

The COINTELPRO Papers

Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars Against Dissent in the United States

by Ward Churchill & Jim Vander Wall
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Chapter 5

COINTELPRO - Black Liberation Movement

CONTINUED

COINTELPRO Against the Black Panther Party

By the fall of 1968, the FBI felt it had identified the organization most likely to succeed as the catalyst of a united black liberation movement in the U.S. This was the Black Panther Party (BPP), originally established as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in the San Francisco Bay area city of Oakland by Merritt College students Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale (a former RAM member) during October of 1966. On September 8, 1968, J. Edgar Hoover let it be known in the pages of the New York Times that he considered the Panthers "the greatest [single] threat to the internal security of the country."⁶¹ Shortly thereafter, William Sullivan sent the accompanying memo to George C. Moore, outlining a plan by which already-existing COINTELPRO actions against the BPP might "be accelerated."

Although Sullivan utilized the habitual Bureau pretense that targets of such attention were "violence-prone" and making "efforts to perpetrate violence in the United States," the party's predication -as evidenced in its Ten-Point Program- was in some ways rather moderate and, in any event, entirely legal.⁶² Far from conducting "physical attacks on police," as Sullivan claimed, the Panthers were well-known to have anchored themselves firmly in the constitutional right to bear arms and effect

citizens arrests in order to curtail the high level of systematic (and generally quite illegal) violence customarily visited upon black inner city residents by local police. ⁶³ More to the point, but left unmentioned by the FBI assistant director, was that the entire thrust of BPP organizing - reliance on the principle of armed selfdefense included - went to forging direct community political control over and economic self sufficiency within the black ghettos. ⁶⁴ As has been noted elsewhere, "In late 1967, the Panthers initiated a free breakfast programme for black children, and offered free health care to ghetto residents." ⁶⁵ By the summer of 1968, these undertakings had been augmented by a community education project and an antiheroin campaign. The party was offering a coherent strategy to improve the realities - both spiritual and material - of ghetto life. Consequently, black community perceptions of the BPP were radically different from those entertained by the police establishment (which the Panthers described as an "occupying army").

Memo initiating COINTELPRO - BPP

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Memorandum

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Tolson _____
DeLoach _____
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Casper _____
Callahan _____
Conrad _____
Felt _____
Gale _____
Rosen _____
Sullivan _____
Tavel _____
Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Holmes _____
Gandy _____

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

DATE: 9/27/68

FROM : G. C. Moore

- 1 - Mr. C. D. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. G. C. Moore
- 1 - [REDACTED]
- 1 - [REDACTED]
- 1 - [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
(BLACK PANTHER PARTY)

PURPOSE:

To obtain authority for the attached letter to those field divisions having Black Panther Party (BPP) activity instructing that the counterintelligence program against this organization be accelerated and that each office submit concrete suggestions as to future action to be taken against the BPP.

The extremist BPP of Oakland, California, is rapidly expanding. It is the most violence-prone organization of all the extremist groups now operating in the United States. This group has a record of violence and connections with foreign revolutionaries. It puts particular emphasis on not only verbal attacks but also physical attacks on police.

OBSERVATIONS:

REC-15
10/1/68
10/1/68

The information we are receiving from our sources concerning activities of the BPP clearly indicates that more violence can be expected from this organization in the immediate future. It therefore, is essential that we not only accelerate our investigations of this organization and increase our informants in the organization but that we take action under the counterintelligence program to disrupt the group. Our counterintelligence program may bring about results which could lead to prosecution of these violence-prone leaders and active members, thereby thwarting their efforts to perpetrate violence in the United States.

Enclosure
100-448006

CONTINUED - OVER

JGD:emm (7)

S. [Signature]
10/1/68
10/1/68

Memorandum to Mr. W. C. Sullivan
RE: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
(BLACK PANTHER PARTY)

SCOPE OF PROPOSED COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM:

As stated above, the attached letter will instruct the field to submit positive suggestions as to actions to be taken to thwart and disrupt the BPP. Instructions are and will be reiterated that no action is to be taken without prior Bureau authority.

These suggestions are to create factionalism between not only the national leaders but also local leaders, steps to neutralize all organizational efforts of the BPP as well as create suspicion amongst the leaders as to each others sources of finances, suspicion concerning their respective spouses and suspicion as to who may be cooperating with law enforcement. In addition, suspicion should be developed as to whomay be attempting to gain control of the organization for their own private betterment, as well as suggestions as to the best method of exploiting the foreign visits made by BPP members. We are also soliciting recommendations as to the best method of creating opposition to the BPP on the part of the majority of the residents of the ghetto areas.

RECOMMENDATION:

That attached letter , in accordance with the above, be approved.

WCS

A significant measure of the Black Panthers' success was described in racist terms by Sullivan who noted that membership was "multiplying rapidly." Beginning with a core of five members in 1966, the BPP had grown to include as many as 5,000 members within two years, and had spread from its original Oakland base to include chapters in more than a dozen cities. ⁶⁶ This seems due, not only to the appeal inherent in the Panthers' combination of standing up for basic black rights in the face of even the most visible expressions of state power with concrete programs to upgrade inner city life, but to the party's unique inclusiveness. Although the conditions for acceptance into the BPP were in some ways quite stringent, Newton and Seale had from the outset focused their recruiting and organizing efforts on what they termed "the lumpen" - a cast of street gangs, prostitutes, convicts and excons typically shunned by progressive movements - with an eye towards forming a new political force based upon this "most oppressed and alienated sector of the population" and activating its socially constructive energies. ⁶⁷

Also of apparent concern to the Bureau was the Panthers' demonstrated

ability to link their new recruitment base to other important sectors of the U.S. opposition.⁶⁸ One of the party's first major achievements in this regard came when Chairman Bobby Seale and Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver managed to engineer the merger of SNCC with their organization, an event signified at a mass rally in Oakland on February 17, 1968 when Stokely Carmichael was designated as honorary BPP Prime Minister, H. Rap Brown as Minister of justice and James Forman as Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁶⁹ As is demonstrated in the accompanying October 10, 1968 memo from Moore to Sullivan, the FBI quickly initiated a COINTELPRO effort to "foster a split between ... the two most prominent black nationalist extremist groups" through the media.

The SNCC leadership was also targeted more heavily than ever. H. Rap Brown was shortly eliminated by being "charged with inciting a race riot in Maryland," allowed to make bail only under the constitutionally dubious proviso that he not leave the Borough of Manhattan in New York, "and was eventually sentenced to five years in a federal penitentiary [not on the original charge, but] for carrying a rifle across state lines while under criminal indictment."⁷⁰ Stokely Carmichael's neutralization took a rather different form. Utilizing the services of Peter Cardoza, an infiltrator who had worked his way into a position as the SNCC leader's bodyguard, the Bureau applied a "bad jacket," deliberately creating the false appearance that Carmichael was himself an operative.⁷¹ In a memo dated July 10, 1968, the SAC, New York, proposed to Hoover that:

... consideration be given to convey the impression that CARMICHAEL is a CIA informer. One method of accomplishing [this] would be to have a carbon copy of an informant report supposedly written by CARMICHAEL to the CIA carefully deposited in the automobile of a close Black Nationalist friend ... It is hoped that when the informant report is read it will help promote distrust between CARMICHAEL and the Black Community ... It is also suggested that we inform a certain percentage of reliable criminal and racial informants that "we have it from reliable sources that CARMICHAEL is a CIA agent. It is hoped that the informants would spread the rumor in various large Negro communities across the land."⁷²

Pursuant to a May 19, 1969 Airtel from the SAC, San Francisco, to Hoover, the Bureau then proceeded to "assist" the BPP in "expelling" Carmichael through the forgery of letters on party letterhead. The gambit worked, as is evidenced in the September 5, 1970 assertion by BPP head Huey P. Newton: "We ... charge that Stokely Carmichael is operating as an agent of the CIA."⁷³

Memo outlining tactic to split the BPP and SNCC.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

ROUTE 11 ENVELOPE

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan *W.C.S.*

FROM : Mr. G. C. Moore *G.C.M.*

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
(BLACK PANTHER PARTY)

DATE: October 10, 1968

SEARCHED
SERIALIZED
INDEXED
FILED

PURPOSE:

To recommend attached item be given news media source on confidential basis as counterintelligence measure to help neutralize extremist Black Panthers and foster split between them and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

BACKGROUND:

There is a feud between the two most prominent black nationalist extremist groups, The Black Panthers and SNCC. Attached item notes that the feud is being continued by SNCC circulating the statement that:

"According to zoologists, the main difference between a panther and other large cats is that the panther has the smallest head."

This is biologically true. Publicity to this effect might help neutralize Black Panther recruiting efforts.

ACTION:

That attached item, captioned "Panther Pinheads," be furnished a cooperative news media source by the Crime Records Division on a confidential basis. We will be alert for other ways to exploit this item.

Enclosure
100-448006

- 1 - Mr. C.D. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. W.C. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. T.E. Bishop
- 1 - Mr. G.C. Moore

1 - [REDACTED]

610 (100-448006)

OCT 22 1968

Meanwhile, according to the New York SAC, his COINTELPRO technicians had followed up, using the target's mother as a prop in their scheme:

On 9/4/68, a pretext phone call was placed to the residence of STOKELY CARMICHAEL and in absence of CARMICHAEL his mother was told that a friend was calling who was fearful of the future safety of her son. It was explained to Mrs. CARMICHAEL the absolute necessity for CARMICHAEL to "hide out" inasmuch as several BPP members were out to kill him. Mrs. CARMICHAEL appeared shocked upon hearing the news and stated she would tell STOKELY when he came home. ⁷⁴

Excerpt from July 10, 1968 memo proposing the bad-jacketing of SNCC/BPP leader Stokely Carmichael.

It is suggested that consideration be given to convey the impression that CARMICHAEL is a CIA informant.

One method of accomplishing the above would be to have a carbon copy of informant report reportedly written by CARMICHAEL to the CIA carefully deposited in the automobile of a close Black Nationalist friend. The report should be so placed that it will be readily seen.

It is hoped that when the informant report is read it will help promote distrust between CARMICHAEL and the Black Community. It is suggested that carbon copy of report be used to indicate that CARMICHAEL turned original copy into CIA and kept carbon copy for himself.

It is also suggested that we inform a certain percentage of reliable criminal and racial informants that "we heard from reliable sources that CARMICHAEL is a CIA agent". It is hoped that these informants would spread the rumor in various large Negro communities across the land.

Although there is no evidence whatsoever that a Panther "hit team" had been assembled to silence the accused informer, Carmichael left the U.S. for an extended period in Africa the following day, and the SNCC/Panther coalition was effectively destroyed.

As all this was going on, Cleaver was developing another highly visible alliance, this one with "white mother country radicals," which he and Seale had initiated in December 1967.⁷⁵ This was with the so-called Peace and Freedom Party, which planned to place Cleaver - not only in his capacity as a leading Panther, but as the celebrated convict author of *Soul on Ice*⁷⁶ and parolee editor of *Ramparts* magazine on the California ballot as a presidential candidate during the 1968 election; his vice presidential candidate was slated to be SDS co-founder Tom Hayden, while Huey P. Newton was offered as a congressional candidate from his prison cell.⁷⁷ The ensuing campaign resulted in a wave of positive exposure for the BPP which the authorities were relatively powerless to counteract. Hence, Cleaver - the powerful writer and speaker at the center of it all - was targeted for rapid elimination.

