HOW DO YOU ABET TERRORISM WHILE WORKING A 70 HOUR WORK WEEK?

A number of people pointed out in the days after the Boston Marathon attack that the family members of James Holmes were not only not harassed in the days after he killed 12 people in a movie theater in Aurora. The press ultimately obeyed their request for privacy.

Nor does the press appear to have focused on the wife of James Everett Dutschke, the man now accused of sending President Obama and two others ricin-laced letters, in spite of suspicious text messages on her phone.

> The affidavit also alludes to Dutschke's or his family's possible frame of mind earlier this month, as seen in text messages on his wife's cell phone.
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> "We're coming over to burn some things," one such message from April 20 reads. Another from the same day states, "We are gonna clean house."

In that case, like the Boston Marathon case, big questions remain, such as how he learned to make the ricin and who the second DNA on a ricin-tainted mask found at his dojo belongs to.

But Katherine Russell Tsarnaeva, Tamerlan wife, has come under blistering scrutiny, both from law enforcement and the press.

> Every time the widow of suspected Boston Marathon bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev leaves her parents' house, federal agents watching the residence follow her in unmarked vehicles.
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> Federal authorities are placing intense pressure on what they know to be the

> inner circle of the two bombing suspects, arresting three college buddies of surviving brother Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, and keeping Tamerlan's 24-year-old widow, Katherine Russell, in the public eye with their open surveillance and leaks to media about investigators' focus on her.
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> Legal experts say it's part of their quest not just to determine whether Russell and the friends are culpable but also to push for as much information as possible regarding whether the bombing suspects had ties to a terrorism network or accomplices working domestically or abroad. A primary goal is to push the widow and friends to give their full cooperation, according to the experts.
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> [snip]
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> In addition to threatening her with criminal charges and a potential prison sentence to get what they want from her, Ron Sullivan said authorities can bring social pressure to bear, including leaking information that suggests she isn't being helpful.
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> "She's the mother of a young daughter. I imagine she does not want to be deemed as a pariah or ostracized by the whole country," he said.

The justification for this scrutiny, anonymous leaks from investigators say, consists of three details:

- Dzhokhar Tsarnaev says the brothers made the pressure cooker bombs in the Cambridge apartment Tsarnaeva shared with Tamerlan
- Investigators have found

Inspire and other radical materials on “her” computer (presumably also at the apartment)
- She sent a text message of undescribed content to her husband after the press IDed him as suspect #1 in the attack

In addition to the different treatment the Feds and the press seem to be giving Tsarnaeva and the wife of the alleged ricin terrorist, there’s also the apparent urge to explain how a “normal” American would choose the life Tsarnaeva did.

> *Street Address A*: A big tan house in North Kingstown, Rhode Island; the corner lot of a woody cul de sac near a bike path populated by joggers in Lululemon. Quiet and country charming, a well-landscaped American achievement. This is the house where Katherine Russell grew up, with her parents and two sisters.
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> *Street Address Z*: An apartment in a rowhouse in Cambridge, Mass., the most run-down structure on an otherwise cheerful block. A building with cracked window panes on the second floor and a sagging brown exterior, and the feeling of fatigue emanating from it like an odor.
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> This is the house where Russell lived when the Boston Marathon bombs went off. Where she went from being “normal” to — if not abnormal, than certainly very different from what people who knew her expected her to be. Where few neighbors recall seeing her outside the home, where she seemed to become a ghost.

Much of the fascination and suspicion about

Tsarnaeva seems to stem from apparent incomprehension that a white middle class girl might one day adopt a head scarf.

Oddly, these profiles never seem to consider what the “normal” life is for a woman who gets knocked up and then chooses to marry and have the kid with the deadbeat but super religious father, as seems to be the case with Tsarnaeva (the daughter appears to have been born in 2010, less than 6 months after the couple married).

Most of all, though, the search for answers about Katherine Russell Tsarnaeva seems to invest everything in this notion that for scary terrorists like Tamerlan – unlike for accused ricin terrorist Deutschke – there must be an answer that lies outside of America.

And, just as importantly, the refusal to consider a very basic claimed fact about Tsarnaeva, which would explain a lot about why she may be innocent even if the pressure cookers and radical material were in “her” apartment.

Even before the potentially incriminating evidence against his client became known, Tsarnaeva’s lawyer Amato DeLuca told the press that she worked 70 to 80 hours a week as a home health aide.

> DeLuca said his client did not suspect her husband of anything, and that there was no reason for her to have suspected him. He said she had been working 70 to 80 hours, seven days a week as a home health care aide. While she was at work, her husband cared for their toddler daughter, DeLuca said.
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> “When this allegedly was going on, she was working, and had been working all week to support her family,” he told the AP.

70 to 80 hours a week! Even assuming he meant she was “at work” (including some kind of commute) 70 to 80 hours a week, that would mean

she’d be working 10-12 hour shifts (not unheard of in the home health industry). How much time, pray tell, would that leave her to surf her own computer, particularly presuming she’d want to spend what time she could with her child?

This detail – that she was away from the house upwards of 10 hours a day, every day – is a verifiable fact with a quick business record order to her employer. And if it’s true, it explains a lot about whether we should expect her to know what her husband was doing all day while she was working to pay the bills. It’s not that FBI agents or even journalists don’t know what it means to work hard. I assume the folks investigating Boston have been working 80 hour weeks themselves. It’s that that detail has been divorced from any discussion of her potential knowledge of the attack.

Apparently, those white middle class girls who grow up to marry deadbeats and wear a headscarf are also endowed with the superhuman skills that allow them to work 70 hour weeks, mother a child, and engage in terrorism.