

# ISIS Jihadi Wannabe arrested in Kansas in attempted Suicide Bombing of Fort Riley



John T. Booker, Jr., aka Muhammed Abdullah Hassan,

[Fort Riley](#) is home of the legendary *Big Red One*, the famed US Army 1<sup>st</sup> Division. You may recall the 1980 Sam Fuller autobiographical [film](#) by the same name, starring the late Lee Marvin and *Star Wars* actor Mark Hamill. The film depicted Marvin as Sgt. Leading a special infantry unit through combat in North Africa, Italy and Germany. There are 25,000 uniformed members the Army 1<sup>st</sup> Division and civilian personnel on this storied military post located 70 miles west of the Kansas State Capitol at Topeka on I-70. Today, a 20 year old Topeka native John T. Booker, also known as Muhammed Abdullah Hassan, was arrested and charged with plotting to drive a van loaded with what he thought was 1,000 pounds of explosives in an attempted suicide mission in support of ISIS at Fort Riley. If convicted Booker could face life in prison.



Location of Fort Riley, Kansas

*The Capital Journal of Topeka* [reported](#):

According to the indictment, Booker, who is also known as Muhammed Abdullah Hassan, was recruited by the U.S. Army in Kansas City and was scheduled to report for basic training on April 7, 2014.

Before he could report, Booker was interviewed by FBI agents regarding Facebook posts he had made.

“I will soon be leaving you forever so goodbye! I’m going to wage jihad and hopes that I die,” he wrote on March 15, 2014, according to federal prosecutors.

“Getting ready to be killed in jihad is a HUGE adrenaline rush!! I am so nervous. NOT because I’m scared to die but I am eager to meet my lord,” he wrote four days later, on March 19.

On March 20, FBI agents questioned Booker about the Facebook posts. After waiving his Miranda rights, **Booker allegedly told agents that he enlisted in the Army to commit an insider attack against American soldiers similar to one carried out by Nidal Hassan at Ford Hood, Texas, on Nov. 5, 2009.**

“Booker stated that if he went overseas and was told to kill a fellow Muslim, he would rather turn around and shoot the person giving orders,” the indictment alleges. “Booker clarified that he did not intend to kill ‘privates,’ but that he wanted to target someone with power. Booker also said that he did not intend to use large guns, but instead a small gun or a sword.”

After questioning by the FBI, Booker was denied access into the military.

[ABC noted](#) the charges for Booker’s arrest and an accomplice who failed to report the plot:

A man charged Friday with plotting a suicide bomb attack on a Kansas military base to help the Islamic State group was mentally ill and was acting strangely only days before his arrest, according to a Muslim cleric who said he was counseling him at the request of the FBI.

John T. Booker Jr., 20, of Topeka, is accused of planning a suicide attack at Fort Riley. Prosecutors allege he told a [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#) informant he wanted to kill Americans and engage in violent jihad on behalf of the terrorist group, and said he believed such an attack was justified because the Quran “says to kill your enemies wherever they are,” according to a criminal complaint.

Authorities arrested Booker on Friday as he was trying to arm what he thought was a 1,000 pound bomb outside the Army post. The criminal complaint filed in federal court in Topeka charges him with three crimes, including attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction.

The top federal prosecutor for Kansas also charged another Topeka man, Alexander E. Blair, 28, with failing to report Booker’s plans to authorities. The complaint alleges that Blair and Booker shared some “extremist views” and that Blair loaned Booker money to rent space to build and store a bomb.

[Note](#) the sting operation by the FBI and alleged cooperation of the local Imam at the Islamic Center in Topeka:

Imam Omar Hazim of the Islamic Center of Topeka told *The Associated Press* that two FBI agents brought Booker to him early in 2014 for counseling, hoping to turn the young man away from radical beliefs. Hazim said the agents told him that Booker suffered from [bipolar disorder](#), characterized by unusual mood swings that can affect functioning.

Hazim said he expressed concerns to the FBI about allowing him to move freely in the community at their first encounter.

Hazim said he later heard that two others were involved in a bombing plot with Booker. He said the FBI told him they were undercover FBI agents and that the [sting](#) was arranged to get Booker, “off the streets.”

“I think the two FBI agents set him up, because they felt at that point someone else might have done the same thing and put a real bomb in his hands,” Hazim said.

He said he has come to the conclusion that the sting was the right thing to do. He said Booker admitted to him on Tuesday that he had stopped taking his medication because he didn't like the way it made him feel and it was expensive.

A spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office in Kansas declined to comment on Hazim's comments.

The soft-spoken Booker made his first court appearance Friday in U.S. District Court in Topeka, answering basic questions and correcting the spelling of his alias, Muhammad Abdullah Hassan. Booker was ordered to remain jailed. A grand jury is expected to consider the case next week.

The past two weeks have witnessed the arrest of US ISIS wannabes in [New York](#), [Philadelphia](#) and [Illinois](#) in other bomb plots including US military bases.

Neither Booker's family nor friends could understand the transformation by their son and school friend into an ISUA wannabe jihadist coming from a Christian family, notwithstanding his bi-polar condition. As to why youths like John T. Booker aka Muhammad Abdullah Hassan are inspired by ISIS note this assessment from Dr. Michael Welner, renowned forensic psychiatrist in an April 2015 NER [article](#):

What ISIS has tapped into is the notion of the Islamic Caliphate. For those who are devout Muslims, they are very vulnerable, very sensitive to the idea that a Caliphate is required in order for a Muslim to adequately observe one's faith. It is the equivalent of what we have seen in other faiths of false messiahs. The notion of a messiah – if you can carry it off – is so powerful that it gives the

movement, for those who subscribe to it, the entitlement to say come and join and be part of what gives the Caliphate the opportunity to declare itself: that it has *land* fight for it." Thus, people are fighting for a cause and that's why they are joining. They are not joining because of You Tube; they are not joining because of social media. Social media only enable them to be reached, to be energized, to go beyond themselves and to get caught up in something messianic.

The arrest of Booker aka Muhammad Abdullah Hassan occurred on the same day that 47 Purple Hearts were awarded those killed and injured by Maj. Hassan, an Army Psychiatrist. He was convicted in 2013 and given a death sentence on 13 charges of premeditated murder and 32 charges of attempted murder for his jihadist mass shooting of soldiers at a Fort Hood, Texas deployment center on November 9, 2009. Hassan is imprisoned; awaiting an appeal, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas located 135 miles northeast from Fort Riley above Kansas City. *USA Today*, in an article on today's ceremony at Fort Hood, [wrote](#):

The Purple Heart ceremony was years in the making because the Pentagon previously considered the Fort Hood attack workplace violence. Only after a years-long battle by victims and their families did Congress mandate a change in the medals' eligibility criteria. "No one was more affected than those we honor today with the Purple Heart and Defense of Freedom medal. Simply stated, this is what our Army is all about," said retired Gen. Robert W. Cone, who was commander of III Corps and Fort Hood at the time of the attack. "Thank you for your persistence in making sure the government does the right thing by these great patriots."

Problem is that no health and disability benefits came along with those Purple Hearts awarded today. Curious that John T. Booker was inspired to adopt the same name as convicted jihadist Maj. Hassan.