On April 6 [1968], two days after Martin Luther King was killed, Cleaver was in the *Ramparts* office in the late afternoon, dictating his article, "Requiem for Nonviolence." In a matter of hours he and other Panthers would be involved in a shootout with the Oakland police. Seventeen-year-old Bobby Hutton died, shot in the back moments after he and Eldridge, arms above their heads, stumbled out of the building where they'd taken refuge. Cleaver, who was wounded in the leg, was taken first to Oakland's Highland Hospital; then to the Alameda County Courthouse where police made him lie on the floor while he was being booked; and finally, that same night, to San Quentin Hospital where a guard pushed him down a flight of stairs. He was brought to the state medical

facility at Vacaville and confined in the "hole." ⁷⁸

Although Cleaver was never convicted of any charge stemming from the firefight, and it soon became apparent that Ray Brown's Oakland Panther Squad had deliberately provoked the incident, his "parole was quickly revoked, and for two months he sat at Vacaville. The [California] Adult Authority had exercised its authority to suspend or revoke parole without notice or hearing, basing its actions solely on police reports. Three parole violations were listed: possession of firearms, associating with individuals of bad reputation, and failing to cooperate with the parole agent." ⁷⁹ But, when Charles Garry, Cleaver's attorney, petitioned for a writ of habeas corpus, it was granted by state Superior Court Judge Raymond J. Sherwin, in Solano County (where Vacaville is located).

Judge Sherwin almost immediately dismissed the claim that Cleaver had associated with persons of "bad reputation," noting that the adult authority had been unable to even list who was supposedly at issue. The noncooperation claim was also scuttled when Garry introduced evidence that the parole officer in question had consistently assessed Cleaver in written reports as "reliable" and "cooperative" since his release from prison. The state's weapons possession claim also fell apart when the judge found that, "Cleaver's only handling of a firearm [a rifle] was in obedience to a police command. He did not handle a hand gun at all." ⁸⁰ The judge concluded that:

It has to be stressed that the uncontradicted evidence presented to this Court indicated that the petitioner had been a model parolee. The peril to his parole status stemmed from no failure of personal rehabilitation, but from his undue eloquence in pursuing political goals, goals which were offensive to many of his contemporaries. Not only was there absence of cause for the cancellation of his parole, it was the product of a type of pressure unbecoming, to say the least, to the law enforcement paraphernalia of the state. ⁸¹

With that, Judge Sherwin ordered Cleaver's release, a ruling which was immediately appealed by the adult authority to the state appellate court. The higher court, refusing to hear any evidence in the matter, simply affirmed "the arbitrary power of the adult authority to revoke parole." ⁸² Consequently, despite having been shown to have engaged in no criminal activity at all, Cleaver was ordered back to San Quentin as of November 27, 1968. Under such conditions, he opted instead to go into exile, first in Cuba, then Algeria and, eventually, France. ⁸³ The immediacy of his talents, energy and stature were thus lost to the BPP - along with the life of Bobby Hutton, one of its earliest and most dedicated members - while the stage was set for a future COINTELPRO operation.

Memo initiating the lethal COINTELPRO which pitted the US organization against the BPP. Note the similarity in method to that of Operation Hoodwink.

Memorandum



TO : SAC, Baltimore

DATE: 11/25/68

FROM : Director, FBI

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST WHITE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE (BLACK PANTHER PARTY)

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

For the information of recipient offices a serious struggle is taking place between the Black Panther Party (BPP) and the US organization. The struggle has reached such proportions that it is taking on the aura of gang warfare with attendant threats of murder and reprisals.

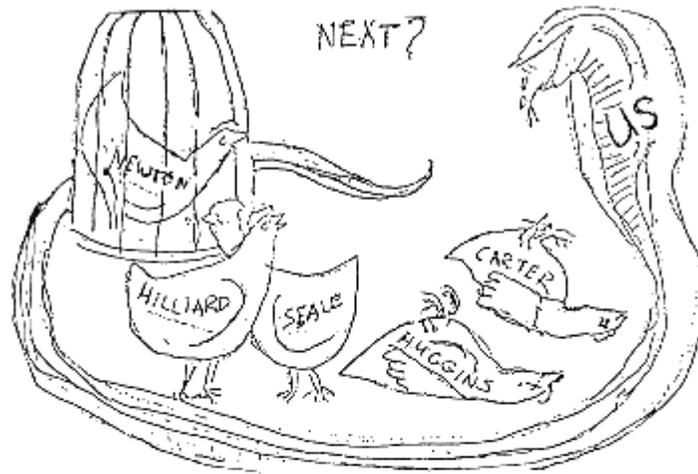
In order to fully capitalize upon BPP and US differences as well as to exploit all avenues of creating further dissension in the ranks of the BPP, recipient offices are instructed to submit imaginative and hard-hitting counterintelligence measures aimed at crippling the BPP.

Commencing December 2, 1968, and every two-week period thereafter, each office is instructed to submit a letter under this caption containing counterintelligence measures aimed against the BPP. The bi-weekly letter should also contain accomplishments obtained during the previous two-week period under captioned program.

All counterintelligence actions must be approved at the Bureau prior to taking steps to implement them.

Anti-Panther COINTELPRO activities were directed not only at blocking or destroying the party's coalition-building. They were, as the accompanying November 25, 1968 memo from Hoover to the SAC, Baltimore, bears out, also devoted to exacerbating tensions between the BPP and organizations with which it had strong ideological differences. In the case of the so-called United Slaves (US), a black cultural nationalist group based primarily in southern California, this was done despite - or because of - "The struggle ... taking on the aura of gang warfare with attendant threats of murder and reprisal." What was meant by the Bureau "fully capitalizing" on the situation is readily attested by the accompanying November 29 memo to Hoover from the SAC, Los Angeles, proposing the sending of an anonymous letter - attributed to the Panthers - "revealing" a fictional BPP plot to assassinate US head Ron Karenga. The stated objective was to provoke "an US and BPP vendetta." A number of defamatory cartoons - attributed to both US and the BPP, with each side appearing to viciously ridicule the other - were also produced and distributed within local black communities by the Los Angeles and San Diego FBI offices.

Samples of the sorts of cartoons produced and distributed by the FBI in southern California to provoke violence between US and the BPP.



Portion of memo highlighting continuing efforts to foster violence between US and the BPP. Note simultaneous operations being conducted to split the BPP from its support base in the Peace and Freedom Party as well as to foment discord among the Panthers themselves.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (100-448006)
FROM : *WGG* SAC, LOS ANGELES (157-1751) (P)
SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE

DATE: 11/29/68

Nichols
Hoff
W. J. ...

Re Los Angeles letter to Bureau dated 9/25/68.

I. OPERATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION

The Los Angeles Office is currently preparing an anonymous letter for Bureau approval which will be sent to the Los Angeles Black Panther Party (BPP) supposedly from a member of the "US" organization in which it will be stated that the youth group of the "US" organization is aware of the BPP "contract" to kill RON KARENGA, leader of "US", and they, "US" members, in retaliation, have made plans to ambush leaders of the BPP in Los Angeles.

It is hoped this counterintelligence measure will result in an "US" and BPP vendetta.

Investigation has indicated that the Peace and Freedom Party (PFP) has been furnishing the BPP with financial assistance. An anonymous letter is being prepared for Bureau approval to be sent to a leader of PFP in which it is set forth that the BPP has made statements in closed meetings that when the armed rebellion comes the whites in the PFP will be lined up against the wall with the rest of the whites.

It is felt that this type of a letter could cause considerable disruption of the association between the BPP and the PFP.

In order to cause disruption between the BPP of Oakland, California, and the BPP of Los Angeles, an envelope is being prepared for Bureau approval which appears

2 - Bureau (RM)
1 - Los Angeles
LWS/dlc
(3)

REC-9

NOV 29 1968

NOV 29 1968

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cc - 200 11/29

Excerpt from an August 20, 1969 report summarizing the "accomplishments" and plans for the BPP/US COINTELPRO in San Diego.

III. TANGIBLE RESULTS

The BPP Breakfast Program appears to be floundering in San Diego due to lack of public support and unfavorable publicity concerning it. It is noted that it has presently been temporarily suspended. Therefore, it was felt that placing the above mentioned anonymous call to the Bishop at this particular time might be a significant factor in precluding the resumption of the program. The information to the Bishop appeared to be favorably received and he seemed to be quite concerned over the fact that one of his Priests was deeply involved in utilization of church facilities for this purpose. This matter, of course, will be closely followed for further anticipated developments concerning the Breakfast Program.

Shootings, beatings, and a high degree of unrest continues to prevail in the ghetto area of southeast San Diego. Although no specific counterintelligence action can be credited with contributing to this over-all situation, it is felt that a substantial amount of the unrest is directly attributable to this program.

In view of the recent killing of BPP member SYLVESTER BELL, a new cartoon is being considered in the hopes that it will assist in the continuance of the rift between BPP and US. This cartoon, or series of cartoons, will be similar in nature to those formerly approved by the Bureau and will be forwarded to the Bureau for evaluation and approval immediately upon their completion.

On January 17, 1969, these tactics bore their malignant fruit when Los Angeles BPP leaders Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter and Jon Huggins were shot to death by US members George and Joseph Stiner, and Claude Hubert, in a classroom at UCLA's Campbell Hall. Apparently at the FBI's behest, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) followed up by conducting a massive raid - 75 to 100 SWAT equipped police participated - on the home of Jon Huggins' widow, Ericka, on the evening of his death, an action guaranteed to drastically raise the level of rage and frustration felt by the Panthers assembled there. The police contended that the rousting of Ericka Huggins and other surviving LA-BPP leaders was intended to "avert further violence," a rationale which hardly explains why during the raid a cop placed a loaded gun to the head of the Huggins' six-month-old baby, Mai, laughed and said "You're next." ⁸⁴ In the aftermath, southern California COINTELPRO specialists assigned themselves "a good measure of credit" for these "accomplishments," and proposed distribution of a new series of cartoons - including the accompanying examples - to "indicate to the BPP that the US organization feels they are ineffectual, inadequate, and riddled with graft and corruption." ⁸⁵

The idea was approved and, as is shown in the accompanying excerpts from an August 20, 1969 report by the San Diego SAC to Hoover, obtained similar results.

The BPP/US COINTELPRO continued in the east.

ROUTE ON ENVELOPE

SAC, Newark (100-49654)

10/2/69

REC-17

EG-103
Director, FBI (100-448006) 1376

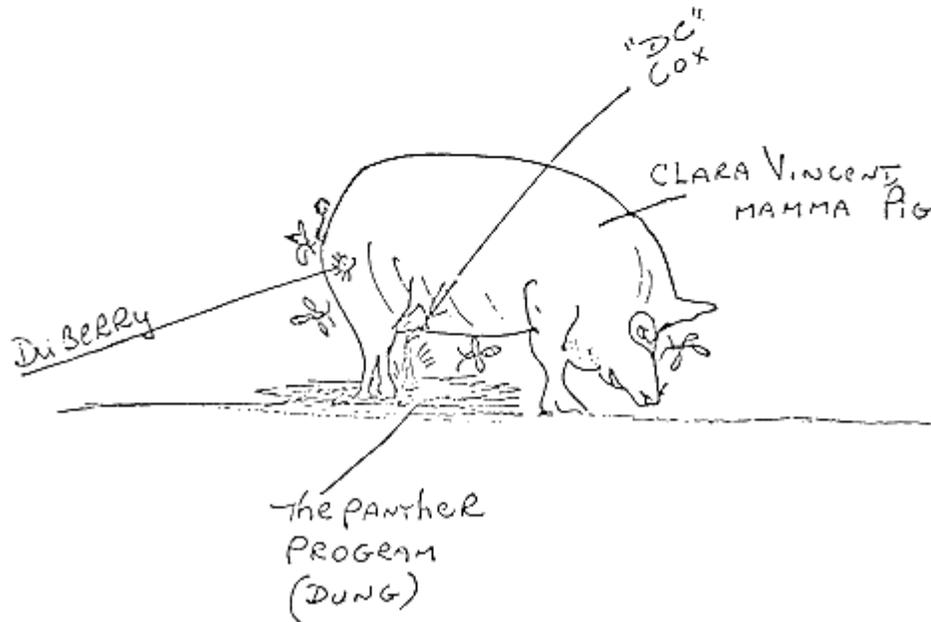
1 - [REDACTED]

(v)

COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
BLACK PANTHER PARTY (BPP)

ReMKlet 9/18/69.

