

VOTE FRAUD IN CLAY COUNTY AND THE HANGED CENSUS WORKER

By now, you've probably heard the horrible story about the census worker and teacher found hanged in Clay County, KY with the word "fed" written on his chest.

Before we assume that this apparent homicide was a response solely to the attacks Michele Bachmann and others have made on the census, it's worth recalling how Clay County made news earlier this year, when a bunch of local officials were indicted for vote fraud.

The United States Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation jointly announced today that five Manchester, Ky. officials, including the circuit court judge, the county clerk, and election officers were arrested pursuant to a federal indictment that accused them of using corrupt tactics to obtain political power and personal gain.

The 10-count indictment, unsealed today, accused the defendants of a conspiracy from March 2002 until November 2006 that violated the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). RICO is a federal statute that prosecutors use to combat organized crime. The defendants were also indicted for extortion, mail fraud, obstruction of justice, conspiracy to injure voters' rights and conspiracy to commit voter fraud.

According to the indictment, these alleged criminal actions affected the outcome of federal, local, and state primary and general elections in 2002,

2004, and 2006. The indictment accused the defendants of the following criminal actions.

Those indicted include a Circuit Court Judge, the school superintendent, the County Clerk, and an election officer (as well as other locals). That trial is currently set for early next year, though they're in the middle of discovery right now, with the defendants trying to get the grand jury testimony.

In other words, in Clay County, the federal government is in the middle of prosecuting a number of top county officials for completely corrupting the voting system.

While there's no more reason to believe Sparkman's death is connected to this case than that it is connected to Bachmann's inflammatory statements, it should at least caution us against leaping to conclusions. There may well be very localized reasons why people in Clay County don't want the federal government going door-to-door.