The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Boston Marathon Bomber Tsarnaev Apologizes for the First Time

June 24, 2015



Protesters against the death penalty walk with signs before the formal sentencing of convicted Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev at the federal courthouse in Boston, Massachusetts, Jun. 24.

Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev apologized for the deadly attack for the first time Wednesday just before a judge formally sentenced him to death.

"I am sorry for the lives that I've taken, for the suffering that I've caused you, for the damage that I've done, irreparable damage," the 21-year-old college student said, breaking more than two years of public silence.

To the victims, he said: "I pray for your relief, for your healing."

His five-minute speech included religious references and praise of Allah. He paused several times, looking as if he was trying to remain composed.

He stood and faced the judge while speaking, but spoke of the victims.

The apology came after Tsarnaev listened impassively for about three hours as victims

and their loved ones lashed out at him for his "cowardly" and "disgusting" acts.

The U.S. District judge was required under law to impose the jury's death sentence for the April 15, 2013, attack that killed three people and wounded more than 260.

The only real suspense was whether Tsarnaev would say anything when given a chance to speak near the end of the proceedings. Until Wednesday, he had said almost nothing publicly since his arrest more than two years ago

"He can't possibly have had a soul to do such a horrible thing," said Karen Rand McWatters, who lost a leg in the attack and whose best friend, 29-year-old Krystle Campbell, was killed.

Campbell's mother, Patricia Campbell, spoke directly to Tsarnaev.

"What you did to my daughter is disgusting," she said. "I don't know what to say to you. I think the jury did the right thing."

Tsarnaev spoke after two dozen people, including those who lost limbs and loved ones in the bombing, discussed the attack's toll on their lives.

Rebekah Gregory, who lost her left leg in the attack, likewise addressed Tsarnaev directly.

"Terrorists like you do two things in this world. One, they create mass destruction, but the second is quite interesting," Gregory said. "Because do you know what mass destruction really does? It brings people together. We are Boston strong and we are America strong, and choosing to mess with us was a terrible idea.

"How's that for your victim impact statement?"

(AP, Reuters)

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/06/24/boston-marathon-bomber-tsarnaev-apologizes-for-the-first-time-a47668