Authority is granted Newark to mail the cartoon submitted in referenced letter. The cartoon, which was drawn by the Newark Office, is satisfactory and needs no duplication. In reproducing this cartoon, Newark should insure that the paper and envelopes used do not contain any traceable markings. When mailing this cartoon, care should be taken so that the Bureau is not disclosed as the source and strict security is maintained. Newark should advise of any results received from this mailing.



Among the "tangible results" which the SAC found to be "directly attributable to this program" were "shootings, beatings, and a high degree of unrest ... in the ghetto area." At another point, he noted that one of the shootings had resulted in the death of Panther Sylvester Bell at the hands of US gunmen on August 14 (another San Diego Panther, John Savage, had also been murdered by US on May 23), and announced that, apparently on the basis of such a resounding success,

"a new cartoon is being considered in the hopes that it will assist in the continuance of the rift between the BPP and US."

The Newark field office also joined in the act, as is attested by the accompanying October 2, 1969 memo from the SAC in that city to Hoover, and the cartoon which corresponds to it. Newark credited the COINTELPRO with three other Panther murders as of September 30, 1969, when it sent an anonymous letter to the local BPP chapter warning them to "watch out: Karenga's coming," and listing a national "box score" of "US - 6, Panthers - 0."⁸⁶ While this seems to have been the extent of the fatalities induced through the COINTELPRO operation - a body count which in itself would not have proven crippling to either side of the dispute - such FBI activities did, as cultural nationalist leader Amiri Baraka (s/n: LeRoi Jones) has pointed out, help solidify deep divisions within the radical black community as a whole which took years to overcome, and which effectively precluded the possibility of unified political action within the black liberation movement.⁸⁷

As has been noted elsewhere, one "of the FBI's favorite tactics was to accuse the Panthers and other black nationalists of anti-Semitism, a tactic designed to destroy the movement's image 'among liberal and naive elements.' Bureau interest in anti-Semitism grew during the summer of 1967 at the National Convention for a New Politics, when SNCC's James Forman and Rap Brown led a floor fight for a resolution condemning Zionist expansion. The convention's black caucus introduced the resolution, and SNCC emerged as the first black group to take a public stand against Israel in the Mid-East conflict."⁸⁸ In New York, as is revealed in the accompanying September 10, 1969 memo, this assumed the form of sending anonymous letters to Rabbi Meir Kahane of the neo-fascistic Jewish Defense League in hopes that the "embellishment" of "factual information" within the missives might provoke Kahane's thugs "to act" against the BPP.

Comparable methods were used in Chicago, where BPP leader Fred Hampton was showing considerable promise in negotiating a working alliance with a huge black street gang known as the Blackstone Rangers (or Black P. Stone Nation). As is demonstrated in the accompanying January 30, 1969 letter from Hoover to Marlin Johnson, the Chicago SAC (see page 138), this "threat" prompted the local COINTELPRO section to propose - and Hoover to approve - the sending of an anonymous letter to Ranger head Jeff Fort, falsely warning that Hampton had "a hit [murder contract] out on" him as part of a Panther plot to take over his gang. What the Bureau expected to result from the sending of this missive had already been outlined by Johnson in a memo to Hoover on January 10:

It is believed that the [letter] may intensify the degree of animosity between the two groups and occasion Forte [sic] to take retaliatory action which could disrupt the BPP or lead to reprisals against its leadership ... Consideration has been given to a similar letter to the BPP alleging a Ranger plot against the BPP leadership; however, it is not felt that this would be productive principally because the BPP ... is not believed to be as violence prone as *the Rangers, to whom violent type activity - shooting and the like - is second nature* [emphasis added].

Memo proposing anonymous letter to provoke conflict between the Jewish

Defense League and the BPP. Text of letter follows.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (100-448006) DATE: 9/10/69

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK (100-161140) (P)

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
BLACK PANTHER PARTY (BPP)

Re NY report of [redacted], captioned "JEWISH DEFENSE LEAGUE, RACIAL MATTERS", NY file 157-3463; Bu letter to NY, 7/25/69.

4-1
 100-161140-100
 23

Referenced report has been reviewed by the NYO in an effort to target one individual within the Jewish Defense League (JEDEL) who would be the suitable recipient of information furnished on an anonymous basis that the Bureau wishes to disseminate and/or use for future counter-intelligence purposes.

NY is of the opinion that the individual within JEDEL who would most suitably serve the above stated purpose would be Rabbi MEIR KAHANE, a Director of JEDEL. It is noted that Rabbi KAHANE's background as a writer for the NY newspaper "Jewish Press" would enable him to give wide-spread coverage of anti-Semitic statements made by the BPP and other Black Nationalist hate groups not only to members of JEDEL but to other individuals who would take cognizance of such statements.

In order to prepare a suggested initial communication from the anonymous source to Rabbi KAHANE which would establish rapport between the two, it is felt that this contact should not be limited to the furnishing of factual information of interest to the aims of JEDEL because the NYO does not feel that JEDEL could be motivated to act as called for in referenced Bureau letter if the information gathered by the NYO concerning anti-semitism and other matters were furnished to that organization without some embellishment.

For example it is felt that JEDEL is aware of the majority of information concerning the factual views of the BPP and other Black Nationalist groups through public sources of information such as the BPP newspaper, "The Black Panther", and to furnish such information from an "anonymous source" would either be dismissed by JEDEL as trivial or attributed to some other party who may have an interest in causing JEDEL to act against such groups as the BPP.

In view of the above comments the following is submitted as the suggested communication to be used to establish rapport between the anonymous source and the selected individual associated with JEDEL:

"Dear Rabbi Kahane:

I am a Negro man who is 48 years old and served his country in the U.S. Army in WW2 and worked as a truck driver with "the famous red-ball express" in Gen. Eisenhower's Army in France and Nazi Germany. One day I had a crash with the truck I was driving, a 2½ ton truck, and was injured real bad. I was treated and helped by a Jewish Army Dr. named "Rothstein" who helped me get better again.

Also I was encouraged to remain in high school for two years by my favorite teacher, Mr. Katz. I have always thought Jewish people are good and they have helped me all my life. That is why I become so upset about my oldest son who is a Black Panther and very much against Jewish people. My oldest son just returned from Algiers in Africa where he met a bunch of other Black Panthers from all over the world. He said to me that they all agree that the Jewish people are against all the colored people and that the only friends the colored people have are the Arabs.

I told my child that the Jewish people are the friends of the colored people but he calls me a Tom and says I'll never be anything better than a Jew boy's slave.

Last night my boy had a meeting at my house with six of his Black Panther friends. From the way they talked it sounded like they had a plan to force Jewish store owners to give them money or they would drop a bomb on the Jewish store. Some of the money they get will be sent to the Arabs in Africa.

They left books and pictures around with Arab writing on them and pictures of Jewish soldiers killing Arab babies. I think they are going to give these away at Negro Christian Churches.

I though you might be able to stop this. I think I can get some of the pictures and books without getting myself in trouble. I will send them to you if you are interested.

I would like not to use my real name at this time.

A friend"

It is further suggested that a second communication be sent to Rabbi KAHANE approximately one week after the above described letter which will follow the same format, but will contain as enclosures some BPP artifacts such as pictures of BOBBY SEALE, ELDRIDGE CLEAVER, a copy of a BPP newspaper, etc. It is felt that a progression of letters should then follow which would further establish rapport with the JEDEL and eventually culminate in the anonymous letter writer requesting some response from the JEDEL recipient of these letters.

The FBI's concern in the matter was not, as Hoover makes abundantly clear in his letter, that someone might be killed as a consequence of such "disruptive activities," but that a properly nondescript envelope be employed in the mailing of the bogus letter in order that "any tangible results obtained" could not be "traced back to" the Bureau.⁸⁹ Similar tactics were employed to block or "destabilize" emerging alliances between the Chicago BPP and another black gang, the Mau Maus

(unrelated to Kenyatta's Harlem-based organization), as well as the already politicized Puertorriqueno Young Lords, a white street gang called the Young Patriots, and even SDS, the white radical organization.
90 The letter-writing COINTELPRO had a significant impact in preventing Hampton from consolidating the city-wide "Rainbow Coalition" he was attempting to establish at the time, but it failed to bring about his physical liquidation.

Letter authorizing sending of bogus letter to Chicago gang leader Jeff Fort in hopes that it will provoke violent retaliation against city BPP head Fred Hampton.

SAC, Chicago (157-2209)

1/30/69

17

Director, FBI (100-440006) *597*
REC-121

COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
BLACK PANTHER PARTY

Reurlet 1/13/69.

Authority is granted to mail anonymous letter to Jeff Fort, as suggested in relet, in care of the First Presbyterian Church, 6401 South Kimbark, Chicago, Illinois.

Utilize a commercially purchased envelope for this letter and insure that the mailing is not traced to the source.

Advise the Bureau of any results obtained by the above mailing.

WDH:ums
(4)

NOTE:

MAILED 10
JAN 29 1969
COMM-FBI

Jeff Fort is the leader of the Blackstone Rangers, a black extremist organization. Chicago advises that so long as Fort continues as the leader of the Rangers, a working arrangement between the BPP and the Rangers may be effected on Ranger terms. Chicago has recommended the anonymous mailing of the following letter in anticipation that its receipt by Fort will intensify the degree of animosity existing between these two black extremist organizations:

100-440006-1081
h v...
1/31/69

- Tolson _____
- DeLoach _____
- Mohr _____
- Bishop _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____

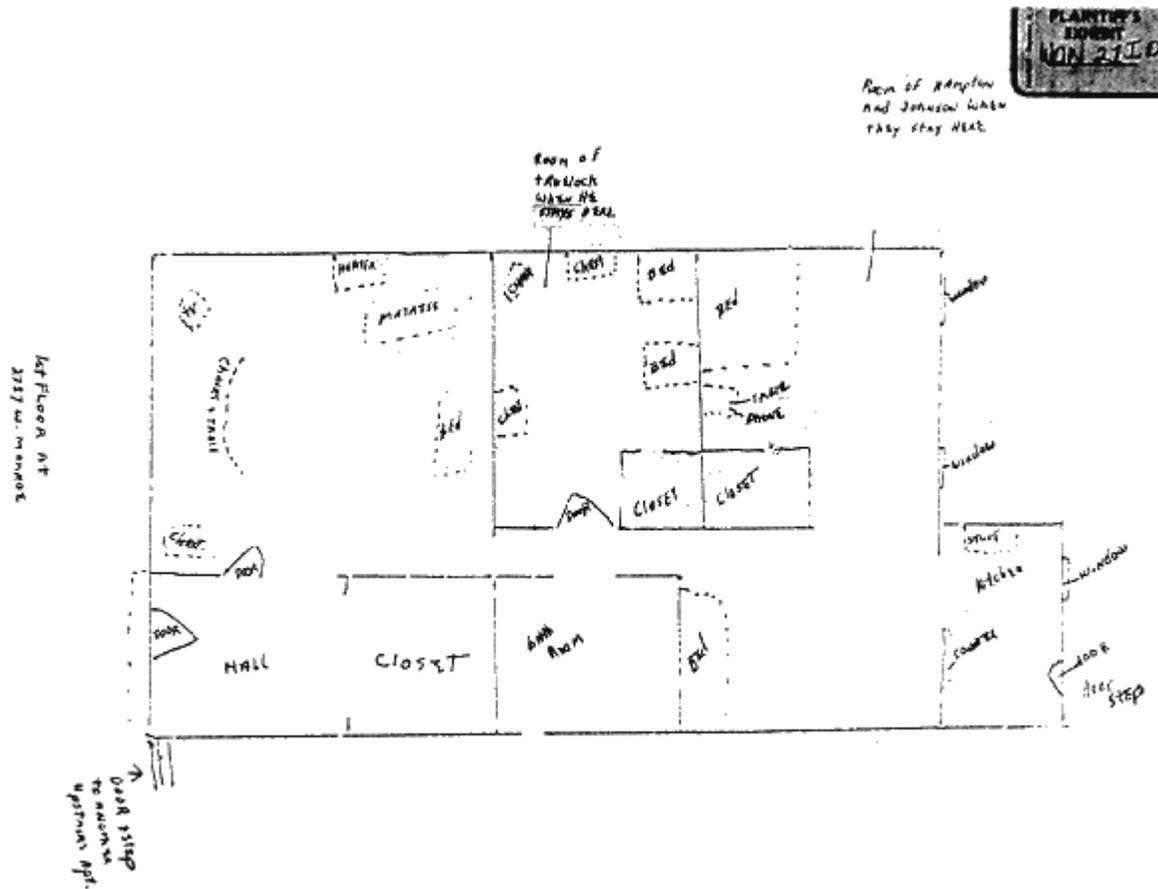
"Brother Jeff:

"I've spent some time with some Panther friends on the west side lately and I know what's been going on. The brothers that run the Panthers blame you for blocking their thing and there's supposed to be a hit out for you. I'm not a Panther, or a Ranger, just black. From what I see these Panthers are out for themselves not black people. I think you ought to know what their up to, I know what I'd do if I was you. You might hear from me again."

