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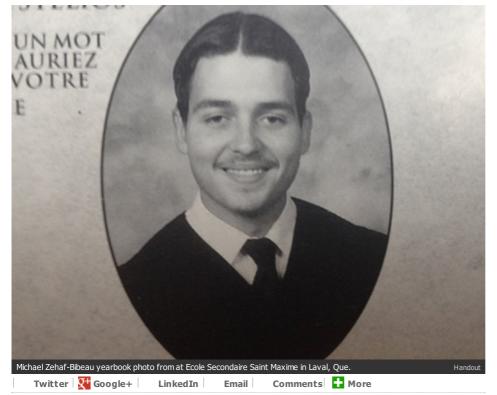
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Details of Michael Zehaf-Bibeau's life paint a picture of a man troubled by drugs and crime

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GRAEME HAMILTON IN MONITEAL, TRISTIN HOPPER, DOUGLAS TODD AND ROB SHAW IN VANCOUVER AND PETER HENDERSON IN OTTAWA, NATIONAL POST STAFF | October 23, 2014 | Last Updated: Oct 23 9:56 PMET Republish Reprint

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Ottawa shooter Michael Zehaf-Bibeau was kicked out of mosque

The high school yearbook inscription from 2000 spoke of great things ahead for Michael Zehaf-Bibeau.

"Mike is a sociable and intelligent guy," a friend at École secondaire Saint-Maxime in the Montreal suburb of Laval wrote. "He loves to laugh, and his smile wins over the girls. He will go far in life."

Mr. Zehaf-Bibeau did make a name for himself but in the worst possible way. On Wednesday, after spending an adulthood filled with homelessness, petty crime and drug addiction, the 32-year-old killed a defenceless soldier at the National War Memorial before being gunned down in the halls of Parliament.

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Dick posted bail early Saturday morning. A call to his agent was not immediately returned

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That morning, Mr. Zehaf-Bibeau had woken up at the Ottawa Mission, a downtown homeless shelter where he had spent the last two weeks of his life annoying fellow residents with anti-Canadian outbursts and pronouncements of a coming Armageddon.

"He went on for more than an hour about how much this country sucked and how he wanted to get out of here, and he was furious about the passport," Mission resident Norman LeBlanc told The Canadian Press on Thursday, describing a Sunday altercation that almost led to blows with the bearded 32-year-old.

Zehaf-Bibeau had come to the capital to secure a passport in order to travel to Syria, where he may have been planning to join ISIS forces.

At the time of the attack, his passport application was still under review, and RCMP suspect his anger over the delay may have helped to motivate the rampage.

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One Mission resident, identifying himself only as P.M., said Zehaf-Bibeau had endeared himself to a pair of young Caucasian Anglophones at the Ottawa Mission.

"He was teaching them about Islam and stuff. He had them doing the Islamic prayer. They were in the hallways here doing it," said P.M.

"You knew they were up to something shifty, pacing around a lot and everything."

The morning of the attack, all three were gone from the shelter by 8 a.m., although police say that nobody else at the shelter were "actively supporting his plot."

On Thursday, Zehaf-Bibeau's mother, Susan Bibeau, made it clear her son had been lost to his family for years. She told a reporter with the Associated Press, "If I'm crying, it's for the people [killed and injured.] Not for my son."

Born Oct. 16, 1982 as Michael Joseph Hall,



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Really, there is no such thing as an 'Original Six.'

his name was officially changed to Zehaf-Bibeau in 1995, according to La Presse, which suggests he was adopted.

His mother is deputy chairperson at the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, dividing her time between Ottawa and Montreal. A graduate of Université de Montréal law school, she joined the IRB in 1990 as a refugee protection officer, where she worked to determine whether refugee claimants were fit to stay in Canada.

Her husband, Belgasem Zahef, is from Libya and owned a restaurant in downtown Montreal in the 1990s. Three years ago, the Washington Times reported that Mr. Zahef had returned to his hometown of Zawiyah in Libya to join the uprising against the Muammar Gaddafi regime.

The family lived in Laval when Zehaf-Bibeau was growing up, and he attended a private high school, Collège Laval, from 1995 to 1998 before being pulled out by his parents.

Michel Baillargeon, the school's principal, said he was an unremarkable student. "He did not stand out," he said. "He was an everyday student like we have hundreds of."

Although Mr. Zehaf-Bibeau made a better impression at Saint-Maxime, he was barely out of high school when he had his first brush with the law.

In November 2001, when he had just turned 19, he was convicted of possessing a false credit card and impaired driving, *La Presse* reported. The next year brought another fraud conviction in Aylmer, QC and an assault conviction in Laval.

He would go on to rack up convictions of robbery, conspiracy and drug possession before moving to Western Canada, where he added to his criminal record with convictions in Alberta and British Columbia.

In Vancouver, he is known to have stayed at a Salvation Army shelter in the city's Downtown Eastside and gotten himself kicked out of a Metro Vancouver mosque for erratic behaviour.

"His behaviour was not normal," said David Ali, vice-president of Masjid Al-Salaam mosque in Burnaby, B.C. "We try to be open to everyone. But people on drugs don't behave normally."

Mufti Aasim Rashid, spokesperson for the B.C. Muslim Association, which runs Masjid Al-Salaam, said Mr. Zehaf-Bibeau was asked to leave the mosque, because he had "gotten a hold of keys and stuff from the mosque, and when he got out of jail, he just started sleeping there."





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Grave matters



Remembrance Day began modestly as a tribute to the terrible losses of the First World War RCMP surveillance video frame grab showing the movements of Michael Zehaf-Bibeauon Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Oct. 22, 2014.

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Another Vancouver mosque, Masjid 'Omar al-Farooq, said they had never seen Zehaf-Bibeau during his time in the city, but issued a statement condemning "acts of aggression and violence ... particularly those committed in the name of our faith."

At a Thursday press conference, RCMP commissioner Bob Paulson confirmed that Zehaf-Bibeau had carried out the shootings with a Winchester 30-30 lever action rifle, a quintessentially Canadian bush gun that is not normally the first choice of would-be terrorists.

Zehaf-Bibeau's lengthy criminal record prevented his from owning firearms, leading police to suspect he may have picked it up on the black market. In preparation for the attack, he also secured a car on Tuesday: A brown Toyota Corolla.

"He wanted to buy a car, desperately, and he was trying to get help from everybody in here to get a car ... He acted bizarre, he did. Very bizarre," resident John Clothier told CBC.

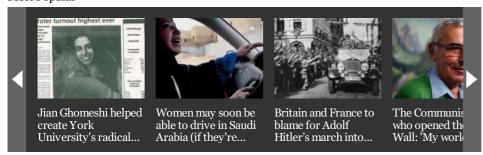
On Thursday, Comm. Paulson vowed to "investigate and understand" Zehaf-Bibeau's "radicalization process."

"He is an interesting individual in the sense that he had a very developed criminality," he said. "Combined with some of the things that gave rise to the radicalization, I think is where the focus of our investigation needs to be."

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