

APB: AT LEAST TWO MISSING “LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL,” LAST SEEN AT IBRAGIM TODASHEV HOMICIDE SCENE

When the FBI first admitted that it had killed Ibragim Todashev, it indicated there were at least 5 people at the scene: Two Massachusetts State cops, the FBI Agent being blamed for shooting Todashev, and “law enforcement personnel” – plural – whom it chose not to describe at all.

The FBI is currently reviewing a shooting incident involving an FBI special agent. Based on preliminary information, the incident occurred in Orlando, Florida during the early morning hours of May 22, 2013. The agent, two Massachusetts State Police troopers, and other law enforcement personnel were interviewing an individual in connection with the Boston Marathon bombing investigation when a violent confrontation was initiated by the individual. During the confrontation, the individual was killed and the agent sustained non-life threatening injuries. As this incident is under review, we have no further details at this time. [my emphasis]

That number correlates with the third-hand report of Khusen Taramov, Todashev’s friend who was at the site of the killing, but then sent home after some hours of interrogation himself.

The father said Taramov told him that

U.S. agents interrogated him on the street while five officials interrogated Todashev in his Florida house for eight hours on May 22, the night he was shot.

But the anonymous law enforcement sources now trying to straighten out the FBI story seem to have kidnapped or disappeared those at least two other "law enforcement personnel." CNN obliquely notes this, though doesn't explain the discrepancy (or point out FBI's official statement seeming to support Todashev and Taramov's version).

Contrary to what a U.S. official said, Todashev's father claimed there were "four of five" law enforcement agents with his son at the time, "all armed."

The rest of the press seem to be blithely disappearing the at least two additional "law enforcement personnel" without comment, now reporting that just the FBI Agent and two MSP cops were at the scene.

NYT:

The shooting occurred after an F.B.I. agent from Boston and two detectives from the Massachusetts State Police had been interviewing Mr. Todashev for several hours about his possible involvement in a triple homicide in Waltham, Mass., in 2011, according to the law enforcement official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the investigation was continuing.

CBS:

The FBI says 27-year-old mixed martial arts fighter Ibragim Todashev was killed last week during a violent confrontation in his Orlando home while an FBI agent and two Massachusetts state troopers questioned him about his ties to slain

Boston Marathon bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev, as well as about a 2011 triple slaying in Massachusetts.

AP:

The FBI says Todashev was being questioned by an FBI agent and two Massachusetts state troopers about his ties to Tamerlan Tsarnaev, as well as about a 2011 triple slaying in Massachusetts.

Of course, between the time FBI said there was one FBI Agent and two MSP cops and at least two other "law enforcement personnel" and the FBI's currently operative story that those at least two other "law enforcement personnel" weren't there, one anonymous source was claiming secondhand that the (unnumbered) other "law enforcement officials" had stepped out of the room before the violence and killing started.

An official said that according to one account of the shooting, the other law enforcement officials had just stepped out of the room, leaving the FBI agent alone with Todashev, when the confrontation occurred.

The current NYT version, which for some reason a bunch of commentators are taking as credible, suggests one "detective" was in the room when the violence and shooting went down, but did not fire a weapon.

[Todashev] then started to write a statement admitting his involvement while sitting at a table across from the agent and one of the detectives when the agent briefly looked away, the official said.

At that moment, Mr. Todashev picked up the table and threw it at the agent, knocking him to the ground.

While trying to stand up, the agent, who suffered a wound to his face from the table that required stitches, drew his gun and saw Mr. Todashev running at him with a metal pole, according to the official, adding that it might have been a broomstick.

The agent fired several shots at Mr. Todashev, striking him and knocking him backward. But Mr. Todashev again charged at the agent. The agent fired several more shots at Mr. Todashev, killing him. The detective in the room did not fire his weapon, the official said.

There are a lot of ongoing problems with the FBI's story, which I laid out here, and Conor Friedersdorf catalogued here. But this is an increasingly fascinating one.

The coroner in this case declared Todashev's cause of death a homicide. But the FBI seems to be intent on ensuring that at least two people who were present at the scene of that homicide disappear entirely.

Update: Note that more sources are stating that an Orlando cop was at the scene, which would resolve who one of these at least two law enforcement personnel is.

And check out this BoGlo piece which tries to catalog and explain away all the changes to the story. While it admits that the story of how many and what kind of law enforcement has also changed, it doesn't offer an explanation for that change.

After 10 days of conflicting reports, even the most basic facts in Todashev's killing remain unclear: Did he or did he not have a weapon when he was shot and killed? And, who was in the room at the time of the shooting?