

SCARY IRAN PLOT: FBI HAD NO NEED TO INVESTIGATE ARBABSIAR'S CORPUS CHRISTI PAST

So imagine this scenario.

A DEA informant calls up his handler out of the blue and says,

Omigod! Some crazy Iranian just approached me to arrange some kind of hit on behalf of this Iranian terror organization. He asked about explosives (I bragged about my C4 expertise.) He found me through my aunt in Corpus Christi. She says she knows him from when he used to be a used car salesman.

The DEA calls the FBI. What's one of the first things the FBI would do?

Maybe look him up in the FBI's own files (they find he doesn't have a federal record). And just after that, you'd think they'd start investigating him in Corpus Christi, where Narc knew him to have connections. Maybe call the cops there and see if they knew this crazy Iranian. Which, since Arbabsiar has a pretty consistent record of petty arrests and lawsuits, they do.

Which is why it's sort of odd that the FBI never contacted the Corpus Christi cops—they first talked to them the day after Arbabsiar was charged.

Arbabsiar had previous arrests in Nueces County during nearly 20 years living in the area.

That meant arrest records and personal details were on file in the county's

warehouse. But no one from any federal agency ever asked for the folder, Kaelin said.

“From an intelligence-gathering standpoint, even the tiniest bits of information could have a connection to something bigger,” he said. “They never asked to see it.”

In fact, FBI agents never contacted the sheriff’s office or the police department about their investigation into Arbabsiar.

That’s all the more weird given that some of the criminal files on Arbabsiar were on dead tree files in a warehouse from back in the day when the FBI itself didn’t really use computers (you know, like last year).

Now, my scenario sounds weird, almost impossible, particularly in the age of information sharing between local cops and national counterterrorism investigators. Even if they were worried about keeping Narc’s identity secret—which I’m sure is particularly critical so close to the border in South Texas—you’d think they’d at least go and make discreet investigations about Arbabsiar (particularly given the claims that, by the end of the investigation, FBI officers seemed to be going out of their way to make their presence known.

Neighbors, however, said it had been years since Arbabsiar lived in the stucco house he once shared with his wife on a suburban cul-de-sac. They said it appeared that as many as 10 people were living in the house, and lately there had been some signs of suspicious activity: When residents looked for available Wi-Fi networks, networks with names like “FBI Van 1” would pop up.¹

Unless ...

Unless they didn't need to do that background research on Arbabsiar when Narc purportedly came to them out of the blue to tell them about this crazy Iranian seeking an assassin purportedly out of the blue.

The FBI's seeming disinterest in learning about Arbabsiar from the law enforcement officials who ostensibly knew him best suggests they already knew about him when he approached Narc.

(As a number of media outlets have reported, the Grand Jury has indicted the plotters, a mere nine days after the Administration started making an international incident about this. I'll update or do a post once the indictment is in the docket.)