

Hale warned on types of clothes

CHICAGO (AP) - A White supremacist accused of soliciting the murder of a federal judge wore prison garb as his trial got under way despite the warning of the trial judge that it was a bad idea.

Matt Hale, 32, insisted on wearing the bright orange prison jumpsuit as he sat at the defense table in front of 100 potential jurors who crowded the courtroom for questioning Wednesday.

Most defendants facing federal trial change into coats and ties, either their own or what the government buys for them, but Hale indicated through his attorneys that he preferred the prison garb.

U.S. District Judge James T. Moody told him wearing the jumpsuit was "a bad idea" and "could be prejudicial," but he left the choice to Hale.

Hale, a White supremacist leader from East Peoria, is charged with soliciting an undercover FBI informant and another person to murder U.S. District Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkowitz.

Lefkowitz in 2002 ordered Hale's supremacist organization to stop using the name World Church of the Creator because the words were trademarked by an Oregon-based religious group that has no ties to Hale and disavows his views.

Prosecutors claim a furious Hale urged a man he believed to be a follower to kill the judge as part of a "racial holy war." The follower was actually an FBI informant who secretly taped the conversation, prosecutors say.

Defense attorneys say the FBI informant is the only one urging violence on the tapes.

Moody started the jury selection Wednesday by asking potential jurors if they had ever heard of Hale, his group or the July 1999 shooting spree by Benjamin Smith, a 21-year-old Hale follower, that put Hale in the national spotlight.

Smith targeted members of minority groups in the rampage through Illinois and Indiana, killing former Northwestern basketball coach Ricky Byrdson and another person before killing himself.

A forest of hands went up at the question, and Moody spent much of the remainder of the day questioning individual jurors privately.

The trial is expected to take up to three weeks.

Hale earned a law degree and passed the bar exam but was denied a license in 1999 by an Illinois committee that rules on the "character and fitness" of prospective lawyers. The panel held that his racist views would prevent him from fulfilling a lawyer's duty not to discriminate against participants in court cases. He unsuccessfully appealed the decision all the way to the Supreme Court.

Volunteer-run clinic helps poor

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP) - Central Pennsylvanians are increasingly relying on Centre Volunteers in Medicine, a volunteer-run free clinic that caters to the needs of the working poor.

With only three paid employees and an annual budget of \$400,000, Centre VIM served almost 1,000 patients in its first year, using volunteer doctors, nurses, dentists and oral surgeons to meet the needs of patients who don't qualify for other low-income programs. "It's wonderful," Crystal Brennan said Wednesday while her 8-year-old daughter, Taylor, had her teeth cleaned. Sons Tyler, 6, and Tyson, 3, waited their turn while son Toby sat on his mother's lap.

"It's great for people who don't have dental insurance, which can be very costly," said Brennan, who used to run the Pickel Barrell restaurant with her husband before it closed. "Since we don't have insurance, we couldn't afford to get a cleaning like this without some

kind of help."

"There are lot of working people who don't qualify for Medicaid," said Don Limbaugh, director of the Centre County Assistance Office, the local agency for the Pennsylvania Welfare Department. "A clinic like this meets the needs of those people, while at the same time helping to find other programs that can help."

Celebrating its first anniversary, Centre VIM is one of four Volunteers in Medicine clinics in Pennsylvania and 31 nationwide, a movement that started in 1993 with the founding of the VIM Clinic in Hilton Head, S.C. Alarmed at the number of Hilton Head residents who had no medical care, Dr. Jack McConnell organized retired doctors in the area to run a free clinic.

Since then, clinics based on that model have opened in 14 states with the assistance of the Vermont-based Volunteers in Medicine Institute.

McKinney seeks political return

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. (AP) - Cynthia McKinney, Georgia's first Black congresswoman, is trying to regain the seat she held for 10 years but lost due to the fallout from her incendiary remarks, particularly on the Mideast and terrorism after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Winning won't be easy, according to political observers and even some fellow Democrats. For one thing, her past statements may be hard for voters to forget.

"It's going to be a real battle. Even if Cynthia gets the nomination, I don't think it'll be a cake walk," said Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga.

Before her ouster, McKinney received national attention for her bold comments and conspiracy theories, particularly after the terrorism of Sept. 11, 2001.

