

Hale puts faith in being own lawyer

Chicago Tribune (IL) - March 29, 2005

Author: Matt O'Connor, Tribune staff reporter.

Jailed white supremacist Matthew Hale, scheduled to be sentenced next week for plotting to murder U.S. District Judge Joan Lefkow, said he was traumatized by his conviction "to the point of self-destructive behavior."

Hale didn't elaborate in the court filing, but he said that since he had begun representing himself, he has "faith and hope that I will be vindicated."

Hale graduated from law school, but he was denied a law license in part because of his racist views.

In a court filing last week, federal prosecutors said they would seek to have Hale's conviction declared a crime of terrorism under sentencing guidelines and argued for a sentence up to 40 years in prison. Hale has contended he should be sentenced to no more than 8 years in prison.

A federal jury convicted Hale last April of soliciting his security chief, who was secretly working for the FBI, to kill Lefkow because she ordered his supremacist group to change its name after losing a trademark-infringement lawsuit.

Hale, who has been jailed since his arrest in early 2003, is scheduled to be sentenced April 6.

On Feb. 28, Lefkow's husband, Michael, and mother, Donna Humphrey, were found slain in the basement of the Lefkow house. As a result of his conviction for soliciting Lefkow's murder, Hale and his followers were the focus of investigators until Bart Ross, whose medical malpractice lawsuit had been thrown out by Lefkow, confessed to the murders in a suicide note.

In his latest court filing, Hale contended he was referring to a lawyer and not Lefkow in a key undercover recording that, prosecutors argued, was proof of the murder solicitation.

Hale said a legal trust fund set up by his father with \$6,000 has been spent and that he is nearly penniless. "I have at most \$150 to my name," Hale said.

In a separate court filing, Hale asked that he be kept at the Metropolitan Correctional Center, a South Loop federal jail, for at least 6 months after his sentencing to allow him to work on his appeal.

Hale said that he was able to gain access to an electric typewriter after "great effort" over the first 22 months of his incarceration. If he is moved to another prison, Hale said, he fears that "I would be forced to revert back to pencil."

The appeals court won't accept submissions in pencil, he said.

Edition: Chicago Final

Section: Metro

Page: 3

Index Terms: CHICAGO ; FEDERAL ; COURT ; OFFICIAL ; MURDER ; ATTEMPT

Record Number: CTR0503290265

Copyright (c) 2005, Chicago Tribune Company. All rights reserved.