

# FBI SAYS THE FBI WASN'T SURVEILLING THE TSARNAEVS

After years of questions about certain oddities in the Federal government's treatment of Anwar al-Awlaki, Robert Mueller said this in one of his last public comments as Director of the FBI.

"I am not personally familiar with any effort to recruit Anwar al-Awlaki as an asset – that does not mean to say there was not an effort at some level of the Bureau (FBI) or another agency to do so," Mueller said.

Which is why I find the specific wording of this statement, issued in response to questions Chuck Grassley is raising, to be so interesting.

Previously, members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force have responded to similar questions relating to whether or not the FBI, Boston Police, Massachusetts State Police or other members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force knew the identities of the bombers before the shootout. Members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force did not know their identities until shortly after Tamerlan Tsarnaev's death when they fingerprinted his corpse. Nor did the Joint Terrorism Task Force have the Tsarnaevs under surveillance at any time after the Assessment of Tamerlan Tsarnaev was closed in 2011. The Joint Terrorism Task Force was at M.I.T., located in Cambridge, MA, on April 18, 2013, on a matter unrelated to the Tsarnaev brothers. Additionally, the Tsarnaev brothers were never sources for the FBI nor did the FBI attempt to recruit them as sources.

There has been recent reporting relating

to whether or not the FBI, Boston Police, Massachusetts State Police or other members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force knew the identities of the bombers before the shootout with the alleged marathon bombing suspects, and were conducting physical surveillance of them on April 18, 2013. These claims have been repeatedly refuted by the FBI, Boston Police, and Massachusetts State Police.

To be absolutely clear: No one was surveilling the Tsarnaevs and they were not identified until after the shootout. Any claims to the contrary are false.  
[my emphasis]

I mean, sure, "No one" ought to include "not any agency or private entity, including those not listed here," but maybe it doesn't.