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ANTHRAX INVESTIGATION Closing a Chapter

08/06/08



Joseph Persichini (center), Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, with U.S. Attorney Jeff Taylor (left), District of Columbia, and Chief Postal Inspector Alexander Lazaroff of the U.S. Postal Service, explains recent developments in the government's Amerithrax case.

The victims and family members of the 2001 anthrax mailings have waited patiently for nearly seven years to find out who was responsible for the worst case of bioterrorism in U.S. history. This morning during a special briefing at FBI Headquarters, Director Robert Mueller provided answers. The briefing took place several hours before the **public release of documents** relating to the investigation.

While updating victims and their families on the case—in which five people were killed and 17 were sickened—Mueller said that “the pain and suffering the attacks caused the victims and their families was in the minds of all the investigators” as they tirelessly worked to solve the case. That pain and suffering, he added, “has never, ever been lost to us.”



This afternoon during a press conference, Department of Justice and FBI officials highlighted some of the information contained in the just-released Amerithrax documents, explaining why charges were about to be brought against anthrax researcher Dr. Bruce Ivins, who took his own life before those charges could be filed.

U.S. Attorney Jeff Taylor, District of Columbia, said that normally evidence against a suspect who has not been charged is not publicly released, in part because of the presumption of innocence. “But,” added Taylor, “because of the extraordinary public interest in this investigation...we are compelled to take the extraordinary step of providing the victims, their families, Congress, and the American public with an overview of some recent developments as well as some of our conclusions.”



Read: Court records related to Amerithrax case
Read: Transcript of Amerithrax press conference

Because of Ivins' death, the government will not be able to present its case in court. But according to Assistant Director in Charge Joseph Persichini, FBI Washington Field Office, “Bruce Ivins was responsible for the death, sickness, and fear brought to our country by the 2001 anthrax mailings.”

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