



Department of Justice

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Eastern District of California

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VISALIA MAIL BOMBER INDICTED

FRESNO, Calif. — United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown and B. Bernard Ferguson, Postal Inspector in Charge of the Los Angeles Division, announced today that a federal grand jury in Fresno indicted VERNON DALE MUSTIN, 51, of Spiro, Okla., charging him with one count of transporting an explosive with intent to kill or injure, one count of mailing injurious articles and one count of possessing and using a destructive device.

This case is the product of a joint investigation by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Los Angeles Division, and the Visalia Police Department, assisted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol Bomb Squad, and the Leflore County (Okla.) Sheriff's Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Karen A. Escobar, who is prosecuting the case, MUSTIN caused a package containing five pipe bombs to be mailed to a business in Visalia, Calif. On September 8, 2009, an employee of the business opened the package; one of the bombs exploded, and the employee received flash burns and cuts.

The remnants of the packaging led investigators to a remailing service in Roseville, Calif. Subsequent investigation led to MUSTIN in Oklahoma, who was the brother of the Visalia business owner.

The crimes of transporting an explosive with intent to kill or injure and mailing injurious articles both carry maximum prison terms of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of possessing and using a destructive device carries a mandatory minimum prison term of 30 years. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

MUSTIN was ordered detained by a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Eastern District of Oklahoma on October 15, 2009. The U.S. Marshals Service will transport him to Fresno for prosecution within one to three weeks.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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