

MURDER SUSPECT MAY HEAD BACK TO CITY, FBI SAYS

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There is "a strong possibility" that fugitive murder suspect **Alton Coleman** is trying "to return to the Detroit area," an FBI spokesman said Wednesday.

"He was successful in eluding apprehension in Detroit and Toledo . . . and there seems to be a growing belief that he will try and return to those areas where he's felt comfortable in the past," said FBI Special Agent John Anthony of the Detroit office.

Coleman is wanted for six murders as well as a string of kidnappings, robberies and assaults during a six-state, six-week spree, Anthony said.

"At this point, he's moving rapidly to avoid detection," Anthony said, "and given its size and large black population -- which he uses to his advantage -- we believe it's more than a reasonable likelihood that he'll try to come back to Detroit."

A full-scale search for **Coleman**, 28, continued Wednesday in Dayton, Ohio, but "the trail's getting colder by the minute," admitted FBI Special Agent David Lichtenfeld.

ON TUESDAY, Lichtenfeld said, **Coleman** and his female companion, Debra Brown, 21, were responsible for the kidnapping of a college professor in Lexington, Ky., the robbery and beating of an elderly Dayton minister and his wife, and the robbery of another elderly Dayton couple.

Thomas Harris, 33, a Lexington man who turned himself in to FBI agents Tuesday afternoon, was charged with kidnapping Wednesday in U.S. District Court for allegedly being an accomplice of **Coleman** and Brown in the kidnapping of the professor. Harris was ordered held in lieu of \$100,000 bond.

"We've been able to establish that his contact with **Coleman** was confined to this single kidnapping incident," Lichtenfeld said. "He met **Coleman** on a street in Lexington."

The kidnapping victim was Oline Carmichael Jr., 39, a history professor at Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Ky.

A few hours before Carmichael was found unharmed locked in the trunk of his car in a Dayton park, the minister, the Rev. Millard Gay, 79, and his wife, Kathryn, notified police that a couple who stayed at their home July 7-9 using the names "Paul and Diana Fisher" might be **Coleman** and Brown. Shortly after police left the Gays' home, Lichtenfeld said, **Coleman** and Brown returned, tied up the couple, beat them and stole their car.

"They've (the Gays) told us that when they first met **Coleman** and Brown, they were accompanied by a young black woman and her two small children," said FBI Special Agent John Heck of the Dayton office. "We're trying to locate her because she may be able to help us . . . but also because her life could be in danger."

LICHTENFELD SAID the last car **Coleman** and Brown were seen in was a yellow 1970 Chevrolet Biscayne sedan which was stolen from the Dayton home of Dallas and Flossie Davis, both 73, about 12:30 p.m. Tuesday. The couple was approached by **Coleman** and Brown, who asked if Mrs. Davis was planning a garage sale, police said. **Coleman** then pulled a gun, tied up the couple, gagged them with paper towels and robbed them of a color television set and \$130 before fleeing in their car, police said.

"My personal feeling," said Lichtenfeld, "is that they've left Dayton. And we don't think he feels safe enough any more to stay in any one place for more than a day or two . . . other than in a large urban area . . . like Toledo or Detroit."

Anthony said anyone with information about the whereabouts of **Coleman** or Brown can call the Detroit FBI office any time at 965-2323.

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