

# The 2015 Ciccolo Affair: Another “Terror” Arrest; Another Mentally Ill Man, Armed by the FBI

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This 2015 report by The Intercept sheds light on FBI procedures pertaining to the recent shootings in Orlando, Florida

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*U.S. law enforcement officials announced another terror arrest on Monday, after arming a mentally ill man and then charging him with having guns.*

[ABC News](#) quoted a “senior federal official briefed on the arrest” as saying: “This is a very bad person arrested before he could do very bad things.”

But in a sting reminiscent of so many others conducted by the FBI since 9/11, Alexander Ciccolo, 23, “aka Ali Al Amriki,” was apparently a mentally ill man who was doing nothing more than ranting about violent jihad and talking (admittedly in frightening ways) about launching attacks—until he met an FBI informant. At that point, he started making shopping lists for weapons.

The big twist in this story: [Local media](#) in Massachusetts are saying Ciccolo was turned in by his father, a Boston Police captain. The [FBI affidavit](#) says the investigation was launched after a “close acquaintance ... stated that Ciccolo had a long history of mental illness and in the last 18 months had become obsessed with Islam.”

According to the affidavit, Ciccolo first talked to the FBI informant about attacking two bars and a police station. Later, he spoke of attacking a college campus with a homemade pressure-cooker bomb like the one used in the Boston Marathon terror attack; he also talked about using guns and a lot of ammo. Ciccolo, according to the affidavit, then “ordered the firearms from a confidential human source (“CHS”) working with the FBI.”

“You get the rifles, I’ll get the powder,” Ciccolo allegedly told the informant. “The next time we meet I want us to have at least those two things.”

The FBI then surveilled Ciccolo as he bought a pressure cooker at a Walmart. When the informant showed up with the guns, Ciccolo had no black powder. He was, however, soaking Styrofoam strips with motor oil in an apparent attempt to make explosive “Molotov cocktails,” the affidavit alleged.

The Justice Department’s press release referred to these as “Terrorist Attack Plans,” and alleged that he was a supporter of the Islamic State. But Ciccolo was notably not charged with any of the actual terror charges, such as [use of weapons of mass](#)

[destruction](#) or [providing material support to terrorists](#), that are most commonly employed by the Justice Department.

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