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# **News Release**

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## **4 sentenced for conspiring to prevent federal judge from performing her duties**

Four Minnesota men were sentenced today in federal court for attempting to prevent a United States District Court judge from performing her official duties.

On Feb. 23 in Minneapolis, U.S. District Court Judge Rodney S. Webb, from the District of North Dakota, sentenced the men each on one count of conspiracy to impede an officer and one count of obstruction of justice. Judge Webb sentenced Robert Bonine Beale, 65, North Oaks, to 48 months in prison and three years of supervised release; Frederick Ogan Bond, 63, Champlin, to 24 months in prison and three years of supervised release; and John Howard Pelton, 67, Stillwater, to 24 months in prison and three years of supervised release.

The three men were indicted on July 14, 2008, and were convicted following a five-day trial on Oct. 27. Judge Webb was brought in to preside over the trial because the case concerned a sitting District of Minnesota judge.

A fourth defendant, Norman William Pool, 43, Blaine, was also sentenced today to three years probation on one count of conspiracy. Pool, who was also indicted on July 14, pleaded guilty on Sept. 25.

“As citizens, we are responsible for obeying the laws that govern our society,” said U.S. Attorney Frank J. Magill. “Mr. Beale failed to accept that responsibility. Mr. Beale recruited others to help him in an attempt to skirt the law and avoid prosecution by threatening a judge and plotting to escape from custody. Mr. Beale and his cohorts committed crimes that go to the heart of a civilized society founded on the rule of law. Today’s sentences reflect the seriousness of those crimes, and I want to applaud the quick response by law enforcement, especially the Sherburne County Sheriff’s Office, the FBI and the U.S. Marshals, in this matter.”

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, from before March 2008 to April 21, 2008, the four defendants 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 judge who was the target of the conspiracy was U.S. District Court Judge Ann Montgomery, who presided over the jury trial of Beale in April 2008. 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. Beale's 48 month penalty in this case will be served in addition to the 134-month sentence.

The purpose of the conspiracy was to prevent Judge Montgomery from holding Beale's tax evasion 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 Pool, on behalf of the common law court.

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."

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