

COLEMAN ACCOMPLICE TO LEAVE DEATH ROW OHIO GOVERNOR COMMUTES SENTENCE

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Debra Brown, convicted of murder in joining **Alton Coleman** in a 1984 crime spree, will leave death row thanks to a commutation by Ohio Gov. Richard Celeste.

Brown and **Coleman** -- who were charged with robbery, kidnapping and assault in Detroit -- led police through the Midwest on a wild chase of murder, sexual assaults, beatings and robberies in the summer of 1984 before they were arrested in a suburban Chicago park. Eight people were killed.

Convicted of murdering Tonnie Storey of Cincinnati, Brown and **Coleman** were sentenced to death in June 1985. But in a surprise move last week, Celeste commuted the death sentences of Brown and seven other inmates facing execution.

Celeste, an opponent of capital punishment, left office Monday. Brown's new sentence is life in prison without parole.

Coleman and Brown are accused of striking in Detroit and its suburbs, allegedly kidnapping, robbing and attacking several area residents. Although never tried, the couple are named in three warrants still on file, according to the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office.

Coleman and Brown also were suspects in the slaying of Donna Williams, a 25-year-old woman from Gary, Ind., whose car was found abandoned on Detroit's west side. But homicide charges were never filed against the couple in that case, said Richard Padzieski, the Wayne County prosecutor's chief of operations.

Coleman remains under death sentence following his conviction in the Storey slaying, another Ohio murder and the killing of a 7-year-old girl in Gary.

Caption: Photo

: Debra Brown **Alton Coleman** Richard Celeste

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