

Bombing Grand Jury Asked To Look Into Inmate's Death

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BIOG: NAME: UPD: 19970708 -TEXT-

Oklahoma Chief Medical Examiner Fred Jordan has asked that the Oklahoma County grand jury investigating the bombing of the federal building also look into the death of a federal transfer center inmate.

In a letter to Oklahoma County District Attorney Bob Macy, Jordan asked the jury to investigate the death of Kenneth Trentadue, an inmate who died almost two years ago at the Federal Transfer Center near Will Rogers World Airport.

"As I believe you know, this agency has had difficulty in dealing with the federal government with regard to initiating and completing the investigation in this case. I, therefore, feel that if we are to accomplish anything, we must do it as Oklahomans and as citizens of this county," Jordan said in his July 1 letter.

Daniel Dunne, spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Prisons in Washington, D.C., said the bureau has and will continue to cooperate with any investigation into Trentadue's death.

"We plan on doing that throughout this case with any requests made of the Federal Bureau of Prisons," Dunne said.

Also, an Idaho-based citizens group is offering a \$10,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of anyone connected to the case.

Macy said he would like to see the grand jury investigate Trentadue's death. By law, only the jury decides what it wants to investigate.

The jury has been asked to investigate the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, which resulted in the deaths of at least 168 people.

The jury is in recess until July 14, when it will reconvene to inspect the Oklahoma County Jail. State law requires county grand juries to inspect jails in the county.

The jury has inspected all but the county's largest jail at 201 N Shartel.

Trentadue, 44, a bank robber who was paroled in 1988, was arrested in 1995 after he failed to report to his parole officer. He was taken to the federal inmate transfer center in Oklahoma City, where he died Aug. 21, 1995.

Federal officials said he hanged himself with a bedsheet.

Trentadue's relatives said his battered and bruised body showed he was murdered. They accuse prison guards.

Jordan has said he believes Trentadue's death was suspicious. He said his office was denied access to Trentadue's cell until five months after his death.

Last week, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno said she was continuing to monitor investigations into Trentadue's death.

But Trentadue's brother, Jesse Trentadue, and U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, have criticized the slow-paced investigation by the federal Justice Department and the federal grand jury in Oklahoma City.

Jordan sent the letter to Macy shortly after former U.S. Rep. George Hansen, R-Idaho, asked for Macy's support in seeking answers to Trentadue's death.

Hansen, who went to prison for ethics violations and later was cleared of any wrongdoing, said he came to Oklahoma City at the end of June to support state Rep. Charles Key, R-Oklahoma City, in his effort to convene a grand jury in the bombing. Key spearheaded the petition drive to convene the jury.

Hansen, chairman of the U.S. Citizens Human Rights Commission, said he also asked Macy if the county grand jury or some other local agency could investigate Trentadue's death.

Hansen said he was a prisoner in the transfer center in 1995.

Hansen said he was neglected and forced to sit for hours in chains, which caused his legs and feet to swell.

Hansen said he and members of his group will be distributing fliers about the \$10,000 reward.

Macy said, "We talked about it. And I asked him if he should get any information, to please forward it to my office."

Archive ID: 689398