

Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev arraigned in federal court

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Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, suspect in the Boston Marathon bombing attack of April 15, was arraigned before a federal court in Boston Wednesday. He has been charged with 45 separate counts and could face the death penalty.

Three people were killed and more than 260 were wounded when two bombs detonated near the finish line of the marathon in a central commercial and tourist area of Boston. Tsarnaev is also charged in connection with the subsequent murder of Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer Sean Collier, as well as the kidnapping and robbery of a motorist whom the Tsarnaev brothers allegedly carjacked in an effort to escape the Boston area.

At his arraignment, the 19-year-old suspect pleaded not guilty to all of the charges.

Nearly three months after the bombing, the arraignment takes place amidst an ongoing cover-up by government officials and the media of extensive contacts between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the second alleged bomber, Dzhokhar's older brother Tamerlan Tsarnaev, as well as other members of the Tsarnaev family.

Tamerlan Tsarnaev was killed in a police shootout on April 19, during which Dzhokhar was wounded. The younger brother was arrested the following day and soon after transferred to a prison hospital in Massachusetts.

The US government seized on the bombings to impose a police-military lockdown on Boston and surrounding communities. Under the cover of a manhunt for the Tsarnaev brothers, thousands of National Guard troops and state and local police were mobilized to shut down a major urban area, utilizing heavily armed police backed by machine gun mounted armored vehicles and military helicopters to conduct warrantless house-to-house searches.

Residents were "advised" to remain indoors and virtually all public transit and surface and air traffic

closed down.

This exercise in de facto martial law—a dress rehearsal for mass repression and the imposition of military rule—was overwhelmingly applauded within the political and media establishment as a model of coordination between police, intelligence and national security agencies.

In the weeks since the bombings and the police lockdown of Boston, the media has all but dropped mention of the events, evading any discussion of the murky circumstances surrounding the bombings themselves and the sinister political implications of the government response.

Simultaneously with Wednesday's arraignment, a hearing was held at which Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis told a Senate panel that in the run-up to the Boston Marathon, the FBI failed to share information about Tamerlan Tsarnaev with Boston police officers sitting on the regional Joint Terrorism Task Force with FBI, Homeland Security and other federal and state officials.

Neither Davis nor FBI Director Robert Mueller, who admitted to a congressional panel in May that his organization failed to inform local and state officials about Tamerlan Tsarnaev's suspicious activities, has offered any credible explanation for this staggering breach of security.

In 2012, Tamerlan Tsarnaev traveled to the volatile North Caucasus in Russia and remained for six months, staying in Dagestan with his father and visiting other family members. There are multiple reports that while in Russia, the elder Tsarnaev brother made contact with Islamist separatists involved in terrorist attacks on Russian authorities.

The Tsarnaev family hails from Chechnya, which borders Dagestan. The Tsarnaevs left Chechnya in the mid-1990s, during the years of heavy fighting between

Russian forces and Chechen rebels, who received covert support from the CIA.

In 2011, Russian and Saudi Arabian security services contacted the FBI and CIA with warnings about Tamerlan Tsarnaev. A Saudi official told the British *Daily Mail* that the information they gave the US was “very specific,” warning that “something was going to happen in a major US city.” The *Mail* cited a Department of Homeland Security official confirming the existence of this letter.

The FBI has said it investigated Tamerlan Tsarnaev in 2011, including interviews with Tamerlan and other family members, but found nothing suspicious and closed the case. Nevertheless, Tamerlan Tsarnaev’s name was placed on two US antiterrorism watch lists.

Despite this, Tamerlan Tsarnaev was allowed to fly out of the US to Dagestan and return without even being questioned by US border security. Subsequently, he allegedly purchased high-explosive fireworks, weapons and detonators without interference.

These circumstances, along with the failure of the FBI, CIA and Department of Homeland Security to inform local and state police of their contacts with Tamerlan in advance of the Marathon—a major international event—defy an innocent explanation.

The indictment against Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, handed down at the end of June, maintains the official cover story that the Tsarnaev brothers were “self-radicalized” and inspired by Al Qaeda materials downloaded from the Internet. They allegedly acted entirely on their own. This story has been promoted by the government and uncritically echoed by the media in an evident attempt to preempt questions about the extensive contacts between the Tsarnaevs and US police and intelligence agencies.

The mainstream media has refused to report new facts documenting longstanding, high-level connections between US government agencies and members of the Tsarnaev family, including ties of blood and marriage.

Ruslan Tsarni, uncle of the Tsarnaev brothers, reportedly incorporated the Congress of Chechen International Organizations (CCIO), which was involved in the transfer of military supplies to Islamist militants fighting in Chechnya. The CCIO was registered to the home address of Graham Fuller, chairman of the National Intelligence Council at the CIA during the Reagan administration. Fuller’s extensive CIA career included postings to Germany, Turkey, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, Afghanistan (where he served as station chief in Kabul) and Hong Kong.

Fuller was a key player in the 1986-87 Iran-Contra

scandal, having first proposed the policy of secret arms sales to Iran to finance right-wing militias in Nicaragua, and was working at RAND Corporation, a think tank with close ties to the CIA and Pentagon, when Tsarni registered the CCIO to his address. Additionally, Tsarni married Fuller’s daughter in the mid-1990s.

The state killing of Ibragim Todashev, an acquaintance of the Tsarnaev brothers and subject of the government’s investigation, provides further damning evidence of systematic efforts by the government to conceal the roots and nature of the bombings. On May 22, five weeks after the bombings, Todashev was killed by an FBI interrogator in his Florida home. Todashev was shot as many as seven times, once in the head.

The government offered no less than four contradictory accounts of the killing in the week that followed, including initial claims that Todashev wielded a knife, which were later acknowledged to be false. Days after the knife claim was released and retracted, the *New York Times* reported that Todashev grabbed a “metal pole” that “might have been a broomstick.”

What is known for certain is that at least four federal agents occupied Todashev’s home for eight hours prior to his death and that before the interrogation began, Todashev informed his roommate that he feared for his life. At a press conference in Moscow, Todashev’s father stated that morgue photos proved the shots were fired into Todashev while he was on the ground, with a “control shot” delivered point-blank to his head.

There has been no attempt by the US media to pursue the issue of the state murder of Todashev.

The Boston bombing is the latest in a series of terrorist incidents involving individuals known to and monitored by US intelligence agencies, beginning with the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington DC. The abortive attempt to blow up a passenger jet as it approached Detroit on Christmas Day 2009 was likewise carried out by an individual about whom multiple warnings had been made to US intelligence agencies.



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