"A black brother you don't know"

Hence, in mid-November 1969, COINTELPRO specialist Roy Mitchell met with William O'Neal, a possibly psychopathic infiltrator/provocateur who had managed to become Hampton's personal bodyguard and chief of local BPP security, at the Golden Torch Restaurant in downtown Chicago. The agent secured from O'Neal the accompanying detailed floorplan of Hampton's apartment, including the disposition of furniture, and denotation of exactly where the BPP leader might be expected to be sleeping on any given night. Mitchell then took the floorplan to Richard Jalovec, overseer of a special police unit assigned to State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan; together, Mitchell and Jalovec met with police sergeant Daniel Groth, operational commander of the unit, and planned an "arms raid" on the Hampton residence. ⁹¹

Floor plan of Hampton's apartment provided by FBI infiltrator William O'Neal in order to pinpoint targets during the Panther leader's assassination.



On the evening of December 3, 1969, shortly before the planned raid, infiltrator O'Neal seems to have slipped Hampton a substantial dose of secobarbital in a glass of kool-aid. The BPP leader was thus comatose in his bed when the fourteen-man police team - armed with a submachinegun and other special hardware - slammed into his home at about 4 a.m. on the morning of December 4. ⁹² He was nonetheless shot three times, once more-or-less slightly in the chest, and then twice more

in the head at point-blank range.⁹³ Also killed was Mark Clark, head of the Peoria, Illinois, BPP chapter. Wounded were Panthers Ronald "Doc" Satchell, Blair Anderson and Verlina Brewer. Panthers Deborah Johnson (Hampton's fiancée eight months pregnant with their child), Brenda Harris, Louis Truelock and Harold Bell were uninjured during the shooting.⁹⁴ Despite the fact that no Panther had fired a shot (with the possible exception of Clark, who may have squeezed off a single round during his death convulsions) while the police had pumped at least 98 rounds into the apartment, the BPP survivors were all beaten while handcuffed, charged with "aggressive assault" and "attempted murder" of the raiders, and held on \$100,000 bond apiece.⁹⁵

A week later, on December 11, Chicago COINTELPRO section head Robert Piper took a major share of the "credit" for this "success" in the accompanying memo, informing headquarters that the raid could not have occurred without intelligence information, "not available from any other source," provided by O'Neal via Mitchell and himself. He specifically noted that "the chairman of the Illinois BPP, Fred Hampton," was killed in the raid and that this was due, in large part, to the "tremendous value" of O'Neal's work inside the party. He then requested payment of a \$300 cash "bonus" to the infiltrator for services rendered, a matter quickly approved at FBI headquarters.⁹⁶

The Hampton-Clark assassinations were unique in that the cover stories of involved police and local officials quickly unraveled. Notwithstanding the FBI's best efforts to help "keep the lid on," there was a point when the sheer blatancy of the lies used to "explain" what had happened, the obvious falsification of ballistics and other evidence, and so on, led to the indictment of State's Attorney Hanrahan, Jalovec, and a dozen Chicago police personnel for conspiring to obstruct justice. This was dropped by Chicago Judge Phillip Romitti on November 1, 1972 as part of a quid pro quo arrangement in which remaining charges were dropped against the Panther survivors. The latter then joined the mothers of the deceased in a \$47 million civil rights suit against not only the former state defendants, but a number of Chicago police investigators who had "cleared" the raiders of wrongdoing, and the FBI as well.⁹⁷

Airtel recommending cash bonus be paid infiltrator O'Neal for services rendered in the Hampton-Clark assassinations. The money was quickly approved.

12/11/69

AIRTEL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI ~~██████████~~
 FROM: SAC, CHICAGO ~~██████████~~
 SUBJECT: ~~██████████~~

Re Bureau airtel 12/8/69 and Chicago letter 11/24/69.

Information set forth in Chicago letter and letterhead memorandum of 11/21/69, reflects legally purchased firearms in the possession of the Black Panther Party (BPP) were stored at 2337 West Monroe Street, Chicago. A detailed inventory of the weapons and also a detailed floor plan of the apartment were furnished to local authorities. In addition, the identities of BPP members utilizing the apartment at the above address were furnished. This information was not available from any other source and subsequently proved to be of tremendous value in that it subsequently saved injury and possible death to police officers participating in a raid at the address on the morning of 12/4/69. The raid was based on the information furnished by informant. During the resistance by the BPP members at the time of the raid, the Chairman of the Illinois Chapter, BPP, FRED HAMPTON, was killed and a BPP leader from Peoria, Illinois, was also killed. A quantity of weapons and ammunition were recovered.

It is felt that this information is of considerable value in consideration of a special payment for informant requested in re Chicago letter.

~~██████████~~
 1 - Chicago

The Bureau had long-since brought in ace COINTELPRO manager Richard G. Held, who replaced Marlin Johnson as Chicago SAC, in order to handle the administrative aspects of what was to be a monumental attempted cover-up. But even his undeniable skills in this regard were insufficient to gloss over the more than 100,000 pages of relevant Bureau documents concerning Hampton and the Chicago BPP he claimed under oath did not exist. Finally, after years of resolute perjury and stonewalling by the FBI and Chicago police, as well as directed acquittals of the government defendants by U.S. District Judge J. Sam Perry (which had to be appealed and reversed by the Eighth Circuit Court), People's Law Office attorneys Flint Taylor, Jeff Haas and Dennis Cunningham finally scored. In November 1982, District Judge John F. Grady determined that there was sufficient evidence of a conspiracy to deprive the Panthers of their civil rights to award the plaintiffs \$1.85 million in damages. ⁹⁸

The Hampton-Clark assassinations were hardly an isolated phenomenon. Four days after the lethal raid in Chicago, a similar scenario was acted out in Los Angeles. In this instance, the FBI utilized an infiltrator named Melvin "Cotton" Smith who, like O'Neal, had become the chief of local BPP security. Like O'Neal, Smith provided the Bureau with a detailed floorplan - albeit, in the form of a cardboard mock-up rather than a mere diagram - of the BPP facility to be assaulted. Forty men from the LAPD SWAT squad were employed, along with more than 100 regular police as "backup" in the 5:30 a.m. attack on December 8, 1969. This time, however, the primary target, LA Panther leader Elmer

"Geronimo" Pratt, was not in his assigned spot. Unbeknownst to the police, he had decided to sleep on the floor alongside his bed on the night of the raid; consequently, the opening burst of gunfire which was apparently supposed to kill him missed entirely.⁹⁹ Another major difference between the events in Chicago and those in LA was that, in the latter, a sufficient number of Panthers were awake when the shooting started to mount an effective resistance:¹⁰⁰

The Panthers chose to defend themselves, and for four hours they fought off the police, refusing to surrender until press and public were on the scene. Six were wounded. Thirteen were arrested. Miraculously, none of them were killed."¹⁰¹

As in Chicago, the raiders were headed, not by a SWAT or regular police commander, but by a coordinator of the local police Red Squad. The Los Angeles raid was led by Detective Ray Callahan, a ranking member of the LAPD Criminal Conspiracy Section (CCS), a Panther-focused "subversives unit" tightly interlocked with the local FBI COINTELPRO section, headed by Richard Wallace Held, son of Chicago SAC Richard G. Held.¹⁰² Also as in Chicago, the Panthers were immediately charged with "assaulting the police," an accusation which received considerable media play until it was quietly dropped when the matter was finally decided by a jury - and the defendants acquitted on December 23, 1971.¹⁰³ Pratt, meantime, spent a solid two months in the LA County Jail in the wake of the firefight, until his \$125,000 bond money could be raised.¹⁰⁴

As the U.S. Attorney in San Francisco put it at the time, pointing to a special "Panther unit" created by the Justice Department specifically to assist federal/local cooperation in "containing" the black liberation movement, "Whatever they say they're doing, they're out to get the Panthers."¹⁰⁵ Hence, although many antiPanther actions around the country appeared to be purely local police initiatives, most were actually coordinated by the FBI's COINTELPRO operatives in each locality. By 1969, a uniform drumbeat of anti-BPP repression was readily apparent across the nation:

From April to December, 1969, police raided Panther headquarters in San Francisco, Chicago, Salt Lake City, Indianapolis, Denver, San Diego, Sacramento and Los Angeles, including four separate raids in Chicago, two in San Diego and two in Los Angeles. Frequently Panthers were arrested during these raids on charges such as illegal use of sound equipment, harboring fugitives, possessing stolen goods and flight to avoid prosecution, and later released. In September, 1969, alone, police across the nation arrested Panthers in forty-six separate incidents [at least 348 were arrested during the whole year] ... Police raids frequently involved severe damage to Panther headquarters. Thus during a raid in Sacramento in June, 1969, in search of an alleged sniper who was never found, police sprayed the building with teargas, shot up the walls, broke typewriters and destroyed bulk food the Panthers were distributing free to ghetto children. Sacramento Mayor Richard Marriot said he was "shocked and horrified" by the "shambles" he reported police had left behind. During raids on Panther headquarters in Philadelphia in September, 1970, police ransacked the office, ripped out plumbing and chopped up and carted away furniture. Six Panthers were led into the street, placed against a wall and stripped as

Police Chief [later mayor] Frank Rizzo boasted to newsmen,
"Imagine the big Black Panthers with their pants down." ¹⁰⁶

**Airtel from J. Edgar Hoover reprimanding the San Francisco office for its
lack of vigor in pursuing COINTELPRO operations against the BPP.**

May 27, 1969

Airtel

1
1 - [REDACTED]
1 - [REDACTED]
1 - [REDACTED]

To: SAC, San Francisco (157-601)

From: Director, FBI (100-448006)

C
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
BLACK PANTHER PARTY (BPP)
BUDED: 6/9/69

PERSONAL ATTENTION

ReSFairtel 5/14/69.

A review has been made of referenced airtel which contains your thoughts on the Counterintelligence Program (CIP).
Your reasoning is not in line with Bureau objectives as to our responsibilities under the CIP. C

You state that while the Department of Justice considers the BPP as a violence-prone organization seeking to overthrow the Government by revolutionary means, "There seems to be little likelihood of this." All information developed to date leads to the obvious conclusion that this group is dedicated to the principle of violent overthrow and will go to any length to further this aim.

You point out that the activities of the BPP have reached the black and white communities as evidenced by their weekly newspaper which has reached a circulation of 45,000. You have previously been instructed to review your files concerning this newspaper to determine whether we could disrupt the mailings of the publication. Your answer stated that you were not in a position to do this. You must immediately take positive steps to insure that we will be in a position to accomplish CIP objectives including the disruption of the mailing of their publications. You must develop adequate informant coverage to insure that we are in a position to accomplish all of our objectives, which include steps to counteract the impact this group has made.

