Panthers' Lawyer Releases Evidence

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By Deborah Rankin
Associated Press

CHICAGO, Jan. 19—A lawyer representing the families of two Black Panther Party leaders slain in a police raid today produced 10 boxes of evidence requested by a deputy coroner.

Among the material delivered by Francis Andrew, the lawyer, was a door panel with a hole that police say was made by a bullet fired by a Panther from inside the raided apartment.

A circuit judge had ordered an arrest warrant issued for Andrew earlier today after the lawyer did not meet a court deadline for producing the evidence.

Andrew was jailed Friday after refusing to hand over the evidence at the inquest into the slayings of Fred Hampton, 21, and Mark Clark, 22, the Panther leaders.

Andrew told Martin S. Gerber, deputy coroner, that he held the evidence in trust for his clients and could not release it until he checked with other lawyers.

Cook County (Chicago) sheriff's deputies declined to allow newsmen to examine the door panel, but one large hole was clearly visible to spectators at the inquest.

Gerber's appearance on a television show Sunday sparked an argument between him and the jurors at the inquest. The jurors presented a statement criticizing Gerber for discussing inquest evidence on TV.

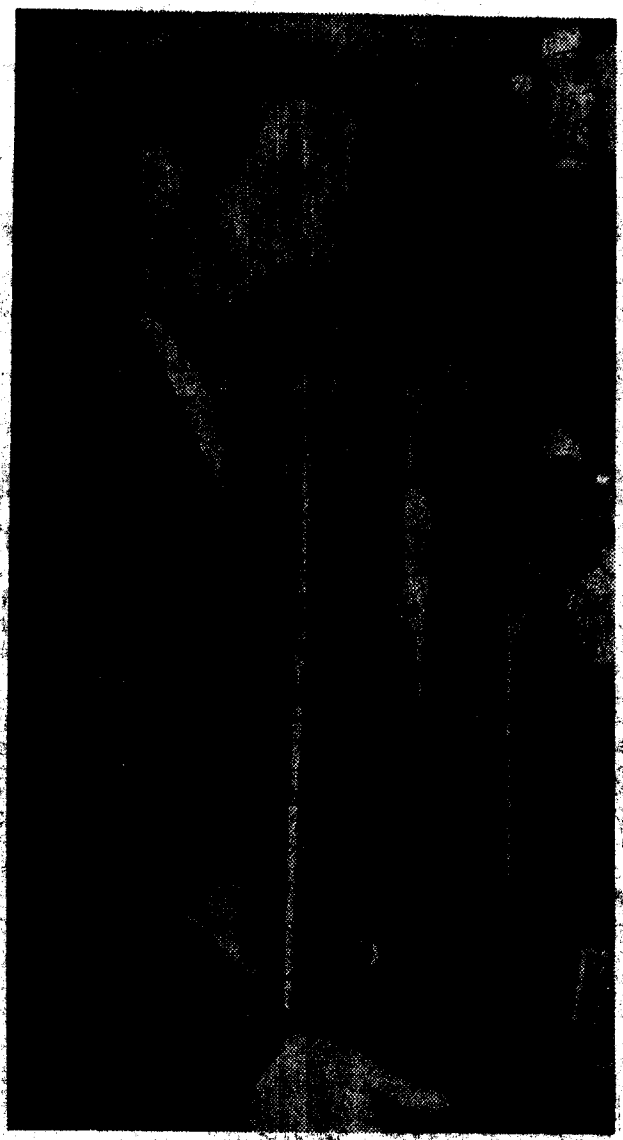
"It is improper for anyone connected with the coroner's office to discuss evidence at this inquest until the inquest is completed," said the statement, read by Julian Wilkins, a lawyer.

Wilkins is a member of the six-man coroner's jury. He said the statement was approved by the five other members of the jury.

Wilkins said the jurors are "sole determiners of the weight of evidence presented at the inquest."

He asserted Gerber's discussion of the evidence received thus far tended "to demean the proceedings." He asked that Gerber grant no such interviews again.

Gerber called the statement "highly improper" and said it should not have been made. He maintained the interview did not "invade the province of the jury."



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Defense Attorney Francis Andrews displays a door panel taken from the Chicago apartment of two slain Black Panthers. The bullet-shattered panel was presented at an inquest.