

# Panther Chief of Security Was Paid F.B.I. Informer

## A Deposition by the Man Who Held Post When Hampton and Clark Were Slain Was Filed Last Month in Detroit

By JOHN KIFNER

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CHICAGO, Feb. 11 — Court testimony has revealed that the Black Panther party's "chief of security here on the night that its leader, Fred Hampton, was slain in a pre-dawn police raid was a paid Federal Bureau of Investigation informer.

The disclosure of the Federal involvement in the situation came as part of yet another effort to reopen the case, which has remained an object of controversy even though more than four years have passed since the morning of Dec. 4, 1969, when Mr. Hampton died in a hail of bullets in a raid by Chicago policemen attached to the office of then Cook County State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan.

The controversy gave rise to a series of local, Federal, private and journalistic investigations and shattered the black vote, long the mainstay of the Chicago Democratic organization, defeating Mr. Hanrahan for re-election in 1972.

Mr. Hanrahan and the police who took part in the raid were indicted and subsequently acquitted on charges of conspiracy to obstruct justice, Mr. Hanrahan is running for Congress.

### Duties Described

The informer, William O'Neal, said that his duties as the Panther security chief included making sure that all members were properly armed and their weapons working, screening and investigating possible informers, and building "security devices." At one point, he said, he built a home-made electric chair to scare informers.

His testimony came in a deposition taken in Detroit on Jan. 12 in connection with a \$47-million damage suit filed on behalf of Mr. Hampton's family and that of Mark Clark, another Panther killed in the raid, and the survivors.

Mr. O'Neal's activities came during a period when, as the Watergate testimony has shown, the Nixon Administration was concerned with what it perceived as the threat of radical activity. It was a period, too, when, according to documents stolen from the F.B.I. office in Media, Pa., and released by radical agents were ordered to make every effort to recruit new black informers.

Contrary to Mr. Hanrahan's story of a gun battle, the grand jury found that the police had fired between 82 and 99 rounds into the cramped apartment,

while only one shot in return could be attributed to the Panthers. The grand jury found the police investigation "so seriously deficient that it suggests purposeful malfeasance."

But, the grand jury, which was directed by Assistant Attorney General Jerris Leonard, issued no indictments and, indeed, devoted much of its report to sharp criticism of the Panthers for their display of weapons, revolutionary rhetoric, and distrust of the law-enforcement system.

According to the Federal grand jury report, Assistant State's Attorney Richard Jalovec, who authorized the raid, was told in late November by the F.B.I. that there were guns in the apartment and on Dec. 2, Police Sgt. Daniel Groth, who led the raid, was told by a "reliable informant" that there were illegal weapons.

Mr. O'Neal said that he had kept his F.B.I. control agent, Roy M. Mitchell, advised of the weapons the Panthers were keeping, first in their office then in the apartment, for nearly a year. He said in the deposition, that Mr. Mitchell told him later that it was not his information that led to the raid.

Mr. O'Neal described the guns in the apartment as "standing in the corner, laying on floors, hanging on the walls, pockets, hips, pants." But when asked if Mr. Mitchell inquired what was being done with the weapons, he said: "No, he knew the same thing was happening to them when they were at the office, just collecting dust."

### Guns Not an Issue

"From March, 1969 on, guns wasn't too much of an issue because he knew basically what their position was as far as arms were concerned. He knew they had a lot of guns, it wasn't that important unless a train load of guns or something came in and that never happened," Mr. O'Neal said.

Much of Mr. O'Neal's background is still murky. However lawyers, ex-Panthers and forces in the black community say he is known as a drug dealer, burglar and hold-up man. The Federal authorities have moved him to another city and given him a new identity.

As part of the damage suit that has been filed against Mr. Hanrahan and other law enforcement officials, the attorneys hope to look into a report by The Chicago Sun-Times that



United Press International  
Fred Hampton, Black Panther who was killed.



Edward V. Hanrahan, prosecutor at time of raid.

an investigator placed on the staff of the special county grand jury by Chief Criminal Court Judge Joseph A. Power produced two bogus witnesses. The witnesses, both multiple criminal offenders, according to the report, said they had heard survivors of the raid say they fired shots. But, the report says, the survivors had been in the county jail and were inaccessible on the dates of the purported conversation.

The investigator is John J. Clarke, who according to The Sun-Times report was nominally a probation officer, but who was a highly paid police consultant carrying out special investigations for Mayor Richard J. Daley. He conducted surveillance of radical and black groups, according to the report, reporting back to Judge Power, a neighbor and former law partner of the Mayor.

Last month, Mr. Clarke pleaded guilty to Federal charges of income tax evasion and obstruction of justice for tampering with a grand jury investigation of waterfront corruption and received a three-year sentence.