



**United States Department of Justice  
United States Attorney's Office  
District of Minnesota**

**Frank J. Magill,  
United States Attorney**

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist  
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

# **News Release**

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## **3 convicted for conspiring to prevent federal judge from performing her duties**

After approximately seven hours of deliberation, a federal jury today convicted three Twin Cities residents with attempting to prevent a United States District Court judge from performing her official duties.

On Oct. 27 in Minneapolis, a jury found Robert Bonine Beale, 65, North Oaks; Frederick Ogan Bond, 63, Champlin; and John Howard Pelton, 67, Stillwater; each guilty on one count of conspiracy to impede an officer and one count of obstruction of justice. U.S. District Court Judge Rodney S. Webb, from the District of North Dakota, was brought in to preside over the five-day trial because the case concerned a sitting District of Minnesota judge.

According to court documents, from before March 2008 to April 21, 2008, the three knowingly and intentionally conspired to prevent by force, intimidation and threat a federal judge from presiding over a criminal trial and endeavored to obstruct justice. The three were indicted on July 14.

The judge who was the victim of the conspiracy was U.S. District Court Judge Ann Montgomery, who presided over the jury trial of Beale in April. In that trial, Beale was found guilty of one count of felony conspiracy to defraud the U.S., five counts of tax evasion for failing to pay any personal income tax on more than \$5 million in income and one count of failing to appear in federal court. Beale was sentenced to 134 months in prison for those crimes.

The purpose of the conspiracy was to prevent Judge Montgomery from holding Beale's trial. The manner and means by which the defendants sought to accomplish the conspiracy included holding meetings of the defendants' self-described "common law court during which Beale's case was discussed;" filing false and fraudulent liens; delivering purported "arrest warrants" to members of law enforcement in an effort to have Judge Montgomery arrested; planning the arrest of Judge Montgomery; and planning the disruption of court proceedings.

Specifically, on March 24 “warrants for arrest” were drafted commanding the U.S. Provost Marshal and any authorized U.S. officer to arrest Judge Montgomery and others. These “warrants” were signed by Pelton and a fourth defendant, Norman William Pool, on behalf of the common law court. Pool, 43, Blaine, pleaded guilty on Sept. 25 to one count of conspiracy.

According to a Federal Bureau of Investigation affidavit, Pelton is the leader of a “common law court.” This group allegedly believes that there is only one judge who has exclusive jurisdiction over people – Jesus Christ. The group continued to support Beale during his arrest and subsequent prosecution.

Beale had been contacting the group via a jail telephone and made threatening communications against Judge Montgomery. During an April 3 phone call Beale made to another person, he said, “God wants me to destroy the judge. That judge is evil. He wants me to get rid of her.” During a second conversation, Beale said, “God wants me to take the judge out, that’s what he wants me to do.”

On April 10, Bond presented a subpoena to the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office addressed to Judge Montgomery, commanding that she appear before the common-law group at its April 15 meeting in Little Canada.

On April 16, Beale called Bond, stating that he wanted Judge Montgomery “to be intimidated,” and Beale also called Pelton telling the group to “get as many people as you can in the courtroom.”

Each of the four defendants face a potential maximum penalty of six years in prison on the conspiracy to impede count and 10 years on the obstruction count. Judge Webb will determine their sentences at a future date.

This case is the result of an investigation by the FBI, the U.S. Marshals, the Sherburne County Jail, the Sherburne County Sheriff’s Office and the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney W. Anders Folk.