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June 26, 2014

Mr. A. Lee Bentley, III  
United States Attorney  
Middle District of Florida  
400 North Tampa Street  
Suite 3200  
Tampa, Florida, 33602

RE: Death of Murray B. Cohen

Dear Mr. Bentley:

For a little over seven (7) years, I represented Steven Esdale and his family in the probate proceedings involving his father Murray B. Cohen's estate in Sarasota Florida. The Esdale family has requested that I contact you to request that your office initiate a full federal investigation into this matter.

Murray Cohen died on January 13, 2003, in his Sarasota home on Siesta Key (**Exhibit 1: Police report**). His death was classified as a natural death. Through a public records request made for a copy of the 911 call the day of his father's death, Mr. Esdale, apparently discovered that his father was a victim of a cold blooded murder committed by his wife of three weeks, Maria Amurrio Cohen. I have never experienced a case in which, on multiple occasions I actually expected an adverse judicial ruling because of my belief that the hearing outcome was "Pre-Ordained".

During my representation of the Esdale's in this case, I have witnessed judicial rulings which have deliberately and systematically denied due process, and allowed evidence of murder to be destroyed, and disallowed. I wrote directly to Governor Rick Scott for assistance and never received a reply (**Exhibit 2: Letter to Governor**).

Murray Cohen died an unattended death with a lethal, exotic poison discovered and inventoried at the death scene by law enforcement. (**Exhibit 3: Inventory**) In spite of the applicable Florida Statute suggesting that an autopsy be performed under any one (1) of several situations, three (3) of which existed in connection with Mr. Cohen's death, an autopsy was never performed. Mr. Esdale garnered the support from the former Sarasota Medical Examiner, Dr. William Anderson, who signed his father's death certificate. Upon reviewing Mr. Esdale's evidence of murder, Dr. Anderson wrote affidavits recommending that the body of Murray Cohen immediately be exhumed and given an autopsy to determine if he died of foul play. (**Exhibit 4: Anderson Affidavit**) Dr. Anderson has publicly admitted to making a mistake in not performing an autopsy on Murray Cohen shortly after his death. I was told by Mr. Esdale that Dr. Anderson wrote directly to then Governor Charlie Crist, stating that he made a mistake and recommended Murray Cohen's body be exhumed to determine his true cause of death. I am also told Dr. Anderson's letter did not receive any action from the Governors office (**Exhibit 5: Anderson's letter to Governor Crist**).

The suspect purportedly obtained a marriage license in her home country of Bolivia three weeks after Murray Cohen's death and has posed as the legal next of kin, thus allowing the suspected killer to prevent Mr. Esdale from having an autopsy performed. (**Exhibit 6: Marriage License**).



Several audio forensic experts from around the country have listened to the 911 recording made by suspect Maria Amurrio and I am told, all have concluded that Murray Cohen is pleading for an ambulance after Amurrio told the 911 operator that he was "not speaking" or "breathing" and was "totally gone". (**Exhibit 7: Forensic Expert Arlo West report**) (**Exhibit 8: Audio Expert Paul Ginsberg report**) I have been informed that experts also hear Murray Cohen tell suspect Amurrio, "You get away from me, you are not going to kill me". Suspect Amurrio is then heard saying "Too Late" and then is heard yelling at Murray Cohen numerous times to give up. I am not an audio expert, but I could hear suspect Amurrio appearing to tell Mr. Cohen to "give up" (**Exhibit 9: CD of complete 911 call and excerpts**).

The Sarasota Sheriffs Office (SSO) is the root cause of this extreme denial of justice. I am informed by Mr. Esdale that member(s) of the Sarasota Sheriffs Office altered and destroyed evidence, and I am told, falsified witness statements. I was also informed that the Sheriffs department deliberately altered the 911 recording to hide Murray Cohen's several desperate pleas for help in the background. I am also informed by Mr. Esdale that the Sheriff's department then requested that the FBI analyze the tampered recording and provide a written report. I am also informed that this report was used to negate the other expert's findings and has allowed Amurrio to evade justice. This report also allowed members of SSO to alter and destroy evidence, obstruct justice, and cover up Murray Cohen's true cause of death. There were two court orders issued by the courts. One was to preserve the hard drive containing the 911 call. Enclosed, is a copy of an earlier court order that directed the sheriffs department to turn over the original copy of the 911 recording. To my knowledge, neither has been honored to this day. The Sarasota Courts have never held anyone at SSO accountable (**Exhibit 10: Court order to Preserve hard drive**) (**Exhibit 11: Court order to turn over original 911 call**).

