

Dangerous Hale

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In her thoughtful commentary "How the war on terrorism has gone way too far" (Commentary, May 7), columnist Carol Marin acknowledges that white supremacist Matthew Hale "preaches a venomous gospel that declares open season on Jews and people of color."

Recounting Benjamin Smith's 1999 murderous rampage targeting African-Americans, Asians and Jews, she further recognizes that "if Hale didn't force Smith to do what he did, does anyone doubt Hale's indecent diatribes helped pull the trigger against decent, innocent people?"

Yet Marin claims that the U.S. attorney's implementation of Special Administrative Measures (SAMS) against Hale is a case of the war on terrorism having gone too far.

We believe Marin misconstrues the federal regulation authorizing SAMS. The regulation at issue, entitled "Prevention of acts of violence and terrorism," is not limited to inmates who are at risk of directing terrorist acts from their jail cells. Rather, it authorizes SAMS "that are reasonably necessary to protect persons against the risk of death or serious bodily injury."

Given Hale's background and history, as well as the indictment pending against him for soliciting the murder of a federal judge, it remains an open question whether Hale's communications with non-attorneys pose threats of violence or murder to our citizens.

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