

Adoption Death Case Carries On

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Russia's top investigator turned to government human rights watchdogs for help Tuesday in pressing further charges against an American couple convicted in the United States in the death of a boy adopted from Chelyabinsk.

Investigative Committee head Alexander Bastrykin sent letters to the head of the presidential human rights council and the federal ombudsman after a Moscow court rejected a petition to arrest Michael and Nanette Craver in absentia.

Basmanny Court Judge Artur Karpov said Monday that there were no grounds for the couple's further criminal prosecution, since they had already been tried and convicted of the 7-year-old boy's death in the United States, Interfax reported.

The Prosecutor General's Office has disputed the legality of issuing an international warrant, ruling that investigators failed to provide evidence that the Cravers attempted to hide from Russian justice.

But state investigators have shown no signs of giving up.

"The failure of a Russian court to approve the petition ... in no way represents an obstacle to the further prosecution [of the Cravers] in Russia," said committee spokesman Vladimir Markin.

The Cravers insist that the adopted child, Nathaniel — born Ivan Skorobogatov — suffered from fetal alcohol syndrome and died after running headlong into a stove. They were sentenced to 19 months on Nov. 18, but were freed because they had already served the time while awaiting trial.

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