dan Joyce (R-Ohio) in the House version of the Defense Appropriation Bill. Obama administration officials oppose these efforts, and as of this writing, a continuing resolution to maintain funding national defense is pending.”

It is due exclusively to the fact that Congressman Joyce was willing to hear my pleas for intervention on behalf of all of us, that there has been any traction whatsoever on the issues plaguing the many victims of the Fort Hood Massacre. Though we have never met in person, he has initiated maximum efforts to begin to right the infinite wrongs committed against us. We, the victims of the Fort Hood Massacre, in masse, continue to bear the dishonor and degradation perpetrated by the current administration. To state that this tarnishes America, is grossly understated. Perhaps treasonous is the more appropriate descriptor.

*Please note that this letter and the current status update were written with the assistance of an elected official in the State of Ohio, who has requested that he not be identified. This is what true American heroism looks like. I am privileged to reveal only that he is a fellow member of the Ohio Military Reserve and of my “platoon”.*