

SFChronicle

House Report

AUG 24 1971

**'Balanced' Study
Of the Panthers****Washington**

The House Internal Security Committee characterized the Black Panther party yesterday as a relatively small group that never has posed "a clear and present danger" to government or society.

"Fortunately, the Panthers rhetoric regarding revolutionary activity has always exceeded performance," the committee said in a 145-page report based on a series of hearings.

But the committee also cautioned that the party "through its deliberately inflammatory rhetoric and through the actual arming and military training of its members, has contributed to an increase in acts of violence and constitutes a threat to the internal security of the United States."

PURPOSES

The four Republicans on the nine-member committee said they disagreed with what they termed the "tone and emphasis" of the report. They claimed that it failed to provide a clear understanding of the true nature and "insidious purposes" of the Panthers.

The report was somewhat surprising in view of past appraisals by the panel when it was called the Un-American Activities Committee, had an ultra-conservative image and was quick to sound the alarm over groups it suspected of being subversive.

Representative Richardson Preyer (Dem-N.C.) chairman of the subcommittee that held the hearings and one of several moderates to become committee members over the past few years, defended the conclusions as fair and balanced.

"Some might say it is too sympathetic to the Panthers," he said in a special summation. "For it would be possible without departing from the facts to write a real zinger of a report which would carry a stronger sense of outrage than the present report."

MARTYRS

"Such a report would run the risk of making martyrs of the Panthers; a cooler and more balanced report would avoid any possibility of reviving a flagging Panther party by making available the charge of 'oppression.'"

Both Preyer and the committee majority concluded that the Panthers did not even have broad support from American Negroes.

"It is hard to believe that only a little over a year ago the Panthers, despite their small number, ranked as the most celebrated ghetto militants. They fascinated the left, inflamed the police, terrified much of America, and had an extraordinary effect on the black community," Preyer said.

EXCESSES

But, he said, the Panthers, "through their excesses, have done most to destroy this myth, a myth of their own creation."

Preyer said the most serious result of Panther "outrages and excesses" would be to harden the heart of Americans who might want an excuse to turn their back on the black ghettos of the nation.

United Press