

The FBI Murder of Ibragim Todashev: The Boston Witness “Who Knew Too Much”?

By [Bill Van Auken](#)

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FBI and other law enforcement officials revealed Wednesday that Ibragim Todashev, the 27-year-old Chechen immigrant who was shot and killed after being interrogated for days about the Boston Marathon bombings, had been unarmed.

The killing of Todashev, and the rapid disintegration of the government’s official story—that he was shot after lunging at interrogators with a knife—is an extraordinary event. It casts into further doubt everything that has been said so far about the Boston Marathon bombings.

The report that Todashev was unarmed was followed Thursday by a press conference in Moscow, where the murdered man’s father, Abdulbaki Todashev presented a series of photographs of his son’s body taken at a Florida morgue showing that he had been shot six times in the torso and once in the crown of his head.

“I would like to say that looking at these photos is like being in a movie,” he said. “I only saw things like that in movies; shooting a person, and then the kill shot. Six shots in the body, one of them in the head.”

He added: “Maybe my son knew something, some information the police did not want to be made public. Maybe they wanted to silence my son.”

Todashev, a mixed martial arts fighter, was acquainted with Tamerlan Tsarnaev, the Boston bombing suspect killed by police on April 19, as they were both ethnic Chechens and used the same gym when Todashev lived in the Boston area.

In breaking the story, the *Washington Post* reported that “An air of mystery has surrounded the FBI shooting” since it happened in Orlando, Florida on May 22. This is a gross understatement. The entire affair reeks to high heaven of an extra-legal execution and coverup.

The admission that the FBI shot to death an unarmed man led to calls by civil rights groups and Todashev’s widow and family for an independent investigation into the killing. The Council on American-Islamic Relations held a press conference in Orlando calling for the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division to launch a probe into how “an unarmed man who had not been charged or convicted of anything was shot seven times, once in the head.”

Meanwhile, at the press conference in Moscow, Zaurbek Sadakhanov of the Moscow Interterritorial Bar Association stated his belief that the case was one of extrajudicial execution and urged Todashev’s friend, who had taken the morgue photos, to return to

Russia. “Being a witness in the US is not safe,” he said.

At the time of his death, Todashev had undergone prolonged interrogation by a team of FBI agents accompanied by Massachusetts state troopers and counterterrorism officials. The marathon questioning took place in Todashev’s own apartment, where he was held prisoner while denied representation by a lawyer.

After the killing, FBI and other police sources fed the media a story that Todashev had been shot after trying to attack an agent with a knife. Some media outlets went so far as to report that the young immigrant had stabbed an agent before he was brought down in a hail of gunfire, an amazing feat given that he had no knife.

All of this now is revealed as a deliberate lie that has been dutifully repeated by the media. The *New York Times*, it bears pointing out, has not published a single story on Todashev since the immediate aftermath of the killing in Orlando. As of late Thursday afternoon, the *Times* had not even posted an update on the acknowledgment that Todashev had been unarmed. No doubt, as on previously sensitive stories involving the national intelligence apparatus, someone from the *Times* editorial board was consulting with the White House, the FBI and other agencies on how best to handle the matter.

FBI and other police sources also put out the story that Todashev had verbally confessed that both he and Tamerlan Tsarnaev, the Boston bombing suspect, were responsible for a triple homicide that took place in Massachusetts in 2011. He was shot, the law enforcement sources claim, just before signing the alleged confession.

There is even less reason to believe this tale—also dutifully repeated as fact by the corporate media—than there was to accept the claims that Todashev had somehow concealed a knife from his heavily armed captors and then tried to attack them with it.

Todashev’s housemate, Khusen Taramov, has told the media that he had been questioned together with Todashev up until the last eight-hour session in which he was murdered. He said the issue of the murders in Massachusetts was never raised. “They were asking different questions like how did we meet these guys [the Boston bombing suspects Tamerlan Tsarnaev and his younger brother Dzhokhar], the kind of relationship we had with the guys.”

Similarly, Todashev’s widow, Reni Manukyan, 24, said that all of the questioning, to which she too was subjected, was about the Boston bombings, and no one asked her or her husband about the killings in 2011. “The interviews were always about Tsarnaev and the bombings,” she said. “How did we know him and what was the relationship with him.”

As Todashev’s father put it in an interview with the *Boston Globe* from Russia, “They killed my son and then they made up a reason to explain it.”

Why would the FBI and other intelligence and police officials lie about the killing of Todashev? The “air of mystery,” to use the *Post*’s phrase, surrounding this state murder is bound up with the unanswered questions and murky explanations for the Boston bombings themselves. The coldblooded killing in Orlando only underscores that nothing reported by government officials or the major media regarding this case can be accepted uncritically.

This includes the identity of the bombers themselves. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who survived the

shoot out with police, has, according to his mother, spoken with her for the first time and has denied involvement in the bombing. Dzhokhar was severely injured after a boat he was hiding in, unarmed, was shot up by police. He is currently being held in a Massachusetts prison hospital facing the capital charge of using a weapon of mass destruction.

One thing is certain, as with the attacks of 9/11 and virtually every other real or manufactured terrorist incident since, the alleged perpetrators were known to US intelligence. In the case of Tamerlan Tsarnaev, it is known that Russian security officials alerted both the FBI and the CIA in 2011 to what they said was evident danger that he was involved with Islamist terrorism. There have also been reports that Russian agencies provided their US counterparts with a dossier on Tsarnaev's contacts with such elements in 2012, following his six-month visit to the North Caucasus, and that Saudi authorities had issued a similar warning.

Yet, the FBI claimed it found nothing to warrant keeping open an investigation on Tsarnaev, and he was allowed to return from the Russian region, which includes Chechnya, where Islamist separatists waged two wars with Russian forces in the 1990s, without being questioned by immigration, customs or other officials.

Moreover, the FBI failed to share any of the information that it received about Tsarnaev with either state or local police in Massachusetts, despite working together with them on a joint terror task force.

Now, it emerges that one of the only individuals in the US who could have potentially shed light on Tsarnaev's ties to Chechnya was shot to death execution-style by US agents.

Was it a case of a man who knew too much? Could Tsarnaev have shared information with Todashev that compromised covert operations by US intelligence?

The involvement of US intelligence agencies both in promoting Islamist separatist forces in the former Soviet Union and utilizing such forces as proxy troops in countries like Libya and Syria is well known. Is it possible that Tamerlan Tsarnaev became involved somehow in these links?

On the other hand, virtually every major terror incident on US soil since 9/11 has been orchestrated by the FBI using agent provocateurs, who provided everything needed to carry out an attack before arresting their patsies and announcing another victory in the "war on terrorism." Was this such a staged incident that got out of hand, or, perhaps, allowed to proceed?

The Boston bombings served as the pretext for carrying out an unprecedented lockdown of an entire US metropolitan area in which basic democratic rights were suspended and security forces carried out what amounted to a dry run for a military coup.

The FBI murder of Ibragim Todashev is symptomatic of a country in which the military and intelligence apparatus exerts ever greater control, and the democratic rights of working people, the great majority of the population, are under relentless assault. Such state killings are a warning that preparations for dictatorial forms of rule are already well advanced in America.

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Articles by: [Bill Van Auken](#)

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