SSO Sheriff Counsel, Kurt Hoffman sought and obtained an ex parte court order allowing him to destroy the hard drive without my advance knowledge and while a public records request was apparently pending by the Orlando Sentinel newspaper for access to the hard drive to retrieve the original call. I later learned that Mr. Hoffman's request for the order of destruction occurred the very day that he learned of the public records request by the Orlando Sentinel Newspaper. Judge Andrew Owen's signed the order, and the hard drive was apparently picked up and later destroyed (**Exhibit 12: Orlando letter to Hoffman and Judge Owens**). I received my copy of the order of destruction several days after it was entered. Upon learning of the entry of the order of destruction without my advance knowledge, I wrote Judge Owens a letter commemorating Mr. Hoffman's failure to comply with local protocol regarding the submission of a proposed Court order with a five (5) day courtesy letter to opposing counsel.

Computer expert William Tidwell who worked for the manufacturer of the system used at the SSO 911 call center the day Murray Cohen died was hired to retrieve the 911 call directly from the hard drive. Mr. Tidwell testified at a hearing that he conducted a 16 hour examination of the hard drive and testified that all the 911 calls on the system the day Murray Cohen died were deliberately deleted from the five hard drive system and back auxiliary recorder (**Exhibit 13: Tidwell Affidavit**). I was informed by Mr. Esdale that SSO refused to conduct an investigation into Tidwell's findings. I am also informed that FDLE was contacted by my client about the matter and refused to conduct an investigation. Enclosed are emails from FDLE indicating their choice not to get involved (**Exhibit 14: FDLE internal emails**). Enclosed is an affidavit from Mr. Tidwell indicating that FDLE Agent Andrew Rose falsified Mr. Tidwell's statements made to Agent Rose during an interview (**Exhibit 15: Tidwell Affidavit**).

Over a year ago, the head of the Jacksonville Florida FBI headquarters, Jim Casey, whose credentials are self-evident, apparently retired and went into private practice as an investigator. Mr. Casey was hired to investigate Murray Cohen's death. After a seven month investigation and a 48 page report, Casey concluded that there was probable cause Murray Cohen was murdered by suspect Amurrio (**Exhibit 16: Jim Casey's summary and credentials**). Mr. Casey also wrote in his report that the day FDLE was ordered to conduct a review, all chances for justice to be served were doomed. I was informed by Mr. Esdale, that Mr. Casey's report was sent to Sarasota State Attorney, Ed Brodsky, with a request justice be

served. Brodsky's office concluded that Casey's report was nothing new, and that Murray Cohen died a natural death.

Mr. Esdale informed me about ten months ago, that he saw a CNN story about the death of Kendrick Johnson which took place in Valdosta, Georgia. Mr. Johnson's body was apparently found rolled up in a mat in a school gymnasium. I am informed that the medical examiner determined that Mr. Johnson's death was accidental. I am further informed that Mr. Johnson's family did not believe the findings of the medical examiner and conducted their own investigation and uncovered evidence of murder. I am also informed that the Johnson family also accused law enforcement of ignoring evidence of murder and covering up the true cause of their son's death. The Johnson family attorney apparently contacted Georgia US attorney Michael Moore and requested that a full blown federal investigation be conducted into Mr. Johnson's true cause of death.

I am informed that US attorney Moore's office opened a full blown federal investigation to discover the true cause of Mr. Johnson's death and also allegations that law enforcement had ignored evidence of murder. US attorney Moore apparently was also investigating the motivations of law enforcement to cover up the murder and who they were covering for.

As an officer of the court and one who experienced the disappointing, frustrating and outrageous outcome of the probate proceedings in the death of Murray Cohen, I am on behalf of the Esdale family turning to your agency, for the same assistance given to the Johnson family in Georgia. We are asking you to conduct a full federal investigation into the true cause of Murray Cohen's death, the obstruction of justice and destruction of evidence committed by members of the Sarasota Sheriff's office. I am hopeful that an independent investigation will result in justice finally being served and closure provided for the Esdale family. Your office appears to be the Esdale family's last recourse. Please pursue justice.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation, I remain,

Very truly yours,

  
Mark W. Lord

cc: Mr. Steven Esdale





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