

TAMERLAN TSARNAEV MOVED INSPIRE ONTO DZHOKHAR'S COMPUTER THE DAY HE LEFT FOR RUSSIA

Yesterday, the defense in the Dzhokhar Tsarnaev trial rested; closing arguments will be Monday. Dzhokhar's defense consisted of just four witnesses, undermining the suggestions by the prosecution that he was just as steeped in jihadist propaganda as Tamerlan (see this post for part of a description).

As part of their efforts to do that, the defense showed, in far more detail, what the brothers had been doing online, and how the complete copies of Inspire magazine had gotten onto all their computers and when. (The defense exhibits are here, though this site is apparently being flagged as itself suspicious, at least by Twitter.) This document, for example, shows that Dzhokhar spent more time on Pornhub than he did on anything explicitly jihadist (though who knows what we was doing on Facebook and VKontakte, his most commonly accessed sites, by a very large margin). Several of the others show that the searches for explosives related materials took place on Tamerlan's computer (though oddly, he already had some of those materials by that point).

And while I don't think the defense laid this case out yesterday, it appears that Tamerlan loaded Inspire onto a thumb drive and then onto Dzhokhar's computer the morning of January 21, 2012, just before he left for Russia.

This document shows that the Sony Vaio, which ultimately became Dzhokhar's computer, was loaded with Windows in early 2011. Then came the HP that was in a room in Cambridge that fall. And finally came the Samsung loaded with Windows

December 21, 2011, not long before Tamerlan would go to Russia. This document shows CompleteInspire being created on the Samsung that day, December 21, 2011. This document appears to show someone inserting a thumb drive into the Samsung at 6:22 AM on January 21, 2012, moving a copy of Inspire onto it, and then moving copies of those onto the Sony.

This CBP record shows his departure that day on Aeroflot flight 316, which at least currently departs at 8:05PM.

It's not clear what to make of this – though it does make clear that Dzhokhar, at least, would have avoided any upstream searches on Inspire because it got placed on his computer via thumb drive, not download. It also doesn't prove that Dzhokhar wasn't reading Inspire by that point – as far as I understand it, the Sony was his computer by that point. But I find the timing – that the first thing Tamerlan did the morning he left for Russia was to make sure all the laptops had a copy of Inspire on them – rather curious.

One more note: something else introduced in the last days also showed a Russian version of Inspire.

Also, from the exhibits, it's not really clear whether these files were found on the computer or deleted in unallocated space. There was a second copy of CompleteInspire loaded onto the Samsung in August 2012, after Tamerlan returned from Russia. So it's possible that what we're seeing is Tamerlan moving Inspire onto his brother's computer, deleting it on his own for border crossings, and then reloading it on his own after his return.

That said, if he didn't delete that copy of Inspire the morning he left for Russia, if CBP done a perfectly legal device search on Tamerlan's computer at JFK that evening, they might have seen that he was flying with a full copy of Inspire on his device (though remember, this computer, unlike the Sony, was encrypted). Which, if it were the case, would make CBP's

failure to do so all the more damning.