

## CLARKSTON MAN JAILED ON DRUG-RING CHARGES

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A Clarkston real estate investor accused of running a cocaine ring of "breathtaking" proportions stretching from Brazil to Michigan was ordered jailed Friday after a hearing in federal court.

But even as Chief U.S. Magistrate Paul Komives was taking testimony in the detention hearing of John Bryant, 28, federal agents announced the capture in Los Angeles of reputed ring member Charles Silas, a confessed drug courier who disappeared in July just as he was about to testify for the government before a grand jury on the alleged smuggling operation.

IRS agent Kevin Boudreau told Komives he had just spoken with Silas by telephone in California and that the fugitive said he fled Detroit after receiving threats from Bryant.

The capture jolted a hearing already stitched together with testimony of Bryant's travels to the Caribbean and Brazil, carloads of cocaine, a .357 Magnum laser-sighted revolver and electronic bugging detectors.

Three other people charged in the case are still missing:

Claude Mask of Detroit was offered money by the ring to leave town and has not been seen since his landlady dropped him off Jan. 4 at a Kmart, drug agent William Weinman testified.

James Haywood said he was going to visit relatives in January "and since that day no one has seen him," Weinman testified.

The two men had been cooperating with federal agents when they disappeared, and Weinman said: "I don't know if they left me or escaped John."

**Dean Parker** dropped from sight in early spring.

Bryant -- who according to pretrial questioning said he has a \$30,000-a-month real-estate income -- was one of 14 people charged in a federal drug dealing and money laundering indictment. Nine others have been arrested.

The 20-page indictment accuses the ring of running multi-kilo loads of cocaine from California to Detroit. The indictment cites cocaine shipments of up to 47 kilos (103 pounds), but the total operation is of a much larger scale, said a person closely involved in the case.

"The amount we're talking about is breathtaking," said the person, who declined to be identified because of the investigation.

Bryant was jailed despite defense lawyer Cyril Hall's arguments that his client was no threat to the community and had not fled. Hall also belittled talk of a major drug ring: "This is not the biggest conspiracy that's ever come before this court."

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