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**INTERNET RADIO TALK SHOW HOST HAL TURNER CONVICTED OF
THREATENING THREE FEDERAL APPEALS COURT JUDGES IN
CHICAGO OVER DECISION UPHOLDING HANDGUN BANS**

CHICAGO — **Hal Turner**, an internet radio talk show host and blogger, was convicted today in Federal Court in Brooklyn, N.Y., of threatening to assault and murder three federal appeals court judges in Chicago in retaliation for their 2009 ruling upholding handgun bans in Chicago and a suburb. Jurors deliberated approximately two hours before returning their guilty verdict in a trial that began on Tuesday. Turner, 47, of North Bergen, N.J., who had been released on bond, was immediately taken into custody pending sentencing, but no date was immediately set.

He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

After federal trial judges in Chicago were recused, U.S. District Judge Donald Walter, of the Western District of Louisiana, was assigned to preside over the case and last year he ordered that it be moved to Brooklyn, where two previous trials — one last December and another in March — ended in mistrials after the juries were deadlocked.

Turner was arrested and charged in June 2009 for writing Internet postings that month that proclaimed “outrage” over a handgun decision by Chief Judge Frank Easterbrook and Judges Richard Posner and William Bauer, of the Chicago-based 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, stating,

among other things: “Let me be the first to say this plainly: These Judges deserve to be killed.” The postings included photographs, phone numbers, work address and room numbers of these judges, along with a photo of the building in which they work and a map of its location.

Turner was charged with threatening to assault and murder three federal judges with intent to retaliate against them for performing official duties. All three judges testified at the trial on Wednesday.

“There is no place in society for threatening federal judges with violence. Period. We are grateful that the jury saw these threats for what they were and rejected any notion that they were acceptable speech,” said Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. He thanked the U.S. Attorney’s Offices for the Eastern District of New York and the District of New Jersey for their assistance. Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which investigated the threats, thanked the FBI Office in Newark for providing local assistance.

According to the charges, several lawsuits had challenged handgun bans in Chicago and suburban Oak Park after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that the Second Amendment entitled handguns at home for self-protection. On June 2, 2009, the 7th Circuit issued an opinion in *National Rifle Association v. Chicago*, Nos. 08-4241, 08-4243 & 08-4244, affirming a district court’s decision to dismiss the cases challenging the local handgun bans. The unanimous decision was written by Chief Judge Easterbrook and joined by Judges Posner and Bauer.

On June 8, 2009, law enforcement agents were directed to postings on a web site. The front page of the site contained an entry dated June 2, 2009, that was titled: “OUTRAGE: Chicago Gun Ban UPHOLD; Court says ‘Heller’ ruling by Supreme Court not applicable to states or

municipalities!” After describing the decision, a lengthy entry followed, which is contained in the complaint affidavit. In addition to proclaiming “These judges deserve to be killed,” the entry noted that it was the same 7th Circuit Court of Appeals that decided the case of Matt Hale, a white-supremacist who was imprisoned after being convicted of soliciting the murder of a U.S. District Court judge in Chicago. The entry further noted that the same judge’s mother and husband were murdered by a gunman in her home. The posting then stated:

“Apparently, the 7th U.S. Circuit court didn’t get the hint after those killings. It appears another lesson is needed.”

The posting was updated the next morning on June 3, 2009, with the following content:

“Judges official public work addresses and a map of the area are below. Their home addresses and maps will follow soon. Behold these devils.”

Below this headline, the entry listed the names, photos, phone numbers, work addresses and room numbers of the three judges involved in the handgun decision, as well as a photo of the Dirksen Federal Courthouse in Chicago and a map. The photo of the building had been modified to include arrows and a label referencing “Anti-truck bomb barriers.”

The Court will determine the appropriate sentence to be imposed under the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines. The government was represented at this trial by Assistant United States Attorneys Diane MacArthur and William Ridgway, and Assistant U.S. Attorney William Hogan provided assistance and participated in the previous trials.

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