

BLACK PANTHER PARTY

Part 2

Investigation of Seattle Chapter

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1970

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL SECURITY,
Washington, D.C.
PUBLIC HEARING

The subcommittee of the Committee on Internal Security met, pursuant to recess, at 10 a.m., in Room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C., Hon. Richardson Preyer, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.

(Subcommittee members: Representatives Richardson Preyer of North Carolina, chairman; Richard H. Ichord of Missouri, chairman of the full committee; and John M. Ashbrook of Ohio.)

Subcommittee members present: Representatives Preyer and Ashbrook.

Staff members present: Donald G. Sanders, chief counsel; Stephen H. Romines, assistant counsel; and Thomas Q. Simmons and Richard A. Shaw, investigators.

Mr. PREYER. We will resume our hearings on the subject of the Black Panther Party in Seattle, Washington. You may call your first witness, Mr. Romines.

Mr. ROMINES. Stanley Fridell.

Mr. PREYER. Will you raise your right hand.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. FRIDELL. I do.

TESTIMONY OF STANLEY K. FRIDELL

Mr. ROMINES. Would you please state your full name for the record?

Mr. FRIDELL. Stanley K. Fridell.

Mr. ROMINES. By whom are you employed, Mr. Fridell?

Mr. FRIDELL. Seattle Police Department.

Mr. ROMINES. Are you assigned to any specific division or section of the Seattle Police Department?

Mr. FRIDELL. Detective in the civil disturbance section of the intelligence division.

Mr. ROMINES. Would that be the same civil disturbance section that Sergeant Archie Porter is sergeant in charge of?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, it is.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you work directly under Sergeant Archie Porter?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I do.

Mr. ROMINES. How long have you been a detective in the civil disturbance section?

Mr. FRIDELL. Four years. Well, the intelligence division started out as general intelligence and they divided it up in 1969 into two categories.

Mr. ROMINES. So, you have been a detective for 4 years, and you have been a detective in the civil disturbance section ever since it was formed in the year 1969; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. As a detective in the civil disturbance section, have you had occasion to investigate activities of the Black Panther Party in Seattle, Washington?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I have.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you have any specific assignment with respect to the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. I was assigned to investigate them when they started out.

Mr. ROMINES. Approximately when would that have been?

Mr. FRIDELL. They first came to our attention in January of 1968. At that time we had a group headed by John Henry Wilson, known as the Voodoo Man. Also, in there were the Black Panthers and another party known as The Group.

Mr. ROMINES. Were the Black Panthers actually organized as a functioning organization in 1968?

Mr. FRIDELL. No, they were just starting out.

Mr. ROMINES. When did they actually become an autonomous organization, as such?

Mr. FRIDELL. In April and May.

Mr. ROMINES. What year?

Mr. FRIDELL. 1968.

Mr. ROMINES. Have you then had the specific assignment of the Black Panther Party from April and May of 1968 to the present?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I have.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, who was instrumental in forming the Black Panther Party in April or May of 1968?

Mr. FRIDELL. Aaron Dixon; his brother, Elmer Dixon; Curtiss Harris; E. J. Brisker; Larry Gossett.

Mr. ROMINES. Were there any females involved?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, there were.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know who they were?

Mr. FRIDELL. Joyce Bruce, Kathleen Halley, Gwendolyn Morgan, who later married Aaron Dixon.

Mr. ROMINES. What titles were held by these people, if any, when the Black Panther Party was first formed in Seattle?

Mr. FRIDELL. It started out with Aaron Dixon and Curtiss Harris as cocaptains.

Mr. ROMINES. Did Elmer Dixon have any title at that time?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I believe he did; they had different titles, as minister of defense.

Mr. ROMINES. Is Curtiss Harris still a cocaptain?

Mr. FRIDELL. No, he is not.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know at what time he relinquished that title?

Mr. FRIDELL. Sometime in the summer of 1969.

Mr. ROMINES. Now, as I understand it, the nucleus of the group organized by the Voodoo Man to a certain extent became the nucleus of the Black Panther Party; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Was there much of a struggle for power between and among these respective organizations?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; when they first started out, John Henry Wilson claimed he would take charge of the group, that he had permission from Bobby Seale. And later on Aaron came out and said Bobby Seale appointed him.

Mr. ROMINES. Was Aaron Dixon, in fact, appointed by Bobby Seale to be captain of the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, he was.

Mr. ROMINES. I hand you what has been marked Committee Exhibit No. 1 and ask you if you can identify that, please.

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; this is a list of Panthers in the city of Seattle.

Mr. ROMINES. That is divided into approximately three sections. What is the first section?

Mr. FRIDELL. The first section is the members of the party when it first started out.

Mr. ROMINES. Would that have been the members or the officers?

Mr. FRIDELL. The officers.

Mr. ROMINES. What is the second section?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is the list of officers at the present time.

Mr. ROMINES. Is it at the present time?

