

# State

## Coup plot payoff \$50,000

United Press International  
NEW ORLEANS — A self-styled soldier of fortune insisted Thursday two businessmen gave him more than \$50,000 to overthrow the government of a tiny Caribbean island republic.

Michael Perdue of Houston, who pleaded guilty to plotting a coup against Dominica and be-

came the government's star witness, rejected defense claims he got the money in an antiques deal.

"I had antiques transactions, but they had nothing to do with the coup," Perdue said.

In the third day of the trial of electrical contractor L.E. Matthews of Florence, Miss., and James White of Lakeland, La., their de-

fense lawyers continued to assault Perdue's credibility.

Matthews and White contending Perdue tricked them into unwittingly bankrolling the so-called "Bayou of Pigs" operation.

The bizarre paramilitary expedition ended before it began when federal agents arrested 10 would-be mercenaries in New Orleans on April 27.

Prosecutors Lindsay Larson and Pauline Hardin Larson to call expert witnesses who sampled Perdue's handwriting and compared it to documents the defense claimed proved legitimate antique transactions.

U.S. District Judge Jack Gordon ordered the sample taken after Perdue testified Tuesday he

could not remember signing or writing the documents.

Matthews and White were charged with conspiring to topple the government of Prime Minister Mary Eugenia Charles and giving \$57,800 to the makeshift mercenaries for guns, ammunition and military gear.

In exchange for the money, Perdue said he promised Matthews and White shares in Nortie Enterprises, a corporation he was going to form to run gambling casinos, an international airport and agricultural interests if the coup succeeded.

If convicted Matthews and White could get up to eight years in prison and \$13,000 in fines.

## Priest offers to visit man accused of beating him

United Press International  
DALLAS — A priest who was kicked in the face and threatened with death during a robbery says he's willing to visit one of the suspect's jail cell to grant him forgiveness.

The Rev. Daniel Griffith of St. Constantine and Helen Eastern Orthodox Church was beaten and robbed Sept. 27 by three men who offered him a ride. As the beating was being administered, however, one man begged for forgiveness and asked Griffith to visit him if he was caught.

Tuesday Robert Eugene Weare, 24, was captured and jailed Tuesday on robbery charges.

Griffith said Wednesday he would fulfill the man's wishes if Weare was sure he wanted a visit.

"I think it would be best to respond to his (Weare's) initiative," Griffith said. "I think that I would like to see him and talk with him and see if I can help him."

"I know what he's done is wrong and I believe he should face the censure of society for the protection of others, but I feel no personal anger toward

him, or the other two for that matter.

"We must be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful."

Weare, who has admitted to a life of crime since age 12, said from his jail cell that he felt an urge to ask forgiveness while robbing Griffith and that the incident had changed his life.

"I had some compassion or some compelling thing inside me to reach out to him," he told the Dallas Times Herald. "Here I am, robbing somebody and reaching out to him at the same time. I told him I just needed help, and I knew it. At that point I realized I wouldn't be able to keep on doing what I've been doing because I have to live with myself."

Charged with three aggravated robberies and being held on \$10,000 bond, Weare confessed to several armed robberies. Police said Weare, a welder, received a 15-year sentence in Washington state last year for auto theft. The sentence was suspended on the condition he complete a two-year program in a rehabilitation center. Weare said he fled the center a few months later.

He was arrested in Balch

Springs, Texas, last week on warrants from California.

Griffith said he accepted a ride from the three men after his car broke down. When he arrived at his church, Griffith said, the three followed him and attacked him. His nose was broken by a kick from one of the other robbers as Weare, holding a gun on him, begged for forgiveness.

"I think in a sense (Weare's) life was touched, or he would have asked for forgiveness," Griffith said. "If I can help deepen his commitment, would like to do it."

"He was afraid he'd hurt me that he'd hit me in the face. But he just pushed my head back, told the investigator to tell him that if he wanted, I would visit him in jail."

The investigator promised to discuss the priest's offer with Weare, Griffith said, adding he had not yet heard back from the officer.

Griffith said he preferred to wait until he was sure Weare still wanted to see him.

Police said about \$80 in cash, \$400 in checks, a stereo and a television set were stolen in the robbery.

## Turkey drop gets pecked by Humane Association

United Press International  
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — More than ruffled feathers could be shaping up for the American Humane Association and sponsors of a traditional weekend "turkey drop."

Attorney General Steve Clark said Wednesday that American Humane Association officials can legally arrest anyone who stages such an event, and an AHA director says his organization is prepared to do just that.

"We'd rather educate than prosecute, but if it does take that extra step, we'll be ready to do it," Dennis White, the association's director of animal protection, said.

The association asked Clark and

Gov. Frank White to yell the 35-year-old tradition in Yellville, Ark., an event in which live turkeys are dropped from the air to crowds in the local courthouse square.

Clark said an 1879 law gives agents of humane societies and similar organizations the right to legally interfere with such activities and make arrests if they feel there is a violation of state law involving cruelty to animals.

"It gives the authority to a humane society to make arrests and take them to municipal court," Clark said. "There's nothing I can do, but there's apparently something they can do."

White said he would contact the

association's agent in Little Rock, Ann C. Thompson, and ask her to present at the festival in the drop is held.

"I think to make our point, don't want to put anybody in White said. "Right now I think that if we saw the drop was to take place, we would first instruct our agent to go to a judge and try to get a cease and desist order."

However, White said, if such order could not be obtained, would "have somebody to make the appropriate move."

Asked if that meant making arrests, White said, "Yes."

The drop has been taken off the schedule for the Yellville festival but it still could be held.

## Texan's request for lower bond denied in drug possession case

United Press International  
KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — A federal district judge Thursday refused to lower the \$1 million bond of a Texas man who flew a twin-engine airplane loaded with about \$200 million worth of cocaine into

a small airport near the Smoky Mountains.

The 614 pounds of cocaine was seized by federal, state and local agents and was reported to be the largest amount ever flown into the United States.

Judge Robert Taylor said he did not feel he should overrule state judges who had refused to lower the bond for Charles Leslie Kageler Jr., of Lubbock. But Taylor said to give Kageler a speedy trial or he would act to free the suspect.

Kageler testified at the hearing that he flew the plane into the Sevierville-Gatlinburg airport, but that he did not know what the aircraft was carrying. He said the plane had been loaded in the jungles of Colombia, but he was unaware it was cocaine that was being placed aboard.

The 24-year-old Kageler, led into the federal courthouse in handcuffs, has been held in the Sevier County jail since June 12. Knoxville attorney Robert Ritchie argued the bond was un-

reasonable. He maintained Kageler's wife had moved to East Tennessee to be near her husband. "he has the kind of family ties that would lend itself to a reasonable bond."

Prosecutors said they fear Kageler would flee if the bond was reduced.

Federal, state and local agents searched three months for suspects before arresting Kageler, Clarence Dennis Newell, 50, of Kemah, Texas.

Charles Leslie Kageler Sr., owner of the airplane, is still being sought in the case.

Newell remains in the Jefferson County Jail under \$1 million bond. He has attempted to lower the bond reduced once.

Kageler and Newell are charged with felonious possession of cocaine with intent to deliver or sell it.

The airplane has since been flown to Nashville where state officials are preparing to auction it. The cocaine is also in custody in Nashville.

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