



Incident in RI Was a Red Flag

By John Zaremba Slain Washington Navy Yard shooter Aaron Alexis' bizarre statements to Rhode Island cops last month — that he heard voices coming from his hotel walls, floor and ceiling, and that three tormentors were using a microwave device to keep him from sleeping — should have given Navy brass more than enough reason to yank his clearance, according to security experts. “Very disturbing. It’s disturbing that this could have been potentially avoided,” said Greg Rinckey, of Albany, N.Y., a former Army judge advocate general attorney who specializes in security-clearance cases. “We had one last week where they suspended a security clearance because the guy bought rental property in Australia. They were concerned about foreign influence. An investment property. And it was Australia. It’s not like it was Iran.” Alexis, working in Newport as a contractor at Naval Station Newport, called cops to a Marriott on Aug. 7 to report harassment, according to a police report. He told cops he believed a man he’d argued with while boarding a plane in Virginia had “sent 3 people to follow him and keep him awake by talking to him and sending vibrations into his body,” the report says. Alexis told police the voices followed him from a Residence Inn in Middletown, R.I., to a hotel at the naval station, and finally to the Marriott — and that he believed they were using “some sort of microwave machine to send vibrations through the ceiling, penetrating his body so he cannot fall asleep,” the report said. Police asked Alexis what the voices were saying, but he did not elaborate. Cops were concerned enough to alert authorities at the naval station, and were told naval police would “follow up on this subject and determine if he is, in fact, a naval base contractor,” the report said. Alexis arrived in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 25 — two and a half weeks after the Newport incident — and had been staying at a Residence Inn in the capital since Sept. 7, nine days before Monday’s massacre that left 12 others dead and eight injured, including a police officer. Alexis was killed in a firefight with cops. David P. Sheldon, a Washington, D.C., lawyer and a former judge advocate general attorney who specializes in security-clearance cases, said he’s stunned Alexis, an ex-Navy reservist and civilian contractor, had a valid pass to enter the D.C. Navy Yard, given his history of arrests and his apparently paranoia-induced statements to Newport cops. “The history here — then combined with him being delusional and being reported to Newport command — it’s pretty striking here that someone might have missed the boat on this,” Sheldon said. A spokesman at the naval base yesterday referred a Herald reporter’s questions to the FBI. An FBI spokeswoman, in turn, declined to say what authorities did with the information, citing the ongoing investigation. Alexis’ motive — or whether he even had one — remains unclear. Sheldon said he’s shocked that Alexis — whose record includes gun-related arrests in Fort Worth, Texas; Seattle; and a disorderly-conduct rap at a nightclub in DeKalb County, Georgia — was even awarded clearance in the first place. “I have individuals who have smoked marijuana, and that’s disqualifying alone. But to have the type of violent behavior exhibited and concerns over a pattern of misconduct. ... I don’t know who was asleep at the switch, but it would really raise red flags to me,” Sheldon said. Meanwhile, authorities yesterday said the Navy discharged Alexis in 2011 after bouts of insubordination, disorderly conduct and unauthorized absence from work. Alexis joined the Florida-based IT consulting firm The Experts last September, leaving temporarily to attend school. He returned to the firm part time in June.

