

Russian officials charge FBI failure to heed warnings led to Boston bombings

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The speaker of the Russian Senate, Valentina Matvienko, told interviewers from the Interfax news agency on Tuesday that Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) officials sent numerous warnings to US authorities about Boston Marathon bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev, but “this information was not taken seriously by the American side, which is what led to that tragedy.”

The statement came after a bipartisan US congressional delegation, headed by House Republican Dana Rohrabacher, visited the country on an ostensible “fact-finding” trip, where they were presented with documents by FSB official Sergei Besada showing that his agency had known about Tsarnaev since 2011.

The six congressmen were read a translation of a letter sent by the FSB to the US Federal Bureau of Investigation in March 2011 that gave a detailed account of Tsarnaev’s Islamic jihadist sympathies. The Russian intelligence agency subsequently sent the same letter to the US Central Intelligence Agency.

The FSB reported that Tamerlan Tsarnaev had become radicalized in Boston in 2010 and wanted to join Palestinian fighters, but gave up the idea because he did not speak Arabic. Instead, the letter said, Tsarnaev’s focus turned to Dagestan, a majority-Muslim region in the North Caucasus where a Muslim separatist movement has been carrying out terrorist actions against Russian authorities. Tsarnaev’s mother came from Dagestan and his father from neighboring Chechnya.

According to one of the congressmen in the US delegation, Rep. William Keating (Democrat of Massachusetts), the letter gave Tsarnaev’s date of birth, his cell phone number and information about his boxing career as well as information as about his wife and mother.

The letter asked US officials to notify Russia if Tsarnaev headed to Dagestan.

According to the Russians, neither the FBI nor the CIA responded, and there was no warning from the US when Tsarnaev traveled to Dagestan in January of 2012, where he remained for six months and established contact with underground separatist fighters.

He met several times with Makhmud Mansur Nidal, a known separatist recruiter, as well as with Canadian-born jihadist William Plotnikoff, according to the Russian officials, who believed Tsarnaev decided to return to the United States only after these two contacts were killed by Russian forces.

“I never thought we’d get that much information and cooperation,” said Keating. He added that “you can see with the level of these details that, in fact, if we had had better information sharing, there’s a very strong chance that things could have changed, and [the bombings] could have been avoided.” He further noted that the level of detail provided by Russian sources was much “more specific” than that provided by the FBI.

Another member of the delegation, Rep. Steve King (Republican of Iowa), told the *Hill* web site, “[Russia] wanted to help. And they got the message by implication that the FBI was not interested in examining Tamerlan.”

These developments render all the more implausible the official story that the FBI conducted an investigation of Tamerlan Tsarnaev in 2011 and then closed the file on him, having found “no derogatory information.” The failure of the FBI, CIA and Homeland Security Department to respond to multiple warnings, to prevent Tsarnaev, who had been placed on terrorist watch lists, from traveling to Dagestan, or even question him on his return, and their failure to alert

state and local police in advance of the April 15 Boston Marathon of their knowledge of Tsarnaev—none of this has been explained. Instead, the alibi utilized to explain the staggering security and intelligence lapses in the 9/11 attacks has been revived: a “failure to connect the dots.”

The media and both political parties evince no desire to get to the bottom of the US intelligence agencies’ evident role in facilitating the bomb plot allegedly carried out by Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who was killed in a shootout with police several days after the bombings, and his younger brother Dzhokhar, who is in custody in a prison hospital facing federal charges of using a weapon of mass destruction, a capital crime. Three people were killed and more than 260 wounded in the twin bombings near the finish line of the marathon.

The stench of cover-up intensified last month when the FBI shot and killed an unarmed witness who was being interrogated in his home in Florida. The victim, Ibragim Todashev, was a native Chechen who had lived in Boston and become friendly with Tamerlan Tsarnaev. No credible explanation has been given for this crime, lending credence to suspicions that Todashev was silenced because he knew too much about Tamerlan’s relations with the FBI and other US agencies.



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