You state that local and national newspapers continue to publicize information concerning the BPP. This fact automatically lends itself toward mass media disseminations to capitalize on this eagerness and to isolate the organization from the majority of Americans, both black and white. The dissemination of mass media information to selected and trusted newspapermen, pointing out the violent and dangerous nature of a group, has contributed measurably to the decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States. Newspapers will print derogatory information much easier than they will print commendatory information, especially if the organization is by its nature violence-prone. For your information the San Diego Office has waged an effective CIP against the BPP which has measurably resulted in declining activities and considerable disruption.

It is noted that BPP leader Bobby Seale speaks in schools and universities and receives fees of up to \$1,000. This raises counterintelligence opportunities, among which are anonymous disseminations of derogatory information to universities and misuse of funds received.

As it concerns the BPP, you point out that results achieved by utilizing counterintelligence ideas such as publicizing the evils of violence, the lack of morals, the widespread use of narcotics and anonymous mailings, have not been outstanding. This is because a typical black supporter of the BPP is not disturbed by allegations which would upset a white community. You must recognize that one of our primary aims in counterintelligence as it concerns the BPP is to keep this group isolated from the moderate black and white community which may support it. This is most emphatically pointed out in their Breakfast for Children Program, where they are actively soliciting and receiving support from uninformed whites and moderate blacks. In addition, we have received information from San Francisco and other offices indicating that BPP officials are extremely suspicious of each other as to monies received. This also is a fertile ground for CIP and should be explored.

ReSFairtel states that nation-wide mailings to BPP chapter offices would automatically indicate that the FBI was the source. Mailings originating from Oakland, California, would logically be attributed to someone either at national headquarters of the BPP or a dissident who has recently resigned and had access to the records.

You state that the Bureau under the CIP should not attack programs of community interest such as the BPP "Breakfast for Children." You state that this is because many prominent "humanitarians," both white and black, are interested in the program as well as churches which are actively supporting it. You have obviously missed the point. The BPP is not engaged in the "Breakfast for Children" program for humanitarian reasons. This program was formed by the BPP for obvious reasons, including their efforts to create an image of civility, assume community control of Negroes, and to fill adolescent children with their insidious poison. An example of this is set forth in the May 11, 1969, issue of "The Black Panther." Page seven contains an article captioned "Black Panther Revolutionary Wedding." The article points out that two members of the Panthers were married at a church in Oakland, California, which is participating in the Breakfast Program. The crowd consisted mostly of Panther members and children from the Breakfast Program. Instead of a Bible, Bobby Seale used the "Red Book Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung" to perform the marriage. After the ceremony, the children sang "We Want a Pork Chop Off the Pig."

The CIP in the San Francisco Office must be re-evaluated. During the reevaluation, give thorough consideration to the adequacy of the personnel assigned. Insure that you are utilizing the best personnel available in this program. Advise the Bureau of the results of your reevaluation by June 9, 1969.

Even in the "out back" of Nebraska, the story was the same:

In August 1971, FBI agents and local police arrested two Black Panthers in Omaha ... David Rice and Ed Poindexter, on charges of killing a local policeman. In subsequent investigations by Amnesty International and other human rights agencies, it was revealed that the FBI had collected over 2000 pages of information on the Omaha chapter of the Black Panthers, and that the actual murderer of the police officer was a former drug addict

who was soon released by authorities, and who subsequently "disappeared." Both Rice and Poindexter were convicted, however, and still remain in federal penitentiaries. ¹⁰⁷

The pressure placed upon the party through such "extralegal legality" was enormous. As Panther attorney Charles Garry observed in 1970,

In a period of two years - December, 1967 to December, 1969 - the Black Panther Party has expended in bail-bond premiums alone -just the premiums, that is, money that will never be returned - a sum in excess of \$200,000! How many breakfasts or lunches for hungry children, how much medical attention sorely needed in the ghetto communities would that \$200,000 have furnished? ... In the same two-year period, twenty-eight Panthers were killed ... Let me cite some additional statistics, though for a complete record, I would recommend you consult the special issue of The Black Panther (February 21,1970) entitled, "Evidence and Intimidation of Fascist Crimes by U.S.A." Between May 2, 1967 and December 25, 1969 charges were dropped against at least 87 Panthers arrested for a wide variety of so-called violations of the law. Yet these men and women were kept in prison for days, weeks and months even though there was absolutely no evidence against them, and they were finally released. At least a dozen cases involving Panthers have been dismissed in court. In these cases, the purpose has clearly been to intimidate, to frighten, to remove from operation and activities the Panthers, and to hope the [resultant public] hysteria against the Black Panther Party would produce convictions and imprisonments. ¹⁰⁸

By 1970, what was occurring was evident enough that Mayor Wes Uhlman of Seattle, when his police were approached by agents in the local FBI office about rousting the city's BPP chapter, publicly announced that, "We are not going to have any 1932 Gestapo-type raids against anyone." ¹⁰⁹ Even SAC Charles Bates in San Francisco had attempted to protest at least the extent of what the Bureau was doing to the Panthers. For his trouble, Bates received the accompanying May 27, 1969 Airtel from Hoover informing him that he had "obviously missed the point" and that his outlook was "not in line with Bureau objectives." The director also used the opportunity to order Bates to target the BPP Breakfast for Children Program in the Bay Area. Hoover then unleashed William Sullivan to pull Bates' office back in line:

Sullivan gave Bates two weeks to assign his best agents to the COINTELPRO desks and get on with the task at hand: "Eradicate [the Panthers'] 'serve the people' programs ... So [Charles] Gain, [William] Cohendet, and the other four agents assigned to the BPP squad supervised the taps and bugs on Panther homes and offices; mailed a William F. Buckley, Jr., column on the Panthers to prominent citizens in the Bay area; tipped off San Francisco Examiner reporter Ed Montgomery to Huey Newton's posh Oakland apartment overlooking Lake Merritt; disrupted the breakfast-for-children program "in the notorious Haight-Ashbury District" and elsewhere by spreading a rumor "that various personnel in [Panther] national headquarters are infected with venereal disease," tried to break up Panther marriages with letters to wives about affairs with teenage girls; and assisted with a plan to harass the Panthers' attorney, Charles Garry ... They carried out dozens of other counterintelligence operations as well. ¹¹⁰

As should be obvious from the Rice, Poindexter and other cases already mentioned, spurious criminal prosecution was a favorite tactic used in neutralizing the BPP leadership. For instance, in 1969 Black Panther Chairman Bobby Seale was charged along with seven other Chicago conspiracy defendants, "although he had only the most tangential connection with the demonstrations during the Democratic Convention in Chicago during August of 1968 [which precipitated a major police riot in full view of national television, and for which the conspiracy charges were ostensibly brought], having been flown in at the last moment as a substitute speaker, given two speeches and left." ¹¹¹ Predictably, the charges came to nothing, but not before Seale was denied the right to represent himself at trial, and the country was treated to the spectacle of a major Panther leader bound to his chair and gagged in open court." ¹¹²

Meanwhile, on August 21, 1969 - before the Chicago trial even began - Seale was arrested in California in connection with the alleged New Haven, Connecticut torture-slaying of Alex Rackley, a Panther recruit from New York. Eleven other Panthers (mostly members of the New Haven BPP chapter) were indicted as well. ¹¹³ The main witness against Seale and the others turned out to be one of the defendants, George Sams, a police infiltrator and former psychiatric patient who had worked his way into a position in the Panther security apparatus before being expelled from the party by Seale. ¹¹⁴ As it turned out, Sams had accused Rackley of being an informer and had himself carried the bad-jacketing effort through a week-long interrogation during which the young recruit was chained to a bed and scalded with boiling water. Sams had then killed him, dumping the body in a swampy area where it was soon discovered by fishermen." ¹¹⁵

In the aftermath, one New Haven Panther, Warren Kimbro, pled guilty to second degree murder, not for having killed Rackley, but for not having prevented his death; he was sentenced to life in prison." ¹¹⁶ A second, Lonnie McLucas, was tried alone, convicted of conspiracy to murder and sentenced to 15 years. ¹¹⁷ Sams, the actual killer, was also eventually given a life sentence, despite his various police connections. ¹¹⁸

Although it was plain that the culprits in this ugly matter had been dealt with - even New Haven Police Chief James F. Ahern stated publicly that there was no evidence that Bobby Seale had been involved in Rackley's death" ¹¹⁹ - the state proceeded to bring Seale, along with Ericka Huggins (widow of assassinated LA Panther leader Jon), another "notable," to trial. Apparently, the hope was that the earlier confession and convictions would have tempered public sentiment against the BPP to such an extent that these defendants would be found guilty on the basis of party membership alone. In this the government was disappointed when the "jury in the trial was ready to acquit Seale but ... two jurors refused to vote for acquittal unless [Ericka Huggins] was convicted. [judge Harold M. Mulveny then] ordered both cases dismissed [on May 24, 1971 when the jury reported it was hopelessly deadlocked." ¹²⁰ State apologists promptly claimed "justice" had been served, but by then Seale had served more than two years in maximum security lockup without bail, much of it in solitary confinement, without ever having been convicted of anything at all, and was never really able to resume his former galvanizing role in the party. ¹²¹

While this was going on, in "August, 1969, three Black Panthers were

arrested while riding in a car with a New York City undercover agent, Wilbert Thomas, and charged with a variety of offenses including conspiracy to rob a hotel, attempted murder of a policeman and illegal possession of weapons. During the trial, it developed that Thomas had supplied the car, had drawn a map of the hotel -the only tangible evidence tying the Panthers to the robbery scheme - and had offered to supply the guns. The Panthers were eventually convicted only of a technical weapons charge, based on the fact that a shotgun, which the Panthers said had been planted by Thomas, was found in the car." ¹²²

Moving ahead, the "FBI pressured the Justice Department to get on with the conspiracy prosecutions," either in federal court or by assisting local prosecutors. ¹²³ One result was that: "In May, 1971, the so-called Panther Twenty One' were acquitted in New York City of charges of having conspired to bomb department stores, blow up police stations and murder policemen; a number of the defendants had been held in jail for over two years under \$100,000 bails." ¹²⁴ This was the 10% cash requirement associated with total bonds of \$1,000,000 per defendant, making their aggregate bond a staggering \$21,000,000! They had been indicted on April 2, 1969, largely on the basis of accusations tendered by three police infiltrators, Eugene Roberts, Carlos Ashwood (aka: Carl Wood) and Ralph White (aka: Sudan Yedaw). Their testimony literally fell apart in court. ¹²⁵ The jury deliberated "less than an hour" in acquitting the defendants of all 156 charges levied against them by New York County District Attorney Frank Hogan and Assistant District Attorney Joseph A. Phillips on the basis of "evidence" provided by "New York police officers and FBI agents." ¹²⁶ But, as had been the case with Seale, the Panther 21 had been held under maximum security conditions - many in solitary confinement - for months on end, even though they were ultimately shown to have been innocent of the accusations leveled against them. ¹²⁷ The New York BPP chapter virtually disintegrated during the extended mass incarceration of its entire leadership.

Memo reporting on the progress of a COINTELPRO utilizing disinformation and anonymous letters to foment a split between the international section of the BPP, headed by Eldridge Cleaver in ALgiers, and Huey P. Newton's organization based in Oakland, California. The operation was continued with lethal results.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

NOTE IN ENVELOPE

- 1 - Mr. C. D. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

DATE: May 14, 1970

FROM : G. C. Moore

- 1 - Mr. T. E. Bishop
- 1 - [Redacted]
- 1 - [Redacted]

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE

Tolson _____
DeLoach _____
Mohr _____
Bishop _____
Casper _____
Callahan _____
Conrad _____
Felt _____
Gale _____
Rosen _____
Sullivan _____
Tavel _____
Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Holmes _____
Gandy _____

5-D
[Handwritten initials and notes]

This is to recommend that the Counterintelligence Program against black extremists be continued.

