

Our Leaders Of Tomorrow

By George A. Burns

Name - Gwyn Brown Coleman
Position - Executive Director of the Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce
Status - Past, present and future leader.
Aim - "To see a real united front within the West Las Vegas Community and to personally attain that goal."

"While I'm a leader, I feel it to be in a different capacity. I like to help people help themselves, and once that's given, I like to see them shine..."

Gwyn Brown Coleman

Gwyn Brown Coleman might have set goals for herself and strived to reach the sky by climbing the highest mountain. But for all intents and purposes, a majority of that mountain has indeed been climbed. The hardworking, dedicated and determined young lady is now Executive Director of the Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce.

As Executive Director of that aggressive and ever influentially growing organization, Coleman is determined to see that entity reach its original goals. The chamber's role, according to Coleman is "That of a necessary catalyst that has brought the business community together, strengthening its weaknesses, and collectively moving forward with preserving the competitive enterprise system through the creation of a better understanding of small black business."

Coleman played both a vital and key role in the establishment of that organization. "I provided the professional expertise of putting together the organizational structure of the chamber," she stated. Those essentials such as the "by-laws," and the organizing of a board of directors were the first priorities of the holder of two Master Degrees. (One of Coleman's degrees is in Business Administration and the other is in Community Organization. She received them from the University of Chicago and Depaul University, respectively.) She continued on by stating the reasons for the creation of the Black Chamber. "This organization was both warranted and needed through continued concerns and questions that were being raised for the establishment of such an entity that would advance black entrepreneurship."

Gwyn Coleman, who's very active in a variation of other community organizations including the NAACP, the Clark County Republican Central Committee, The Westside Development Com-

mission, The National Black Republican Council, the Las Vegas OIC and a host of others, has seen the black community unite in the face of recent economic hardships. "With a situation across the country which entailed the loss of incomes, jobs, security and the like, all of this has encompassed a unique position as black residents are concerned in terms of learning strength, unity and coming together. Now more than ever," she continued, "people are reaching out and looking towards other people more. Had not the economic slowdown come about, the "hurried" atmosphere would have continued on an individual basis."

"What is leadership?" she was point blankly asked. "It's a guidance of direction," she responded. "Once that directive decision has been made, assistance is given in sharing philosophies, ideas, ideals and in the implementing of those goals." Coleman noted some essential qualities in being a good leader. "In order to be a good leader, one must be a good follower," she said. "He or she must dismiss the word "I" and constantly deal with the word "we." A leader must understand that he must first crawl before he walks, and always establish an 1&B agenda for alternate routes on the revision of the original planning that takes place." When asked if she considered herself to be a leader, Coleman responded, "yes." "As Executive Director of the N.B.C.C., the 17 board of directors has entrusted me with sharing in the decision making process and implementing those decisions once they have been made."



We cannot expect to see Gwyn Coleman in the political arena at this time, because as she states, "I feel that I am more of a supportive background person, and I like my private life. I want to stay in good health, and simply put, I like what I'm presently doing. I have no political aspirations. I'll get behind someone I believe in and will push him all the way. While I'm a leader, I feel it to be in a different capacity. I like to help people help themselves, and once that's given, I like to see them shine. To me, that's gratifying, but I'm just as sad to

Ivory Coast Patriarch to visit Reagan

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast - The portrait of "the Grand Old Man of Africa" - an aging, slightly rotound figure with fleshy features - gazes down from the walls of innumerable shops and bars, offices and residences across this West African Nation.

No matter what the pose, the countenance projects a penetrating glint of assuredness, a confidence that comes from what has been a lengthy and largely successful public career on troubled continent.

The Grand Old Man of Africa is Felix Houphouet-Boigny, for 23 years the Ivory Coast's president.

At 77 and in the twilight of his years in office, he is scheduled to visit Washington to meet President Reagan sometime in June.

The visit will be something of a capstone with pomp for Houphouet-Boigny, whose biography is a chronicle of the Ivory Coast's emergence from a phlegmatic French colony to a hardy, relatively prosperous republic with increasingly close commercial and cultural ties with the United States.

Houphouet-Boigny, whose ancestors were tribal chiefs and wealthy landholders, is regarded as one of the West's most formidable supporters in Africa.

"Today, the Ivory Coast is considered the anti-communist bastion to destroy," Houphouet-Boigny said in a nationally televised speech in late April, noting sardonically that the preindependence movement he led in the 1950s was once considered "the vanguard of communism in Africa."

As the remarks about communism suggest, Houphouet-Boigny - who practiced medicine and was a well-to-do planter before entering politics - has never fit neatly, or predictably, into an ideological package.

In public life he has been outspoken, if not always flexible or libertarian. Given the choice between disorder and injustice, he said recently, "I prefer to choose injustice. When disorder takes hold, the soul of the country is condemned."

Since independence from France in 1960, Houphouet-Boigny has overseen one of the most open of African societies.

see them fall."

Coleman's suggestion to the West Las Vegas Community: "Get on the bandwagon and help it move! My famous cliché is "help rather than complain." Be part of the solution and not part of the problem. I personally feel that in the very near future, I honestly believe that we are going to get ourselves together as a "united people" in this community and understand that "united we stand, and divided we fall." Of course, "recognition of the wedge" collectively is essential. I see progress and unity happening right now. More is definitely on the horizon!"

Gwyn Brown Coleman: Her dream somehow aligns itself with her Republican Party affiliation, that being: "I like to dream and be dealt with on my own merits, which simply says, if you have to do is open the door, and I'll walk thru. I can do it on my own."

Well, "doing it," she's doing. She concluded by stating simply her personal dream. "To see Blacks patronize black businesses more; and to see a 100% total representation of black businesses in the Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce, along with more representation in the political arena throughout the entire state." On a personal note, she concluded by saying, "From a personal standpoint, my greatest dream is to educate my sons and live to see them as being constructive and contributing individuals in our society, and last but not least, to see a real "united front" within our community and "live and let live."

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