



## Carson soldier in Taliban slaying tries suicide in prison

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DENVER — A U.S. soldier who pleaded guilty to killing a suspected Taliban captive attempted suicide in prison three weeks ago, but he is doing better since mental health officials changed his medication, his father said.

Pfc. David Lawrence is serving a 10-year term at the Army's Fort Leavenworth, Kan., prison after pleading guilty in May to premeditated murder.

Lawrence, an infantryman assigned to a unit from Fort Carson, Colo., was accused of shooting the prisoner in a jail cell at a U.S. outpost in Afghanistan in October 2010.

His father, Brett Lawrence, of Lawrenceburg, Ind., said this week his son slit his wrists because he was hearing voices and having hallucinations.

Brett Lawrence said he is certain his son suffers from schizophrenia. A civilian psychiatrist diagnosed him as having the illness, and others in his family suffer from it, the father said.

One Army evaluation also found the soldier had schizophrenia and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder at the time of the shooting. A second Army assessment found no severe mental illness and called the soldier a malingerer.

Brett Lawrence said he wasn't certain what the Army's current diagnosis is but officials have prescribed his son drugs used to treat schizophrenia.

Fort Leavenworth officials didn't return a phone call seeking comment.

David Lawrence could have faced execution or life in prison on the premeditated murder charge. He pleaded guilty in exchange for a 12 1/2-year sentence.

Last week, the acting commander at Fort Carson, Brig. Gen. James Doty, trimmed that to 10 years after a clemency appeal from Lawrence's attorney, James Culp. Lawrence could now be released after about eight years with time off for good behavior, Culp said.

Doty's order reducing the sentence didn't state his reasons. He didn't immediately respond to a request for comment through an Army spokesman.

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