The Counterintelligence Program against black extremist organizations and individuals was initiated August 25, 1967, and on March 4, 1968, it was expanded from 27 to 42 participating field divisions. The goals of this program are to prevent violence by black extremists, to prevent the growth and/or unification of extremist groups, and to prevent extremist groups from gaining respectability in the Negro community. Some of the excellent results of counterintelligence action during the past year are set out below:

To create friction between Black Panther Party (BPP) leader Eldridge Cleaver in Algiers and BPP Headquarters, a spurious letter concerning an internal dispute was sent Cleaver, who accepted it as genuine. As a result, the International Staff of the BPP was neutralized when Cleaver fired most of its members. Bureau personnel received incentive awards from the Director for this operation.

To show the criminal nature of the BPP a write-up concerning the convictions of its members was prepared and received publicity in a Robert S. Allen and John A. Goldsmith syndicated column of March 31, 1970. Previously we exposed the BPP Breakfast For Children Program in these writers' column of June 14, 1969.

Articles concerning the BPP based on information furnished by a news media source in Mississippi resulted in the closing of a BPP Chapter in Cleveland, Mississippi.

Counterintelligence action against other extremist organizations has also been effective. In San Diego, California, an anonymous telephone call to the landlord of the US organization resulted in the group being evicted from its Headquarters. In Florida, a television source was helped in the preparation of a program exposing the Nation of Islam. The excellent results of this program were contained in a memorandum from G. C. Moore to Mr. W. C. Sullivan, October 21, 1969, on which the Director noted "Excellent

100-448006
97 JUN 10 1970

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE.
25 JUN 1970
CONTINUED - OVER

By the beginning of 1970, "the Black Panther Party had been severely damaged by arrests, trials, shootouts and police and FBI harassment which had jailed, killed or exiled most of the top leadership of the party. Nevertheless, in March 1970, the FBI initiated what the Senate Intelligence Committee has labelled a 'concerted program' to drive a permanent wedge between two factions in the party, one supporting Eldridge Cleaver [exiled in Algeria] ... and the other supporting [Huey P.] Newton, then still in jail." 128 As can be seen in the accompanying May 14, 1970 memo from George C. Moore to William C. Sullivan, this was approached in a quite deliberate fashion through the use of forged and/or anonymous letters and the like. And, as is brought out clearly in the accompanying September 16, 1970 Airtel (see [document](#)) from the director to three SACs, the Bureau considered it "immaterial whether

facts exist to substantiate" the sorts of charges it was introducing into the BPP communications network.

Excerpt from a September 16, 1970 Airtel from Hoover informing his COINTELPRO operatives that outright lies were appropriate content for anonymous letters, and that murder was an appropriate outcome to such an operation so long as the cause could not be traced back to the Bureau.

Concerning the first proposal submitted by Detroit, counterintelligence action by San Francisco to capitalize on Huey P. Newton's favorable stand toward homosexuality has already been authorized by the Bureau. The second Detroit proposal to consider directing an anonymous communication to Newton accusing David Hilliard of stealing BPP funds and depositing them in foreign banks does have merit and the Bureau does not concur with San Francisco's observation that this would have little effect since there is no record that Hilliard is skimming large amounts of money. Purpose of counterintelligence action is to disrupt BPP and it is immaterial whether facts exist to substantiate the charge. If facts are present, it aids in the success of the proposal but the Bureau feels that the skimming of money is such a sensitive issue that disruption can be accomplished without facts to back it up.

Accordingly, Detroit immediately furnish Bureau and San Francisco with specific suggestions and wording to this effect and San Francisco should then review same and submit specific proposal in this regard for approval by Bureau.

With respect to two anonymous letters proposed by Los Angeles, Bureau concurs with San Francisco that to include the card of a member of a rival black extremist group in a letter to Hilliard indicating Newton is marked for assassination could place the Bureau in the position of aiding or initiating a murder by the BPP. Accordingly, Los Angeles' proposal identified as "Letter A" is not approved. Los Angeles should reword this letter to convey the same thought without directly indicating that it is from a specific member of a rival group. The letter could imply that the writer would soon get in touch with Hilliard to see what he would pay to have Newton eliminated. Resubmit the revised letter to the Bureau for approval.

The sorts of repression which had already been visited upon the BPP had inevitably engendered among party members a strong sense of being in a battle for sheer physical survival, a matter lending potentially lethal implications to FBI-fostered rumors that given individuals or groups of Panthers were, say, police agents. That Hoover and his men were well aware these sorts of tactics could have fatal results for at least some of those targeted is readily discernable on the second page of the September 16 Airtel. As may be seen rather plainly, Hoover disapproved the sending of a particular anonymous letter only because, if it were traced back to its source, its wording might "place the Bureau in the position of aiding and abetting in a murder by the BPP." His instructions were simply to reword the letter in such a way as to accomplish the same result while leaving the FBI a window of "plausible deniability" in the event a homicide did in fact result. While there is no evidence that David Hilliard ever actually responded to COINTELPRO manipulation by attempting to have Newton killed, murders *did* result:

[In New York] Robert Weaver, a Cleaverite, was shot dead on a Harlem street corner in early March [1971]. A month later persons unknown entered the Queens County office of the Black Panther Party, a Newtonite enclave, bound up Samuel Napier, circulation manager of The Mack Panther, taped his eyes and mouth, laid him face down on a cot, and shot off the back of his head. ¹²⁹

At least three other murders, all in California, seem likely to have been directly related to this aspect of the FBI's anti BPP COINTELPRO. These were the execution of LA-BPP member Fred Bennett at some point in early 1970 (Bennett's body was never found), Sandra Lane "Red" Pratt (Geronimo Pratt's wife) in LA on January 13, 1972, and the execution-style slaying of former Newton bodyguard Jimmy Carr by LA Panthers Lloyd Lamar Mims and Richard Rodriguez in San Francisco on April 6, 1972. ¹³⁰ In the case of Fred Bennett, rather than conducting any serious investigation into his death the Bureau used it as a prop - as the accompanying February 17, 1971 teletype from the SAC, San Francisco to Hoover indicates - in the penning of a bogus letter to Panther Field Marshall Don Cox ("D.C.") in Algeria as a means to "further exploit dissension within the BPP." Bennett's murder remains "unsolved," as does that of Sandra Lane Pratt.

Teletype proposing forged letter playing upon the murder of Fred Bennett as a means of widening the "Newton-Cleaver split." As the document continues it becomes clear that the gambit is also part of a COINTELPRO to isolate LA-BPP leader Geronimo Pratt.

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 2/17/71

Transmit the following in CONFIDENTIAL
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR (100-448006)
FROM: SAN FRANCISCO (157-601)

DECLASSIFIED BY SP2 Kelym/bj
OR 2/14/20

COINTELPRO - BLACK EXTREMISTS, RM.

TO FURTHER EXPLOIT DISSENSION WITHIN THE BPP AND
SUSPICIONS REGARDING VARIOUS LEADERS, THE FOLLOWING LETTER
TO ~~██████████~~ IN ALGERIA
IS PROPOSED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE:

"D.C.

"BY NOW YOU HAVE HEARD ABOUT POOR FRED. I HAVE WARNED
HUEY OF THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES. IT SEEMS TO BE GETTING
WORSE. J.B. AND ROBERT ARE NOW ALSO MISSING.

"IN VIEW OF THIS SITUATION YOU BETTER HAVE A LONG TALK
WITH ELDRIDGE BEFORE HE LETS KATHLEEN COME HERE. G. IS REALLY
UP TIGHT. BIG MAN IS JUST DYING AND NO HELP AT ALL.

"A.C."

THIS LETTER IS ALSO SLANTED TO IMPLY THAT IT CAME FROM

~~██████████~~ WHOSE EXACT WHEREABOUTS ARE NOT KNOWN TO THE
BPP AND IS IN THE FORM OF A WARNING TO ~~██████████~~ IN VIEW OF

B7C

CLASSIFIED BY SP2 Kelym/bj
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 1
AUTOMATICALLY CONFIDENTIAL Indefinite

JAD/jr
(1)

Approved: [Signature] Sent AS4 M Per [Signature]
Special Agent in Charge

100-448006-2270

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via _____
(Priority)

SF 157-601

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PAGE TWO

THE SITUATION INVOLVING THE DEATH OF FRED BENNETT. THE
 J.B. REFERRED TO IN THE LETTER IS [REDACTED] AND ROBERT IS
 [REDACTED] WHO TOGETHER WITH [REDACTED] HAVE PREVIOUSLY WORKED
 WITH [REDACTED] AND ARE BELIEVED SYMPATHETIC TO THE DISSIDENT
 BPP GROUP REPRESENTED BY GERONIMO. THE WHEREABOUTS OF
 [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] IS UNKNOWN AT THE PRESENT TIME TO THE BPP.
 INASMUCH AS THE FIRST A.C. LETTER COULD POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN
 TAKEN BY NEWTON AS A WARNING FROM THE DISSIDENTS, -THIS LETTER
 WILL FURTHER THIS BELIEF IF THERE IS ANY DISCUSSION BY
 NEWTON WITH BPP REPRESENTATIVES IN ALGERIA.

THE LETTER ALSO CASTS REFLECTIONS ON [REDACTED]
 CLEAVER STALWART.

IF SUCCESSFUL, THIS MIGHT FURTHER SPLIT THE BPP AND
 PREVENT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE RETURN TO THE U.S. OF KATHLEEN
 CLEAVER WHO MIGHT ATTEMPT TO UNIFY THE DISSIDENT FACTIONS
 IN THE PARTY IF SHE APPEARS.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
 Special Agent in Charge

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1969 O - 36-583 811

Such atrocities cannot be separated from the FBI's intervention to exacerbate the "Newton-Cleaver Split," a COINTELPRO initiative which was by then in full swing, as was made clear in a January 1, 1971 teletype from the San Francisco SAC to Hoover. The forged letter proposed in this teletype reads as follows:

Eldridge, I know you have not been told what has been happening lately. It is a shame that a person, as well-placed as I am and so desirous of improving our Party, cannot by present rules travel to or communicate with you. I really don't know where you stand in relationship to our leaders and really am not confident you would protect me in the event of exposure. Since this is my life-work, just let me say I have worked long and well in your behalf in the past, and for the

Party in many places on Planet Earth.

Things around Headquarters are dreadfully disorganized with the Comrade Commander not making proper decisions. The newspaper is in shambles. No one knows who is in charge. The Foreign Department gets no support. Brothers and sisters are accused of all sorts of things. The point of all this is to say I fear there is rebellion working just beneath the surface. You may know the story about "G" and his gang. I believe that people like "G" have many sympathizers who are not yet under suspicion but who should be. They have friends right in Headquarters where the Minister chooses to ignore them.

I am disturbed because I, myself, do not know which way to turn. While I think the Comrade Commander is weak, yet I do not like the evidences of disloyalty I see. I may be wrong but I think the core of this disloyalty (maybe you think what I consider disloyalty is actually supreme loyalty to the ideals of the Party rather than the leader himself) is with persons formerly close to the Field Marshall. If only you were here to inject some strength into the Movement, or to give some advice. One of two steps must be taken soon and both are drastic. We must either get rid of the Supreme Commander or get rid of the disloyal members. I know the brothers mean well but I fear the only sensible course that the Party can take is to initiate strong and complete action against the rebels, exposing their underhanded tricks to the community. Huey is really all we have right now and we can't let him down, regardless of how poorly he is acting, unless you feel otherwise. Remember he is still able to bring in the bread.

