

FBI killer of Ibragim Todashev revealed as ex-Oakland cop accused of cover-up and abuse

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The FBI agent who shot and killed Ibragim Todashev, a key witness in the events related to the Boston Marathon bombing, is alleged to have falsified evidence, abused and intimidated suspects, and been complicit in corruption during a four-year stint in the Oakland (California) Police Department. This revelation, published by the *Boston Globe* Wednesday, and ignored by the major American media outlets, supports the notion that Todashev was assassinated by the state because he knew too much.

Todashev was killed by an FBI Special Agent after being detained and questioned in his Florida apartment for over four hours by the agent and two Massachusetts state troopers. The WSWWS wrote at the time that Todashev, a friend of Tamerlan Tsarnaev, most likely had some information on Tsarnaev's relationship to intelligence agencies.

The FBI and Massachusetts state police officials withheld the names of the officers involved in the killing, citing fears for their safety. However, an improperly redacted version of the investigative report into the killing was obtained, and its redactions removed, by the *Globe*.

The FBI shooter has been identified as Aaron McFarlane. Before joining the FBI's Boston office in 2008, McFarlane was accused of various illegal actions while serving in the Oakland Police Department from 2000 to 2004. His history, involving alleged cover-up, planting of evidence, intimidation and violence suggests that he would be a perfect tool in what appears to have been a premeditated state killing.

In a criminal trial against four Oakland police officers accused of planting evidence and beating and kidnapping citizens, McFarlane testified in defense of the officers. During his cross-examination, however, the prosecutor accused McFarlane of falsifying a police

report in order to produce evidence that would justify a man's arrest. After this, McFarlane pleaded the Fifth Amendment to avoid self-incrimination.

McFarlane was also the defendant in two lawsuits directed against him. In one lawsuit, McFarlane was accused of holding down Michael Cole, a convicted drug dealer, while McFarlane's partner stomped on Cole's head. According to the *Globe*, the incident, which left the plaintiff with an injured eye and broken nose, was retaliation against Cole because his uncle had filed a complaint against McFarlane's partner. The city settled the suit out of court for \$22,500.

In the other lawsuit, a friend of Cole, Robert Girard, alleged that McFarlane and his partner attacked and beat him right after he photographed Cole's injuries in the hospital. McFarlane never acknowledged wrongdoing and the city settled the lawsuit for \$10,000. The Oakland police department also conducted an internal investigation into both incidents which have been classified and withheld.

Several lawyers linked to the Oakland events spoke to the *Globe* after being told that Aaron McFarlane was working for the FBI. Ian Kelly, a prosecuting lawyer on the Cole case, said, "I would be shocked to learn that the Aaron McFarlane we sued a decade ago could have gone on to have a career with the FBI." He told the newspaper that the contents of the lawsuit "should have thrown up a red flag." Another lawyer implied that the FBI had reached "low into the barrel" by hiring McFarlane.

Just before the killing of Todashev, one of the state troopers, Joel Gagne, left the room to make a phone call, violating the team's protocol that three officers remain with Todashev. Staying in the room were McFarlane and Curtis Cinelli, a Massachusetts state trooper who, according to the *Globe*, "specializes in

hunting fugitives.”

Though unarmed, Todashev was shot seven times, three of those bullets in his back and one in his head. No explanation was given of why Todashev was shot in the back three times. An investigative report that exonerated McFarlane nonetheless described two of the shots to the back as being “not consistent” with McFarlane’s purported position.

Cinelli said that he had his gun drawn but never shot because he was afraid of hurting McFarlane in crossfire. A local Florida coroner’s report, however, said evidence pointed to two shooters, not one.

In the aftermath of the event, the media released multiple reports on Todashev’s death, given to them by law enforcement agencies, which mutually contradicted each other. Todashev was reported to have attacked an FBI agent with a knife in one story, lunged for the agent’s gun in the other, and brandished an ornamental samurai sword in another. All of these differed from the final official account.

In the official investigation into the killing, which spanned ten months, the FBI did not allow the lead prosecutor to record McFarlane’s interview. The prosecutor thus declined the interview and received written statements through the FBI.



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