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Officers halt visit to complex

Koresh's mom, lawyer DeGuerin checked at roadblock

By MARK SMITH
Houston Chronicle

WACO — An attempt by Branch Davidian leader David Koresh's mother and one of her attorneys to visit cult members was thwarted Thursday by state and federal officers staffing a roadblock.

Officers stopped a silver Mercedes Benz driven by Houston defense attorney Dick DeGuerin at the main checkpoint on the road leading to the Mount Carmel commune about 10 miles east of Waco about 11 a.m.

In the auto were Koresh's mother, Bonnie Haldeman of Chandler, and another man identified only as "Mark."

Haldeman smiled and placed a finger over her lips to indicate she had no comment when questioned about her mission.

DeGuerin, though, said: "I think that he needs some independent counsel that he can trust. That's my only purpose in being here is to try to get in and talk to him and tell him what his rights are."

Motioning to reporters, he added, "You fellows can help if you can get the message that he needs to contact the FBI — they haven't been in contact with him since Tuesday — and ask to see his mother and me."

Negotiators have been talking since Tuesday with Branch Davidian second in command Stephen Schneider. Koresh has complained

of a severe headache.

DeGuerin was among a national consortium of lawyers, including former McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell, now of Austin, and Mark Lane, of Washington, D.C., an early Kennedy assassination conspiracy theorist, to file motions in the case.

They sought, among other things, to let Koresh consult with lawyers, to let an independent third party enter the negotiations, and to enjoin the government and its agents from using unnecessary force.

A judge Thursday denied the motion, which may have been the first of its kind filed during a federal siege.