Mr. FRIDELL. From 1968 to the present time.

Mr. ROMINES. So, in other words, it would be the individuals who may have been officers at some period of time between April and May of 1968 and the present; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. What is the last section?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is a list of the members from the start until the present time.

Mr. ROMINES. That is a list of people who were at one time or another members of the Black Panther Party between April and May of 1968 and the present; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. I hand you what has been marked Committee Exhibit 2 and ask you if you can identify that, please.

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I can.

Mr. ROMINES. What is Committee Exhibit 2?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is a series of mug pictures from the Seattle Police Department of known Panthers who admitted to be Panthers of the city of Seattle and also who showed up at demonstrations in the city.

Mr. ROMINES. Everyone whose name is on Committee Exhibit 1 would be in a picture on Committee Exhibit 2?

Mr. FRIDELL. If they had been arrested.

Mr. ROMINES. So there would be people whose names appear on Exhibit 1 whose pictures would not be attached to Exhibit 2; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. I ask that Committee Exhibits Nos. 1 and 2 be accepted for the record at this point.

Mr. PREYER. So ordered.

(Documents marked Committee Exhibits Nos. 1 and 2, respectively. See appendix B, pages 4379-4392.)

Mr. ROMINES. Were you present in the hearing room yesterday to hear Sergeant Archie Porter testify, Mr. Fridell?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Did you hear him discuss with me his assessment of Black Panther Party membership in Seattle?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROMINES. Would you agree with his evaluation of the membership there?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I would.

Mr. ROMINES. May I have Committee Exhibit 1, Mr. Chairman? From Committee Exhibit No. 1, Mr. Fridell, can you identify for the committee, please, the individuals who are currently active in the Black Panther Party in Seattle, Washington?

Mr. FRIDELL. Aaron Dixon, Elmer Dixon, Frank Anthony Ware, Michael James Dixon, William "Bill" Green, Kathleen Halley, Alice Spencer, Joyce Ann Bruce, Michael Dean, Michael Murray, Gary Wade Owens, Gwendolyn Dixon (Aaron's wife), Julius Bishop, and there are some other Panthers, but I don't remember their names at the present time.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, on Committee Exhibit 1, alongside some of the names, there is a reference to certain individuals being section leaders. What exactly is a section leader?

Mr. FRIDELL. Well, the Panthers cut up the central area in certain districts, starting from McClellan Street working to, I believe, Prospect Street. Each section would have three or four blocks and the Panthers who live in this section would control that area.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know if these section leaders had any particular responsibilities or particular duties?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were responsible for the men in their district and to go out and recruit the citizens of the central area in that district.

Mr. ROMINES. Is the Black Panther Party in Seattle still organized in this way, do they still have section leaders?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, they do to a certain extent.

Mr. ROMINES. Also on Committee Exhibit No. 1 there is an indication that 12 individuals there are members of an organization or a group known as the Dirty Dozen. What is or was that organization or that group?

Mr. FRIDELL. That was an elite group of Panthers who were supposed to go out and do the bombings and also the enforcers with the Panthers. If any member stepped out of line, they would take care of that member.

Mr. ROMINES. Is the group known as the Dirty Dozen still in existence?

Mr. FRIDELL. No, it is not.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, you also heard Sergeant Archie Porter refer to the fact that the Black Panther Party in Seattle has declined in membership; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. What would be your assessment of the reasons for this decline in membership?

Mr. FRIDELL. Many of the members were arrested and placed in jail. It was at that time when they were put in jail that the Panthers were supposed to make their bail and pay their attorney fees. A lot were never bailed out or attorneys hired for them.

Mr. ROMINES. So, in other words, the Panthers did not provide bail money or attorney money; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct on some of the members. A lot of the people got fed up and quit for that purpose. Others got tired of going out for the drill or the preachings of the Black Panther Party.

Mr. ROMINES. What do you mean by the "preachings of the Black Panther Party"?

Mr. FRIDELL. The study of the "red book."

Mr. ROMINES. The quotations from Chairman Mao?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is right.

Mr. ROMINES. What do you mean by "drill"?

Mr. FRIDELL. They would hold a drill every Saturday, just like marching in the Army, close order drill.

Mr. ROMINES. When were these drills held?

Mr. FRIDELL. Either held on Saturday or Sunday, once a week.

Mr. ROMINES. Where were they held?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were held in different places, one at Washington Park, Madrona playfield, and Garfield playfield.

Mr. ROMINES. Over what interval of time were those drills held?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were held in the late summer and fall into winter of 1968.

Mr. ROMINES. Are those drills still being conducted?

Mr. FRIDELL. No. They are not.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know who conducted those drills?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were conducted by Jack Freeman, who came down to instruct them, and also by Elmer Dixon.

Mr. ROMINES. Approximately how many members of the Black Panther Party participated in those drills?

Mr. FRIDELL. It depended from time to time; it could vary from 15 to approximately 50 members.

