

# Matt Hale Arrested

## "White supremacist arrested in plot to kill judge"

January 8, 2003

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The leader of a white supremacist group a member of which once went on a shooting spree that killed minorities in Illinois and Indiana, was arrested by federal agents Wednesday on **charges of soliciting the murder of U.S. District Court Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow**. Matt Hale, a 31-year-old East Peoria man, was arrested by agents of the FBI-led **Joint Terrorism Task Force** as he arrived in Chicago's federal courthouse for a contempt of court hearing in a trademark infringement lawsuit. U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald scheduled a news conference for 3 p.m. at the courthouse to discuss the case. Federal officials said press credentials would be strictly enforced at the news conference to prevent Hale followers from gaining entrance. A two-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury charged Hale, the self-appointed head of the World Church of the Creator, with attempting between Nov. 29 and Dec. 17 to get another individual to kill Lefkow. Lefkow has been presiding over the trademark infringement suit and on Dec. 13 issued an order requiring Hale to show cause why he should not be held in contempt. The indictment also charged that Hale had "by force endeavored to influence, intimidate and impede" Lefkow from presiding over the lawsuit. Hale was taken into custody as he passed through the metal detector at the north end of the lobby of the skyscraper courthouse. Witnesses said that after the arrest a number of Hale's supporters yelled protests in the lobby. Police and agents then flooded the area. Fitzgerald said in a statement issued by his office that "freedom of speech does not include the freedom to solicit murder." He said the "conduct alleged in this indictment is disturbing on many levels, but particularly so because it targeted a judge, whose sworn duty is to apply the law equally and fairly to all who appear before her." In May 2000, an Oregon-based religious organization-- TE-TA-MA Truth Foundation-- Family of URI Inc.-- sued Hale's group, saying it had infringed on a trademark through the use of the name "Church of the Creator." Lefkow issued a series of rulings favorable to TE-TA-MA in the case. The indictment said that Hale's World Church of the Creator has held itself out as a religious organization "dedicated to the survival, expansion and advancement of the white race."