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**INTERNET RADIO HOST HAL TURNER SENTENCED TO 33 MONTHS IN PRISON
FOR 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 sentenced today to 33 months in federal prison in Federal Court in Brooklyn, N.Y., for threatening to assault three federal appeals court judges in Chicago in retaliation for their 2009 ruling upholding handgun bans in Chicago and a suburb. Turner, 48, of North Bergen, N.J., has been in federal custody since he was convicted by a jury on Aug. 13, 2010, after a trial.

U.S. District Judge Donald Walter, of the Western District of Louisiana, also ordered Turner to serve six months in home confinement after he is released from custody as a condition of three years of supervised release. Judge Walter was assigned to preside over the case after federal trial judges in Chicago were recused and he ordered the case moved to Brooklyn, where two previous trials — one in December 2009 and the second in March 2010 — 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 in August.

“The criminal justice system simply could not function if an individual’s efforts to intimidate a judge through threats of violence were protected from prosecution and punishment,” said Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. “We live in a system where judges should be able to do their jobs and not have to look over their shoulders.” Mr. Fitzgerald 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 evidence, 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!” 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 government was represented by Assistant United States Attorneys Diane MacArthur, William Ridgway and William Hogan.

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