

Judge lets Hale be own lawyer

Chicago Tribune (IL) - August 11, 2004

Author: Allison Benedikt, Tribune staff reporter.

In front of a row of supporters, convicted white supremacist Matthew Hale was granted the right to represent himself Tuesday.

Hale, who is scheduled to be sentenced in November for soliciting the murder of a federal judge, sat next to his post-trial attorney, Timothy Murphy, in U.S. District Court in Hammond. With no objection from prosecutor M. David Weisman, Magistrate Judge Andrew Rodovich relieved Murphy of his duties. Murphy and Hale had moved for Murphy's dismissal.

Though Hale, 33, was never admitted to the bar, he graduated from law school, making him more educated than most people in his position, Rodovich said.

In April Hale was convicted of asking his security chief to kill U.S. District Judge Joan Lefkow, who had ordered Hale's church to change its name as the result of a trademark-infringement case.

Weisman informed the judge that the government plans to present two factors, obstruction of justice and terrorism, to increase Hale's sentence, which is scheduled to be determined at a hearing Nov. 15.

Rodovich made clear to Hale the complexity of his case and asked him numerous times if he still wanted to represent himself in the sentencing and appeal. Hale replied: "My hope is that sentencing will not even occur."

Hale requested and was granted stand-by counsel. He was also given access to all 30 boxes of his files. The Metropolitan Correctional Center, where he is being held, was ordered to accept and store the records. Hale has had only three boxes of documents in his possession.

Hale was denied several other requests, including special telephone access and a typewriter other than the one provided at the prison.

In court, Hale called the prison's typewriter junk, saying "you have to use one finger to get it to type sufficiently," and then requested that the judge order the prison library to hook up a printer to its computer.

"It is not my policy to micromanage" the jail, Rodovich said.

At the end of the hearing, Hale hugged Murphy and asked him to bring the boxes as soon as possible.

Edition: Chicago Final

Section: Metro

Page: 6

Index Terms: MURDER ; COURT ; OFFICIAL ; ATTEMPT ; ARREST ; CULT ; RIGHTS

Record Number: CTR0408110236

Copyright 2004, Chicago Tribune