

# Some of the questions that

By Hugh Hough

"Our object was to avoid an incident."

The words are those of Sgt. Daniel Groth, and they are words of unusual irony because they were used by Groth last week in explaining the genesis of Chicago's No. 1 Incident of 1969 — the slayings of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark.

Groth, leader of the 14-man contingent of state's attorney's police assigned to serve a search warrant at 4:40 a.m. on Dec. 4, said the early hour was selected to avoid an Incident in the West Side ghetto neighborhood where the Black Panther Party leaders lived.

But an incident did occur at 2337 W. Monroe, and it is now the subject of two official investigations — by the Justice Department and a soon-to-be-named coroner's jury.

These investigative agencies will seek answers to many questions.

The prime question is one of credibility.

Who is to be believed?

State's Atty. Edward V. Hanrahan and his 14 policemen, who say their attempt to serve the search warrant was met by a shotgun blast and that Hampton and Clark were killed in the ensuing shoot-out?

Or the seven surviving occupants of the first-floor flat on Monroe, who contended through their lawyers last week that the police came in shooting?

#### Other pressing questions

There are other important questions:

Was Hampton killed in his bed?

Did Hampton fire any shots at police?

How many shots did the Panthers fire?

How many shots did the policemen fire?

Why wasn't tear gas used by police?

Is it common practice for state's attorney's policemen to take a machinegun on such a raid.

Why didn't they take tear gas? (Groth's answer: "Under the law, we had to enter that flat and serve the warrant. We couldn't just lob tear gas in there and charge.")

In planning the raid, in which the officers anticipated violence, did they consider using tear gas in case they were attacked instead of pouring into the apartment to engage in battle?

Have the weapons confiscated from the apartment been tested, and if so, what do the tests show?

Was the Chicago raid part of a bigger plan to erase the leadership of the Black Panther Party across the nation?

It is the lack of clear-cut answers to such questions and discrepancies among various official versions of the raid that have stirred deep unrest in Chicago's black community.

The contradictions include what happened as policemen entered the front door of the apartment, what happened as policemen entered the back door, and where the bullets police say the Panthers fired came to rest.

The day of the raid, Groth said, he knocked on the front door, was asked who it was, said he was a policeman with a warrant, got no response, and finally shoved the door open.

He said he saw a girl on a bed holding a shotgun, and that she fired it.

A week later, in the official version released solely to the Chicago Tribune, Groth said that after a delay in getting a response from the people in the apartment, he ordered Detective

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James Davis to kick the door open, and that as Davis kicked a shotgun was fired through the door.

On the day of the raid, Detective John Ciszewski told another Chicago newspaper that he was wounded by a shotgun blast that came through the back door as he and other officers were about to enter.

But on WBBM-TV, in a re-enactment Hanrahan arranged solely for that station, Ciszewski said he was wounded after entering the apartment. He said he was in the rear bedroom of the apartment when a shot from somewhere grazed his leg.

The first version, which Ciszewski has not denied, would mean there would be holes in the rear door. But there aren't.

And the first version of the front entry would indicate that because the shotgun blast missed the officers, it would have hit the wall behind them. The officers said the blast was a large deer ball, which would have had the force to reach the anteroom wall only a few feet behind the door.

But the wall shows no signs of imbedded slug, pockmark, painting or replastering. And a reporter who toured the apartment the day of the raid said there were powder burns around the hole on the outside of the door.

Frank Greenberg, president of the Chicago Bar Assn., said in calling for a special coroner's jury that the killings have "created a crisis of confidence in the black community of perhaps unprecedented proportions."

The coroner's jury will begin its investigation from this skeleton of facts:

At 4:40 a.m. on Dec. 4, the 14 state's attorney's men arrived at the 2337 W. Monroe address with a search warrant.

What ensued is a matter of controversy, but there was intensive gunfire, the two Panthers were killed, four others were wounded and three additional occupants of the apartment were arrested.

### Murder indictments to be sought

Two policemen were injured. One was Ciszewski. The other, Edward Carmody, was cut on the right hand by flying glass.

Occupants of the apartment suffering bullet wounds were Brenda Harris, 18, of 1848 S. Hamlin; Verlina Brewer, 17, of 125 W. 107th; Blair Anderson, 18, of 6943 S. Justine, and Ronald Satchel, 19, of 2337 W. Monroe.

The others arrested are Debra Johnson, 19, of 2337 W. Monroe; Louis Trulock, 39, of 1900 W. Jackson, and Harold Bell, 23, of Rockford.

Indictments charging attempted murder will be sought against all the survivors.