

Hale seeking apology from U.S.

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In a court filing days before the murders of U.S. District Judge Joan Lefkow's relatives, jailed white supremacist Matthew Hale contended authorities owed him and the judge apologies for causing Lefkow and her family "to think that her life was in danger needlessly and wrongly."

Saying he had "devoted my life to legal and peaceful change," Hale denied soliciting Lefkow's murder and called his incarceration a "Kafkaesque nightmare."

Hale, who is representing himself, filed the court paper last week, but it only became public after Lefkow's husband, Michael, and mother, Donna Humphrey, were found slain in the judge's home Monday. While Hale's conviction has made him and his followers of interest to investigators, authorities have cautioned it is too soon to conclude that any hate group is behind the murders.

U.S. District Judge James T. Moody, brought in from Hammond to preside over Hale's trial, has set aside three days if necessary for Hale's sentencing next month.

A federal jury in April convicted Hale of soliciting Lefkow's murder after she ordered Hale's World Church of the Creator to change its name after it lost a trademark-infringement lawsuit.

Hale argued in the filing that he shouldn't be sentenced to more than 8 years in prison. Prosecutors could seek far in excess of 20 years in prison if they try to hold Hale accountable for a follower's 1999 shooting spree in which two minorities were killed and nine injured. Prosecutors have contended that Hale likely knew in advance of the shooting rampage.

"I deserve not more prison time but rather an apology from the prosecutors and the FBI who cunningly sought to fabricate a mythical federal case ... and who callously caused Judge Lefkow and her family to think that her life was in danger needlessly and wrongly," Hale wrote in his 13-page filing.

"They owe [Lefkow] an apology as well," Hale continued. "Every day I live under this Kafkaesque nightmare--not only as I spend my days in prison, but the allegation that I sought Judge Lefkow's murder and that she herself may believe such is a source of deep pain for me."

Hale went on to defend his character, saying that he had run for public office and "I don't smoke, drink or do drugs."

"I have sought to persuade people that what I believe in is just--just as others with differing beliefs do the same," wrote Hale, who has been incarcerated since early 2003 in the federal Metropolitan Correctional Center in the South Loop. He is being held under restrictive conditions usually reserved for terrorist suspects.

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Page: 19

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