

Media silent on the state killing of Boston bombing witness

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11 June 2013

The extraordinary silence of the American media on the state killing of Ibragim Todashev, a key witness in relation to the recent Boston bombings, calls the official account of the bombings even further into question.

On May 22, Todashev was shot seven times by an FBI agent inside his house in Orlando, Florida, including once in the head, under the most dubious circumstances. Todashev was an acquaintance of alleged bombers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. In the days following Todashev's death, a half-dozen wildly inconsistent accounts of the killing were presented in the media before the story was dropped and buried.

The media first reported that Todashev attacked an FBI agent with a knife. After approximately a week, the "knife" story was unceremoniously abandoned without any explanation and replaced with a series of increasingly incredible accounts. (See "The state killing of Ibragim Todashev") One account involved Todashev retrieving a "samurai sword." Another involved a "metal pole" that "might have been a broomstick."

Todashev was killed following an FBI-led interrogation at his house that lasted up to eight hours. Before the interrogation, he told his roommate that he feared for his life. The *Washington Post* on May 29 reported that, immediately before the shooting, all of the interrogators left the room except for one FBI agent.

There is every reason to suspect that Todashev's death was an extrajudicial state execution, in violation of US and international law. In contrast to the various implausible stories presented in the media, the most probable scenario is that Todashev possessed some information that undermined the official story of the Boston bombings, likely pertaining to Tamerlan Tsarnaev's relations with the US military and

intelligence agencies. To ensure his silence, the FBI terminated him.

With the servile assistance of the "responsible" journalists of the US media establishment, the Todashev story has been effectively censored.

The *New York Times*, for example, published two principal articles on Todashev. The first article, dated May 22, cited unnamed "law enforcement officials" who claimed that Todashev lunged at the FBI agent with "a knife or a pipe or something."

A week later, a second *Times* article dated May 30 gave a new and improved account of the shooting, also citing unnamed government officials. In this account, Todashev lunged at the agent with a "metal pole" that "might have been a broomstick." Having duly disseminated the latest state department of events, the *Times* has had nothing substantial to say on the subject since May 30.

The *Washington Post*, in the week following the shooting, chided the FBI for failing to get its story straight. Offering a friendly warning to the political establishment, the *Post* noted on May 30 that the dramatically inconsistent stories of Todashev's killing could "fuel wild conspiracy theories" and urged the FBI to conduct an official investigation. This call for an investigation was then dropped, and the *Post* has not covered or opined on the subject since May 31.

The silence of the national media has been mirrored in the pseudo-left press.

The *Socialist Worker*, the online organ of the International Socialist Organization, has produced zero articles in which the name "Todashev" appears. The *Nation* likewise published no article containing the name "Todashev," with the exception of a single blog entry by its contributor Greg Mitchell on May 31. Mitchell noted the inconsistencies in the media

accounts of the killing and, echoing the *Washington Post* 's line the previous day, claimed that the inconsistencies “encouraged the Boston bombing conspiracy nuts to get nuttier.”

The issues surrounding the killing of Todashev do not fit neatly into the politically acceptable categories of race, gender, sexuality and lifestyle favored by these forces. The killing also implicates the Democratic Party and the Obama administration, to which the ISO and the *Nation* are oriented. Accordingly, the pseudo-left is not particularly interested in the subject.

Many questions remain unanswered with respect to the April 15 bombings in Boston, which resulted in three deaths and the maiming or wounding of hundreds of people. After the bombings, the city of Boston was placed under military siege, with all transportation halted, armored vehicles in the streets, and heavily armed commandos conducting house-to-house searches without regard for basic rights.

In the aftermath of the bombings, the Russian government claimed that it had provided the US authorities with enough information to stop the perpetrators, but that these warnings had been ignored. (See Russian officials charge FBI failure to heed warnings led to Boston bombings.) It also emerged that, despite very specific warnings from Russia, Tamerlan Tsarnaev traveled in and out of the US to Dagestan to meet with leading radical Islamists with no questions asked by the US intelligence agencies. Moreover, prior to the bombings, the FBI inexplicably failed to inform the state and local agencies of the elder Tsarnaev's activities, despite the existence of joint task forces established to monitor potential terrorists.

It stands to reason that if Todashev actually did attack and injure an FBI agent, and if the FBI agent did actually shoot Todashev in self-defense, the media would readily report the details of the shooting. The public would be reminded that that the “brave men and women serving in the FBI” are daily “risking life and limb” in the fight to “secure our freedoms,” and so forth.

The ubiquitous silence from the political establishment and the media amounts to an acknowledgement that Todashev was terminated by the state. There is something about the Boston bombings that the political establishment does not want the public to know.



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