

U.S. won't appeal ruling on Hale attorneys

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Federal prosecutors have decided not to appeal a judge's decision last week that attorneys for white supremacist Matthew Hale don't have to sign a document pledging they will not forward messages from Hale to his followers.

The decision by the U.S. attorney's office here clears the way for Hale's attorneys, Thomas Anthony Durkin and Patrick Blegen, to meet with Hale for the first time in more than a month.

After Hale was charged with plotting to kill a federal judge in Chicago, U.S. Atty. Gen. John Ashcroft ordered limitations on Hale's communications with others over concern he could incite violence among followers. Citing constitutional concerns, Hale's lawyers refused to abide by the limitations.

Last week, U.S. District Judge James T. Moody of Hammond said the attorneys didn't have to sign the pledge. Prosecutors asked the judge to hold off imposing the order until Monday so they could decide whether to appeal the decision.

Hale has pleaded not guilty to soliciting the murder of U.S. District Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow of Chicago.

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