

Member of coroner's jury

By Thomas J. Dolan

A member of the special coroner's jury that investigated the slayings of two Black Panther leaders expressed concern Thursday about possible "revenge from the Panthers" in declining to discuss the jury's conclusions.

The six-man coroner's jury on Wednesday ruled the Dec. 4 state's attorney's police killings of Fred Hampton, Illinois party chairman, and Mark Clark, a Peoria leader, were cases of justifiable homicide.

Dr. Theodore K. Lawless, a noted dermatologist who serv-

ed on the jury, raised the possibility of possible Panther vengeance.

Revenge expected

Dr. Lawless first said he would have no comment on the coroner's jury actions until the survivors of the police raid "have completed their trial."

fears revenge by Panthers

The black physician then expressed concern that any detailed discussion of the matter would cause "more animosity," adding:

"I don't expect the police to do anything, but I would expect some sort of revenge from the Panthers."

Bobby Rush, deputy minister of defense for the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party, said the party would have no comment on the remarks by Dr. Lawless.

Other members of the jury either declined to explain how the panel reached its justifiable homicide conclusions or could not be reached.

Jury member Philip H. Corboy, a lawyer, said members of the inquest panel discussed the possibility of commenting on their decision "and we all feel as professional people that it would be improper . . . for the simple reason that there will be pending litigation in this case."

The most bitter reaction from a black leader was voiced before a predominantly white suburban audience soon after the jury returned its verdicts.

Charles G. Hurst Jr., president of Malcolm X Community College, said, "Here again we have the predictable verdict—

justifiable homicide."

He said the verdicts were reached despite evidence that Hampton was asleep when police raided the Panther apartment at 2337 W. Monroe.

'This kind of day'

Hurst said Hampton had taken enough sleep-inducing drug "to put a man three times Fred's size asleep."

He added, "When I told the students at the college about the verdict, not one single eyebrow was raised, and not a single flicker of expression appeared on anyone's face."

"We've lived this kind of day so long."