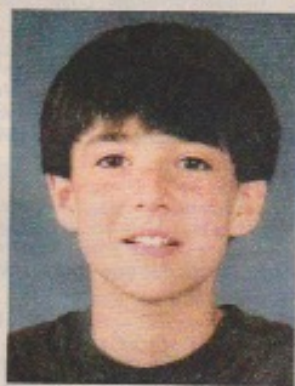


UNTOLD STORY Why a Californian became a diehard fighter for the ene



Young John Walker seems the typical American kid in these family album photos. Above left, John, 7, plays with his baby sister. Left, 4-year-old John with a stuffed toy and as a freckle-faced fifth-grader. Above, John at age 8, with a Beatle haircut and overalls. Top right, dad Frank Lindh jokes with his son on a family vacation. Right, just a few years later, 17-year-old John is a bearded Muslim

ckingly, Walker is also on record as support-
the terrorists' bloody Sept. 11 attacks that
ed more than 3,000 people.

It's likely that Walker will be charged with
ason," Prof. Roger Alford, an international
expert at California's Pepperdine University
ool of Law, tells GLOBE. "And he may
the ultimate price for that - with his life."
rmer friends of Walker, who called himself
layman Faris" and "Abdul Hamid" after
oming a Muslim, tell GLOBE a chilling story
ow he grew up to hate America.

John was always a little off," an old school
tells GLOBE. "But when I saw him captured
TV, I knew he had completely lost his mind.
I that fake Middle Eastern accent he was
ig - what a joke. The guy lost his marbles..."
Walker was born in Washington, D.C., in 1981,
second of three children. He was named John,
r Beatle John Lennon, who had been
dered a few months before his birth.

he family moved to affluent Marin County,
th of San Francisco, in 1991, when he was 10.
father, Frank Lindh, is an attorney for Pacific
& Electric. His mother, Marilyn Walker, is a
e health-care worker. She and Frank are now

divorcing. They were Catholics, but Marilyn later
became a Buddhist.

"Frank and Marilyn gave their son no sense of
right and wrong, they taught him no values,"
says one source. "He became a spineless, aimless
kid who went looking for direction.

"They raised him to be a 'poor little rich kid,'
given everything material, but spiritually empty."

Walker attended Redwood High School, but
couldn't handle it. After less than one semester,
he was sent to Tamiscal High School, an alterna-
tive school. He dropped out after one semester.
Shortly after reading *The Autobiography of*
Malcolm X, Walker converted to Islam, changed
his name to Sulayman and began wearing white
robes and a turban. He studied the Koran and
prayed at a mosque in Mill Valley.

"We were all surprised when he started wearing
Muslim clothes so soon after converting," says
Abdulla Nana, a Muslim friend. "But Sulayman
was so enthusiastic, right from the beginning."

Nana tells GLOBE that Walker's parents fully
supported his conversion to Islam. "His parents
were behind him emotionally and financially,"
he says. "They backed his faith."

In 1998, Walker, then 17, told his parents he

wanted to go to Yemen to study Arabic and
for their financial support. He spent nearly
in Sana'a, the capital, before returning home.

In February 2000, he returned to Yemen
the last time either of his parents saw him
end of last year, Walker told them that he was
enrolling at a madrassah, a fundamentalist
ic school, in the village of Bannu in Pak
Northwest Frontier province. The region is
as a hotbed of support for Osama Bin Laden

"He was isolated," his mother says. "He
know a soul in Pakistan. When you're young
impressable, it's easy to be led by chari
people."

His parents last heard from him seven
ago, when he sent an E-mail from Bannu:
he planned to go "somewhere cooler" for th
mer and would not be in touch for a while. Hi
asked for money and his dad wired him \$1,2

Walker's parents still refuse to condemn
Frank Lindh professes his "unconditional
for his son and says he wants to give him a
kick in the butt" for going to Afghanistan.

And his mother says: "If he got involve
the Taliban, he must have been brainwash

- ROBIN MIZ