

FBI Spy's Role In Panther Raid Revealed

Washington

An FBI informant, presumably posing as a Black Panther party member, supplied Chicago police with crucial information that led to the 1969 raid on the party headquarters in which two Panthers were killed, bureau documents indicate.

A memo from the Chicago field office to FBI headquarters, dated just four days after the raid, claimed a more important role than has been publicly acknowledged for the bureau in the death of Chicago Panther leader Fred Hampton and Panther Mark Clark.

The memo, quoted in a staff report of the Senate Intelligence Committee that was made public yesterday, said the FBI sent to Chicago police "a detailed inventory of the weapons and also a detailed floor plan of the apartment."

"The information was not available from any other source and subsequently proved to be of tremendous value in that it subsequently saved injury and possible

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death to police officers participating in the raid," the memo said.

"The raid was based on the information furnished by the informant," it said.

Police fired more than 90 bullets into the apartment occupied by Hampton, Clark and seven others during the attack Dec. 4, 1969.

The Senate report cited the incident as an example of FBI efforts to encourage local police to engage in raids on the homes of members of the Black Panther Party even though there was little evidence that federal law was being violated.

The report said 233 separate COINTELPRO actions were directed against the Panthers between July, 1969, and April, 1971, when the program was terminated. COINTELPRO was the FBI's designation for efforts to disrupt organizations that the bureau considered subversive.

Much of the Panther report was devoted to FBI efforts to provoke gang wars between the Panthers and rival groups of black militants.

The report confirmed an account in The Los Angeles Times last January. This told of a secret FBI campaign that led to a ghetto war in southeast San Diego between the Panthers and the US organization of Ron Karenga in which two people were killed and at least four others wounded.

James B. Adams, deputy associate FBI director, said the bureau attempted to disrupt the Panthers and US but did not foster violence.

The report brushed aside Adams' denial. It said, "The committee's record suggests otherwise."

The report said that in addition to goading the Panthers into shooting wars with US in San Diego and the Blackstone Rangers (also called the Black P. Stone Nation) in Chicago, the FBI tried to aggravate disagreements between the Panthers' two top leaders, Huey P. Newton and Eldridge Cleaver.

Sometimes using the FBI's "legal attache" in Paris to provide European postmarks, the bureau sent a series of bogus letters in 1970 and 1971 purporting to be from Panther members or sympathizers to Newton, Cleaver and other party leaders. The letters were intended to convince both Cleaver — then in Algeria — and Newton — then in Oakland — that the other was trying to undercut him.

Cleaver's wife, Kathleen, told the Senate committee earlier this year that the letters produced confusion and disruption within the party. Relations between Newton and Cleaver became strained during that period.

In spite of efforts to make the letters look authentic, some of the language seemed to lack the street cadence.

Over the forged signature of Panther "chief of staff" David Hilliard, the FBI said: "You are advised that Eldridge Leroy Cleaver is a murderer and a punk without genitals."

The Senate report says the FBI distributed copies of an inflammatory Black Panther coloring book in

the San Francisco area as part of an effort to cut off funds supporting the party's free breakfast program for children.

The book was sent in 1970 to financial backers of the breakfast program — including Safeway Stores Inc., Mayfair Markets and the Jack-in-the-Box Corp., the report said.

A committee investigator said that Kathleen Cleaver testified that the book originally was authored by a party member in Sacramento but had been ordered destroyed by Bobby Seale because it "did not correctly reflect the party's ideology."

The book contained portrayals of Black Panthers killing police officers, according to Arthur Jefferson, the committee staff member who directed preparation of the Black Panther section of the staff report.

Jefferson said that some time after Seale ordered the book destroyed, the bureau's San Francisco office obtained copies of the publication and sent them, along with anonymous letters, to financial contributors.

The report also described an incident in which the bureau forced the eviction of a Black Panther member from a public housing project in San Francisco by informing housing officials that he was using the apartment for the breakfast program.

Jefferson said the bureau memo concerning the Chicago raid was not supplied by the FBI in response to the committee's request for all material concerning the Panthers.

He said it was one of about 22,000 documents that were introduced within the last month as evidence in a \$47-million civil suit brought by the heirs of Hampton and Clark against officials of the police, state's attorney's office and FBI.

The committee did not identify the FBI informant who infiltrated the Panthers. But he was identified in the civil suit as William O'Neal, former chief of security for the Chicago Panthers.

The report was one of a dozen that the committee has drafted to supplement its two-volume summary of its investigation of the FBI, CIA and other intelligence agencies.

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