She claimed the Bush administration did nothing to stop the attacks because the president's friends stood to profit. She scolded New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani for turning down a \$10 million gift for the victims' families from Saudi Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal, after the prince suggested U.S. policies toward the Mideast were partly to blame for the attacks. (She then asked the prince to give the money instead to her home district.) McKinney also drew criticism for speaking out in support of Palestinian causes and in opposition of American sanctions on Iraq before the war.

Her spoiler in the 2002 Democratic primary, former state judge Denise Majette, campaigned on the premise that she would not embarrass her east Atlanta district as she claimed McKinney had. Now, Majette is seeking the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by former Gov. Zell



Cynthia McKinney wants to hold elective office again.

Miller, leaving McKinney's old seat open.

McKinney, 49, and her campaign did not return telephone calls and an e-mail seeking comment. That's not unusual.

After she accused Vice President Al Gore in 2000 of having a low "Negro tolerance level" by not having more than one Black Secret Service agent, McKinney canceled interviews with The Associated Press.

Some voters say her past remarks are too outlandish for a member of Congress, while others say Washington can use a voice like McKinney's.

"That's the kind of people you need, who's not afraid to go against the grain," said Grace Young, 52, after buying lunch at a Jamaican bakery on Cynthia McKinney Parkway in McKinney's old district.

Virginia Houghtaling, a resident of Stone Mountain Village, said she has serious doubts about what McKinney can accomplish because of her stances. "I don't know if I'd vote for her or not," said Houghtaling, 51.

Charles Bullock, a University of Georgia political scientist, believes McKinney's comments will definitely harm her.

"She's such a well-known quantity now, it would be difficult to redefine herself," he said. And, Bullock added, she is not helped by off-the-cuff comments from her father, Billy McKinney, who himself is trying to regain a Statehouse seat lost in 2002 after 30 years. Before his daughter's 2002 defeat, Billy McKinney spelled out on television the reason he believed she faced such a tough battle: "J-E-W-S."

McKinney blamed her 2002 loss on "malicious crossover voting" by Republicans in her heavily Black and Democratic district. A federal judge rejected a lawsuit by McKinney supporters alleging that.

Bullock said White voters were the key to the easy 2002

ably good shot" at winning the nomination, he said.

This year, McKinney's likely competition in the July 20 primary includes state Sen. Nadine Thomas and Atlanta City Council President Cathy Woolard. Woolard is White; Thomas is Black. Majette hinted that she would prefer anyone other than McKinney.

"It will be up to the people ... to decide, do they want to go back to what they had before or maintain and move forward with what has been established with my being in office?" Majette said. "I am confident they will make a wise decision."

primary victory by Majette, who is Black. Any candidate this year who appeals to White voters has a "reason-

Milwaukee mayor picked by ethnicity

MILWAUKEE (AP) - Residents largely voted along racial lines in choosing a White former congressman to lead the city over the acting mayor, who was seeking to become Milwaukee's first elected Black mayor.

Former U.S. Rep. Tom Barrett won nine districts that have a majority White or Hispanic population, according to election results released Thursday. Acting Mayor Marvin Pratt, an alderman for 17 years, won the six districts with a Black majority in Tuesday's balloting.

Barry Givens, a Black community leader, said Barrett will get support from Blacks if he lets them have a say in city matters.

"Until that happens there will always be race-related problems or issues," he said.

Barrett had 54 percent of last Tuesday's vote and Pratt had 46 percent.

Milwaukee's population is 50 percent White, 37 percent Black and 12 percent Hispanic, census figures show.

Barrett, who represented a largely Black area in Congress for 10 years, said he would reach out to community leaders. He takes office April 20.

"I am convinced (that) as a region we either move forward together or we don't move forward at all," he said.

Pratt, whose campaign slogan was "It's Time," could not be reached for comment Thursday. He said during his concession speech Tuesday he wouldn't give up trying to correct discrimination.

Pratt became acting mayor in January when John Norquist left office four months early after 16 years to take another job. After the primary election, reports surfaced about irregularities in Pratt's campaign finance reports. About a week before the election, he was charged with five civil counts of campaign finance violations.

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