

WELLSTONE ACCUSED OF VOTER FRAUD, THREATENED WITH DEATH, DAY BEFORE HIS PLANE CRASH

✖ There's absolutely no reason to think that the barely literate postcard sent to Paul Wellstone's office the day before his plane crash had anything to do with his death.

The FBI files [released in FOIA to Minnesota Public Radio] reveal, for the first time, the specific criminal leads pursued by investigators.

FBI agents investigated the claims of a caller from Jacksonville, Florida, who said that members of the American Trucking Association had planned to disconnect the plane's de-icers. The man said that Wellstone had been trying to schedule Senate hearings to expose organized crime in the trucking industry. In response to the call, a Wellstone staff member asked a Labor Committee member and a legislative director "who both indicated that they were not aware of any Senate hearing being scheduled to discuss this topic." The rest of the document has been redacted.

Agents also obtained a threatening postcard sent to Wellstone's St. Paul office the day before the plane crash. The handwritten postcard said, in part, "We need to gut (sic) the word out for the snipper (sic) to go after people like you, not real Americans ... This voter fraud you propose will get you dead."

After all, the FBI investigated the threat.

But I think it worth calling attention to the postcard because it's the of the kind of violence Republican myths about voter fraud elicit. ~~I can't make out the whole postcard,~~ [updated w/isis' and scribe's suggestions] It reads at least in part, [see PDF 6]

We know your system for voters. It won't work. You have been targeted. We need to gut [sic] the word out for the sniper [sic] to go after people like you, not real Americans. This card is for you pimps [perps?] to read "Dead Man Walking!" I have cousin at UMN Inside info this voter fraud you propose will get you dead. MC2

The GOP's sustained effort to accuse those who mobilize Democratic constituencies – as Wellstone did better than anyone – of vote fraud is designed not just to delegitimize both big-D and small-D democracy, but also to elicit this kind of tribalistic hatred.