

REPORTS LINK F.B.I. TO BLACKS' FEUD

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Senate Unit Finds an Indirect
Role in Panther-U.S. Battles

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 4—The Federal Bureau of Investigation attempted to capitalize on the violent and sometimes fatal battling between two West Coast black militant groups in 1969, according to memorandums in the files of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Arthur Jefferson, a member of the committee staff who conducted an investigation of this particular counterintelligence program (Cointelpro), said that six members of the Black Panther Party had been killed as a result of fighting with a group known as US, headed by Ron Karenga.

Mr. Jefferson said that there were no documents in which the bureau specifically suggested that one group use violence against another, but that in the atmosphere in California at that time the Cointelpro operation may well have contributed to the killings. However, he said that no death had been directly connected with any F.B.I. action.

He said that the F.B.I. memorandum showed that the bureau had encouraged the battling by sending derogatory cartoons to the Panthers that appeared to have been prepared by US. The bureau, he said, also sent anonymous letters to the leaders of the two groups designed to foment trouble between them.

The idea to capitalize on the differences between the factions appeared to come from F.B.I. headquarters, Mr. Jefferson said. A 1969 memorandum noted the violence that was taking place and then told the field offices that the bureau needed "a hard hitting counterintelligence program," he said.

After this memorandum was written, he said, there was confrontation between Panthers and US on the campus of the University of California at Los Angeles. Two Panthers were killed and several US members were convicted in their deaths, he said.

Both the Los Angeles and San Diego field offices of the F.B.I. sent cartoons and anonymous letters dealing with this fighting, Mr. Jefferson said.

Several other Panthers were killed after the Los Angeles confrontation, he said.

The Panthers at that time projected themselves as a Maoist black organization while U.S. advocated black separatist, but did not associate itself with Communist ideology. The influence of the groups waned sharply in 1970 and 1971, and the counterintelligence program appeared to end at that times.