- Comrade C

The letter was attributed by the Bureau to party member Connie Matthews ("Comrade C"), and designed - according to the text of the remainder of the teletype - not only to cause general "turmoil among the top echelon [of the BPP; e.g.: by casting doubt upon Field Marshall Don Cox, a Cleaver ally]," but to specifically target LA Panther leader Geronimo Pratt ("G") for suspicion by the Cleaver faction. Note the call for "drastic action" in the letter. This, after at least one Panther (Fred Bennett) was already thought to have been killed as a result of the Bureau's deliberate heightening of tensions attending "the split," and in the context of a lively internal dialogue among COINTELPRO planners concerning the probability that others would die if such tactics were continued. Under the circumstances, there can be little doubt as to the Bureau's intent in approving and sending the bogus missive.

Memo targeting Geronimo Pratt and his lieutenant John William "Long John" Washington for neutralization, denying "unity of action" to the LA-BPP.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO DIRECTOR, FBI (100-448006)
FROM SAC, LOS ANGELES (157-4054)(P)

DATE: 1/28/70

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE
BPP

105-11571-206
105-11571-206
105-11571-206

Re Los Angeles airtel and letterhead memorandum to the Bureau dated 11/28/69, entitled "BLACK PANTHER PARTY, RM - BPP", San Francisco letter to the Bureau dated 12/4/69, and Los Angeles letters to the Bureau dated 12/11/69 and 1/15/70.

Enclosed for the Bureau and San Francisco are one copy each of two hand prepared proposed counterintelligence leaflets, numbered 1 and 2 for reference.

Bureau approval is requested in the creation of an anonymous paper underground to attack, expose, and ridicule the image of the BPP in the community and to foment mistrust and suspicion amongst the current and past membership, through publication and dissemination of information embarrassing to the BPP. Activities of the underground, initially to be referred to as "the Los Angeles Three", therein identifying the source in a form of reference

- ⑦ - Bureau (RM)
- (1 - 157-12311)(EMER GIBARD-PHATT)
- 1 - San Francisco (157-8017)(Info)(RM)
- 7 - Los Angeles
- (1 - 157-3026)(EMER GIBARD-PHATT)(SI)

70

RWH/vjh
(16)



MAR 4 1970

NOV 17 1970

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

LA 157-4054

common to Panther rhetoric, would be prepared to suggest participation by active and past members of the Los Angeles Black Panther Party (LA BPP). The selection of the organization's name is an arbitrary one which lends itself to a future display of the group's growth if the response warrants. The necessity for the anonymity of the underground organization could be explained, if necessary, as an imperative precaution in view of the past acts of violence and retaliation executed by the LA BPP.

It is anticipated that this counterintelligence proposal could serve as one phase of a continuous attempt to deny unity of action in the effort of the LA BPP by calling to question the actions of the organization and the legitimacy of its leadership.

It is felt that the production and distribution of these leaflets could be such that the identity of the FBI as the source of the proposed organization could be effectively concealed.

In this respect, Bureau approval is requested in the preparation and dissemination of leaflets similar to the enclosed in the vicinities of 4115 South Central, 9818 Anzac, and 1810 East 103rd Street, locations of BPP activities in Los Angeles. It would be the intention of the Los Angeles Division to distribute leaflet No. 2 seven to ten days following the introduction of leaflet No. 1, as any follow up should not only make the effort a topical one, but stimulate increased reaction within the Los Angeles BPP.

Operation Number One is designed to challenge the legitimacy of the authority exercised by ELMER GERARD PRATT, BPP Deputy Minister of Defense for Southern California, and JOHN WILLIAM WASHINGTON, an active member of the BPP in Los Angeles.

Operation Number Two is utilized to publicize the illicit sexual activities allegedly encouraged and engaged in by [REDACTED] 7C

- 2 -

Concerning Pratt, he had already been the target of a similar COINTELPRO operation which had led to his formal expulsion (as a "police agent" and/or a "Cleaverite") by the Newton faction on January 23, 1971. ¹³¹ This earlier operation, handled by LA COINTELPRO section head Richard W. Held and two subordinates, Richard H. Bloeser and Brendan Cleary, included the high priority targeting of Pratt - as one of the 100-odd "Key Activists" selected for inclusion in the Bureau's Black Nationalist Photo Album - and LA-BPP associate John William Washington for discrediting as part of the overall strategy to "deny unity of action" to the Panthers, a matter brought out in the accompanying January 28 memo and June 26, 1970 teletype from the SAC, Los Angeles, to the director (see document below)

Teletype denoting Geronimo Pratt's inclusion in the Black Nationalist Photo Album, his refusal to cooperate with the FBI as a "Racial Informant," and the Bureau's consequent intention to bad-jacket him.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

LES	DATE 6/26/70	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 5/6/69 - 6/21/70
	REPORT MADE BY [REDACTED]	TYPED BY 74 BCS
CHARACTER OF CASE		

LA 157-3436

It is noted that PRATT's photograph is included in the Black Nationalist Photo Album.

For the information of the Bureau, in view of PRATT's adamant expression of hatred toward law enforcement personnel in general, no consideration is being given to reinterview PRATT for the purpose of development as a PRI. It is noted, however, that constant consideration is given to the possibility of the utilization of counterintelligence measures with efforts being directed toward neutralizing PRATT as an effective BPP functionary.

It is noted that the investigative period of this report overlaps that of referenced report in view of the fact that activities occurring prior to submission of referenced report were not reported until after submission of referenced report.

This report is being classified confidential because it contains information furnished by sources of continuing value and disclosure of these sources could result in their identification thereby affecting the Internal Security of the United States.

LEADS

LOS ANGELES

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA: Will continue to follow and report activities of ELMER PRATT in view of his being the BPP Deputy Minister of Defense.

INFORMANTS

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]

This tied to a second dimension of a campaign to neutralize the LA party leader which saw him charged on December 16, 1970 with the so-called "Tennis Court Murder" (committed on December 18, 1968 in Santa Monica, California).¹³² The "evidence" linking Pratt to the crime was primarily that of an FBI infiltrator, Julius C. "Julio" Butler, who was to perjure himself during the ensuing trial by testifying that he had had no paid association with any police agency since joining the BPP.¹³³ At trial, the FBI also denied the existence of ELSURS logs concerning its wiretapping and other electronic surveillance of the Panther national headquarters in Oakland, a record which would have established that Pratt was in the San Francisco Bay area, some 350 miles north of Santa Monica, on the evening the murder occurred. When the monitoring was

later revealed, the Bureau claimed that its logs covering the two week period which might have exonerated Pratt had been "lost." ¹³⁴ The upshot of the Bureau's bad-jacketing COINTELPRO was that during the course of his trial, the target was isolated from the legal support which might have accrued from his former party associates, both within the Newton faction and - to some extent at least - the Cleaver faction as well. He was thus convicted, and sentenced to life imprisonment. ¹³⁵ At present, he remains incarcerated at San Quentin. ¹³⁶

An equally troubling case in New York involve[s] another COINTELPRO target, (Richard] Dhoruba Moore. A codefendant in the Panther 21 case who believed Newton had ordered his assassination, Moore jumped bail, fled the country, and was acquitted in absentia in March 1971. Police officers arrested him three months later at an after hours club in the Bronx, booking him as a John Doe. The officers also confiscated a .45 calibre [sub] machine gun at the club. When they discovered Moore's identity, they charged him with the attempted murder of two patrolmen [Thomas Curry and Nicholas Binetti] who had been assigned to guard the Riverside Drive home of Panther 21 prosecutor Frank Hogan. Moore was indicted, tried, and convicted, with the court handing down a sentence of twenty five years to life. The question that [goes] to the heart of the criminal justice system ha[s] less to do with Dhoruba Moore's guilt or innocence than whether he received a fair trial. ¹³⁷

A similar case is that of the "New York Three" - Herman Bell, Anthony "Jalil" Bottom and Albert "Nuh" Washington, members of the New York BPP chapter and alleged Black Liberation Army (BLA) members - sentenced to serve 25 year-to-life prison terms in 1975 for the 1971 shooting deaths of NYPD patrolmen Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini. Only much later, during the early '80s, did it begin to come out that the FBI had carefully concealed significant exculpatory material such as a ballistics report showing conclusively that the crucial piece of "physical evidence" introduced at trial - a .45 caliber automatic pistol in Bell's possession at the time of his arrest - was not (as prosecutors claimed) the weapon used to kill the policemen. Suppressed Bureau documents also record that a key government witness, Ruben Scott, was first tortured and then offered a deal on a pending murder charge against him in exchange for his "cooperation" against the three in court; Scott has subsequently recanted the entirety of his testimony. Two other witnesses were jailed for 13 months and threatened with loss of custody over their children to induce their testimony. Each woman was not only released from jail and allowed to retain custody, but also provided a rent-free apartment and \$150 per week stipend for several years after her stint on the witness stand. At the time Bell, Bottom and Washington were tried, and during their subsequent appeals, the FBI falsely contended it had "nothing relevant" regarding their case. As is plainly shown in the accompanying January 24, 1974 memo from G.C. Moore to W.R. Wannall, this was no accident; the Bureau was quite concerned to insure that it could not be identified as the source of information being presented by the state. It thus avoided being compelled to disclose evidence which might have served to exonerate the defendants or bring about reversal of their convictions. As of this writing, all three men remain in prison after 15 years. ¹³⁸

Memo showing the care taken by the FBI to hide the fact that it had

gathered evidence which might have served to exonerate the New York Three. The coverup continued into the 1980s, and to an unknown extent goes on at present.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : MR. W. R. WANNALL *WRW*

FROM : MR. G. C. MOORE *GM*

SUBJECT: NEWKILL

DATE: January 21, 1974

1 - Office of Legal Counsel

1 - Mr. W. R. Wannall

1 - Mr. G. C. Moore

1 - Mr. P. V. Daly

Handwritten list of offices on right side:
 Assoc. Dir.
 Asst. Dir.:
 Adm. Serv.
 Comp. Syst.
 Ext. Affairs
 Files & Com.
 Gen. Inv.
 Ident. Div.
 Insp.
 Intell. Div.
 Lab.
 Legal Coun.
 Plan. & Insp.
 Rec. Mgmt.
 Training
 Telephone Rm.
 Director's Sec'y.

PURPOSE:
 Purpose of this memorandum is to advise that the New York City Police Department (NYCPD) made available to defense attorneys copies of its investigative reports relative to captioned matter, pursuant to a court order, which reports contained information furnished by the Bureau. The New York Office advised, however, that the Bureau could not be identified in these reports as the source of the information.

BACKGROUND:
 Newkill is the code word used for the Bureau's investigation concerning the killing of two New York City police officers on 5/21/71. This investigation was initiated pursuant to request by President Nixon made of the Bureau on 5/26/71. Pertinent results of this investigation were made available to the NYCPD via letter-head memoranda (LHM's).

The 1/8/74 issue of "The New York Times" reported that New York State Supreme Court Justice Roberts ordered the prosecution in captioned matter to make available any information contained in police files favorable to the defendants. According to this article, the Justice, after reviewing the police files, turned over most of this material to defense lawyers.

We queried the New York Office as to whether any of the information furnished to the defense attorneys originated from the FBI and whether it could be clearly identified as such. New York Office, after contact with local authorities in New York, determined that the LHM's made available to the police by the Bureau concerning this matter were not turned over to the defense attorneys nor could the information furnished to the defense attorneys be clearly identified as originating from these LHM's. To date, there is no apparent indication that the defense attorneys may make a similar motion concerning information contained in Bureau files relative to our investigation on Newkill.

ACTION: For information.

157-22002

PVD:ekv

57 JAN 28 1974

Handwritten notes and signatures:
 5-10-74
 REC-45 157-22002-73
 K
 PVD
 157-22002-73

Like the case of Geronimo Pratt, both the Dhoruba Moore case and that of the New York Three are bound up in the context of the FBI's COINTELPRO activities regarding the Newton-Cleaver split. These activities- as are partially reflected in the accompanying excerpt from a February 2, 1971 Hoover Airtel to 29 SACs (see [document](#)) - left the BPP in divisive opposing factions, each utterly unable to provide coherent legal defense to its membership. That the FBI and cooperating police

agencies capitalized upon this situation to the utmost has become increasingly apparent.

