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December 16, 2008

Kurt A. Hoffman, Esquire
General Counsel
Sarasota County Sheriff's Department
2071 Ringling Boulevard
Sarasota, FL 34230

Re: Death of Murray B. Cohen

Dear Mr. Hoffman:

I have received yours of December 8, 2008, copy attached. I did call for you yesterday, and was able to speak with your assistant, Ingrid. She was very courteous, but I have not heard back from you, and I would appreciate the courtesy of a return phone call.

In response to your letter, I have checked with my client, and he was unaware the prior action was pending. He would like an apology from you agency.

Notwithstanding, I am very alarmed at your position in your letter to me. You indicate that your new Sheriff, Mr. Tom Knight, has been "briefed" on the case and has no intent on any further action by your agency.

For your review, I am enclosing a copy of a letter which I previously sent to Governor Crist, outlining the case details, and the inadequacies of your office under the administration of the former Sheriff. The letter is self explanatory. Simply put, my client cannot rely on you to "brief" anyone adequately.

Moreover, I have also done what your office should have done years ago, and conducted a videotaped sworn interview of Steve Beninatti, who is a witness to what my client believes to be the murder of his father. I have also taken the liberty of hiring a private investigator in Boliva, and we have learned that the witnesses to the marriage of Murray Cohen and Maria Ammurrio are both drug traffickers. Indeed, one of them has been charged with murder just last year. Your office should check this out immediately.

You are dealing with a criminal element which appears to be over your head. Candidly, my client has given your office the "holy grail" of evidence through the years, evidence which you should have sought out on your own. Any rational police department would have seized the opportunity and developed some interest in locating the source of the exotic poison, and whether the poison was and remains on the body of Murray Cohen. You have willfully ignored the evidence.


I have directed my client to have no more contact with your office, but through me. However, any reasonable human being would understand why he is so upset with your agency.

Kurt A. Hoffman, Esquire

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In closing let me say this. I have been contacted by many media outlets. Until recently, I have refused all interview requests. However, in light of your position in your letter to me, and the actions and inactions of your agency in the past, the people have a right to know what is going on in Sarasota, Florida. I continue to request that Sheriff elect, Tom Knight, call me at his earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



Mark H. Gelman

MHG/lcf

Enc.

cc: Steve Esdale

Kristen Cosby, CBS

Eben Brown, Fox News Channel

Jesse Watters, The O'Reilly Factor

(w/enclosures)