On other fronts, the Bureau engaged in a range of anti-Panther counterintelligence operations which ranged from the orchestration of murder to attempts to deny funding to BPP legal defense efforts. An example of the former may be found in the FBI's assistance to its allies in the LAPD's CCS to set up the celebrated prison author (and honorary BPP Field Marshal), George Jackson, for assassination inside San Quentin on August 21, 1971, and its subsequent use of the incident as the basis for accusations intended to neutralize Angela Y. Davis, head of Jackson's defense organization and a leading Panther-associated spokesperson.¹³⁹ On the latter count, as the accompanying May 21, 1970 memo from the New York SAC (see page 162) makes clear, efforts were undertaken (successfully, as it turned out) to utilize the earlier mentioned spurious information concerning BPP "anti-Semitism" to dry up legal defense contributions flowing from individuals such as Leonard Bernstein, wealthy conductor of the New York Philharmonic, to the Panther 21.¹⁴⁰

According to the Senate Select Committee, other targets dealt with by the Bureau in a fashion comparable to that used against Bernstein included author Donald Freed (who headed the "Friends of the Panthers" organization in LA), Ed Pearl of the Peace and Freedom Party, the actress Jane Fonda, "the [unidentified] wife of a famous Hollywood actor," an unidentified "famous entertainer," and an employee of the Union Carbide Corporation, among others.¹⁴¹ In each case, COINTELPRO actions were undertaken which "would be an effective means of combating BPP fund raising activities among liberal and naive individuals."¹⁴²

Elsewhere, the FBI utilized the services of an infiltrator to have the Sacramento chapter of the BPP print a racist and violence-oriented coloring book for children. When the item was brought to the attention of Bobby Seale and other members of the Panther leadership, it was immediately ordered destroyed rather than distributed. Nonetheless, the Bureau mailed copies to companies - including Safeway Stores, Inc., Mayfair Markets and the Jack-In-The-Box Corporation - which had been contributing food to the party's Breakfast for Children program, in order to cause the withdrawal of such support.¹⁴³ In the same vein, anonymous letters were mailed to the parishioners and bishop of a San Diego priest, Father Frank Curran, who had been allowing the Panthers to use his church as a Breakfast for Children serving facility, in order that use of the church be withdrawn and Father Curran transferred to "somewhere in the State of New Mexico for permanent assignment."¹⁴⁴

Self-congratulatory Airtel describing the success of the COINTELPRO attending the "Newton-Cleaver Split" in terms of "rising dissent within the BPP causing serious morale problem and strained relationship among Panther hierarchy," which caused a rapid disintegration of the Party.

ROUTE IN ENVELOPE

2/2/71

Airtel

- 1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. J. P. Mohr
- 1 - Mr. C. D. Brennan
- 1 - Mr. J. J. Casper
- 1 - [REDACTED]
- 1 - [REDACTED]
- 1 - [REDACTED]

To: SACs, Albany
 Atlanta
 Baltimore
 Boston
 Charlotte
 Chicago
 Cincinnati
 Cleveland
 Columbia
 Dallas
 Detroit
 Indianapolis
 Las Vegas
 Los Angeles
 Newark

New Haven
 New Orleans
 New York
 Philadelphia
 Pittsburgh
 Portland
 Richmond
 Sacramento
 San Francisco
 Savannah
 Seattle
 Springfield
 Tampa
 WFO

From: Director, FBI (100-448006)

COINTELPRO - BLACK PANTHER PARTY (BPP) - DISSENSION
 RACIAL MATTERS
 FEB 25 1971 2/10/71
 COMM-FBI

Increasing evidence points to rising dissension within BPP causing serious morale problem and strained relationship among Panther hierarchy. Primary cause of these internal problems appears to be dictatorial, irrational and capricious conduct of Huey P. Newton. His extreme sensitivity to any criticism, jealousy of other leaders and belief he is some form of deity are causing severe problems within the group. Newton's relationship with Cleaver and other top leaders is strained. He has recently expelled or disciplined several dedicated Panthers includin

- Tolson _____
- DeLoach _____
- Mohr _____
- Bishop _____
- W.C. Sullivan _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Soyars _____
- Tavel _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

ABF:drl
(69)

REC 8 100-448006-6
 EY-11
 SEE NOTE PAGE THREE

97 FEB 1 1971

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
 HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
 EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
 OTHERWISE

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE

Airtel to Albany et al
R: COINTELPRO - Black Panther Party (BPP) - Dissension
100-448006

[REDACTED] and Newton's
[REDACTED] and companions who were involved
in BPP underground operation (see 1/23/71 edition of
"The Black Panther"); and the "New York 21" who were a
leading cause celebre of Pantherism.

This dissension coupled with financial difficulties offers an exceptional opportunity to further disrupt, aggravate and possibly neutralize this organization through counterintelligence. In light of above developments this program has been intensified by selected offices and should be further expanded to increase measurably the pressure on the BPP and its leaders.

San Francisco and New York are already involved in counterintelligence actions and should continue to be alert for further opportunities. All other recipients should immediately devise at least two counterintelligence proposals and submit same to Bureau by 2/10/71. First proposal should be aimed strictly at creating dissension within the local branch. Second proposal should be aimed at creating dissension or problems between local branch and/or its leaders and BPP national headquarters. Submit each proposal in a separate airtel referencing this communication and in first paragraph specifically indicate whether proposal aimed at local dissension or national dissension.

In order for these proposals to be effective it is imperative that a close analysis be made of weaknesses and problems within the local BPP branch and that all proposals submitted be imaginative and timely. No proposal should be implemented without specific Bureau approval.

Considerable COINTELPRO attention was also focused upon The Black Panther newspaper because, as was observed by FBI headquarters in 1970, "The BPP newspaper has a circulation of .. 139,000. It is the voice of the BPP and if it could be effectively hindered, it would result in helping to cripple the BPP." ¹⁴⁵ The methods employed for this purpose included an unsuccessful effort to use the IRS to close The Black Panther down and the sending of bogus cards and letters, attributed to the Minutemen organization, to the paper's staff purporting to show that the violent right-wing group intended to attack them physically (the operation was apparently intended to frighten the staff into quitting or at least suspending production of their publication). ¹⁴⁶ The Bureau also attempted to bring about bankruptcy of the paper by convincing freight companies to shift from the general rate pertaining to printed material to the "full legal rate allowable for newspaper shipment."

Officials advise this increase ... means approximately a forty percent increase. Officials agree to determine cosignor in San Francisco and from this determine cosignees throughout the United States so that it can impose full legal tariff. They believe the airlines are due the differences in freight tariffs as noted above for the past six to eight months, and are considering discussions with their legal staff concerning suit for recovery of deficit... [T] hey

estimate that in New York alone [it] will exceed ten thousand dollars. 147

Memo outlining plan to deny legal defense funding to the BPP in New York from supporters such as Philharmonic conductor Leonard Bernstein. Note reliance upon the "anti-Semetic" ploy and involvement of the JDL discussed earlier.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (100-448006) DATE: 5/21/70

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK (100-161140) (P)

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST - HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE

ReNYlet to Bureau, 2/25/70.

1. Operations Under Consideration

It is felt by the NYO that BPP operations can best be disrupted by exposing them to individuals and groups who would have a natural or conditioned animosity toward the BPP aims and ideals.

The above can be accomplished through the continued use of anonymous letters and handbills which would be directed toward those who may be expected to act through economic or personal means against the BPP thereby hindering BPP operations.

The NYO realizes the importance of negating the financial benefits coming to the BPP through the distribution of their official newspaper "The Black Panther" and will continue to attempt to derive a logical and practical plan to thwart this crucial BPP operation.

2. Operations Being Submitted

On 2/27/70, correspondence was directed to individuals known to have attended a BPP fund-raising function at the home of the well known musician, LEONARD BERNSTEIN. This correspondence outlined the BPP's anti-Semetic posture and pro-Arab position.

On 3/5/70, mimeograph copies of a "BPP solicitation letter" and a "Store owners letter" were sent to BPP headquarters in NYC as per Bureau instructions dated 3/5/70.

On 3/6/70, information was furnished to an established newspaper contact concerning the source of monies used to raise bail for one of the "Panther 21", a group of BPP members on trial in New York City.

2- Bureau (RM)
1- New York (43)

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(3)



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On 4/1/70, the NYO participated in the formulation of a Counterintelligence proposal submitted by San Francisco office and directed against black militant leader LEROY ELDRIDGE CLEAVER.

On 4/20/70, the NYO sent a letter to various individuals familiar with BPP activities in the New York area concerning STOKELY CARMICHAEL's views on the late ADOLPH HITLER.

3. Tangible Results

On 5/7/70, [REDACTED] both of whom have furnished reliable information in the past, advised that on that date approximately 35 members of the Jewish Defense League (JDL) picketed the Harlem Branch of the BPP in NYC. The purpose of this demonstration was to show that the JDL feels the BPP is anti-Semitic in its acts and words.

Also on the above date approximately 50 members of the JDL demonstrated outside of the Bronx, New York BPP Headquarters for the aforementioned reasons.

In view of the above actions by the JDL it is felt that some of the counterintelligence measures of the NYO have produced tangible results.

4. Developments of Counter-Intelligence Interests

As the summer season approaches the NYO will be keenly aware of the activities of various racial and hate groups in New York City for the exploitation of such activities within the continuing counterintelligence program.

The NYO will immediately inform the Bureau of any situations or developments that occur where counterintelligence techniques may be used.

When such actions failed to engender the desired results, the San Diego field office came up with the idea of utilizing a stink-bomb to close the paper's production facility; the San Diego SAC recommended using Skatol, "a chemical agent in powdered form ... [which] emits an extremely noxiously [sic] odor rendering the premises surrounding the point of application uninhabitable." ¹⁴⁸ This plan also failed, probably because a burglary was required to carry it out, and agents could not "achieve entry" into the "area utilized for production of 'The Black Panther'." ¹⁴⁹ Overall, the Bureau's counterintelligence offensive against this element of "the free press" was undertaken because, in the words of the SAC, New York:

[The FBI] realizes the financial benefits coming to the BPP through the sale of this newspaper. Continued efforts will [therefore] be made to derive logical and practical plans to thwart this crucial BPP operation." ¹⁵⁰

The FBI has admitted that, during the COINTELPRO era proper (1956-71), it ran some 295 distinct COINTELPRO operations against individuals and organizations which - using a broad definition - may be considered as part of the black liberation movement. Of these, 233 were aimed at the BPP between 1967 and 1971. ¹⁵¹ The total number of fatalities resulting from these brutally illegal activities on the part of the nation's "top law enforcement agency" will probably never be known, nor will the number of years spent by innocent people railroaded into prison

cells or the number of lives wrecked in somewhat more subtle ways. The government has, for obvious reasons, been loath to offer anything approximating a comprehensive study of what is known such things, even in the midst of such "housecleanings" as the Church Committee investigations of the mid-70s.

Under the weight of such ruthless, concerted and sustained repression - and despite the incredible bravery with which many of its members attempted to continue their work - the Black Panther Party simply collapsed. Some of its survivors moved into the essentially militaristic Black Liberation Army, founded by BPP member Zayd Malik Shakur (s/n: James Costan) and others in New York as early as 1971.¹⁵² Many others dropped out of radical activism altogether. By 1974, although there was still an Oakland organization bearing the name, the BPP could no longer be considered a viable political force by any standard of measure. With it, whatever its defects may have been, passed the best possibility of Afro-Americans attaining some real measure of self-sufficiency and self-determination which has presented itself during the 20th century.

End of Chapter 5