Mr. ROMINES. Fifteen to how many?

Mr. FRIDELL. To 50.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is Jack Freeman? Is he a member of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. No, he is not.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know who he is?

Mr. FRIDELL. I believe he is a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know for certain whether he is or not?

Mr. FRIDELL. I am not certain, no.

(At this point Mr. Ashbrook entered the hearing room.)

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, do you know whether the Black Panther Party itself conducted, if I may use the word, a purge or in any way asked or requested or forced any members out of the party?

Mr. FRIDELL. Just one.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is that one?

Mr. FRIDELL. Curtiss Harris.

(At this point Mr. Ashbrook left the hearing room.)

Mr. ROMINES. Any others?

Mr. FRIDELL. No.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know why Curtiss [Harris] was asked to leave the party?

Mr. FRIDELL. It was more or less a power struggle. He was married to Elmer and Aaron's sister and there was a fight between the family.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, are you familiar with the area where the Panthers have their current headquarters and, I presume, spent a good deal of their time?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Does this area have any particular name or nickname?

Mr. FRIDELL. It would be in the central area of the city of Seattle.

Mr. ROMINES. Would you describe what the central area is?

Mr. FRIDELL. It is predominantly Negro.

Mr. ROMINES. Would it be a low-income area, an average-income area, a high-income area?

Mr. FRIDELL. It is a low- to middle-class income area.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, have you compiled at committee request a list of Black Panther Party members who have been arrested and convicted for felonies?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I have.

Mr. ROMINES. In addition to that list would there have been other arrests and convictions for misdemeanor charges?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Would there also have been other arrests for felonies and/or misdemeanors which are still pending?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Is this that list of individuals who have been arrested and convicted on felony charges?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, it is.

Mr. ROMINES. Would you please describe and read into the record those individuals who have been arrested and convicted on felony charges?

Mr. FRIDELL. Willie Brazier, Jr., arrested on April 6, 1968, for arson, first degree, two counts. It was reduced on January 22, 1969, to arson second. He was sentenced to 10 years. On March 14, 1969, he was arrested for bank robbery which was Fidelity Bank on Rainier Avenue. He was convicted on October 22, 1969, and sentenced to 20 years.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know, Mr. Fridell, what the circumstances surrounding the arson charge were?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes. That was when the Panthers and the Voodoo group were working together in April of 1968. They were sent out in groups of three's and four's to terrorize the central area, such as firebombing of private dwellings and commercial buildings and sniping at the police.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know what particular type of dwelling Mr. Brazier firebombed?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, two private dwellings.

Mr. ROMINES. Were the residents of the private dwellings white or Negro?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were white.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is the next individual?

Mr. FRIDELL. Garner Earl Brooks.

Mr. ROMINES. What was he arrested and convicted for?

Mr. FRIDELL. On October 3, 1968, with possession of marijuana and March 21 of 1969 he was placed on probation. On January 11, 1969, he was arrested on assault, second degree, and he was convicted on June 23 of 1969 and sentenced to 10 years. This consisted of assault on a prowler car on a routine traffic stop.

Mr. ROMINES. Would this have been the routine traffic stop that Sergeant Archie Porter described to the committee yesterday?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, it was.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is the third individual?

Mr. FRIDELL. Richard Anthony Brown. He was arrested with Willie Brazier on the arson on 4/6/68, which was reduced on the 22d of January 1969. He was placed on 3 years' probation.

Mr. ROMINES. Why would he have been placed on 3 years' probation while Willie Brazier was sentenced to 10 years in jail?

Mr. FRIDELL. Willie Brazier was also placed on probation, but he violated the probation by committing the bank robbery.

Mr. ROMINES. Did he commit the violation of probation by committing the bank robbery?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Were the Black Panthers in existence at the time the arson occurred?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; not as a group by themselves, but they were working with the Voodoo Man's group.

Mr. ROMINES. This would have been, I presume, in the formative stage?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. How about Marshall DeLawrence Buford?

Mr. FRIDELL. He was arrested also with Brown and Brazier on 4/6/68 on first degree arson.

Mr. ROMINES. Was he also placed on probation?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; 3 years' probation.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is the next individual?

Mr. FRIDELL. Leonard Ralph Dawson, Jr., who also was arrested with Buford, Brown, and Brazier on the first degree arson. He was placed on 3 years' probation at the same time as the others.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is the next individual?

Mr. FRIDELL. Aaron Lloyd Dixon.

Mr. ROMINES. What was he arrested for?

Mr. FRIDELL. He was arrested for burglary and was charged with petty larceny on October 9, 1968. He was convicted on July 7 of 1969 and fined \$50 plus court costs of \$126.20. This burglary consisted of Aaron Dixon and two others burglarizing a model city program building at 17th and Cherry and stealing a typewriter and, I believe, a letter tray.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is the next individual?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Elmer James Dixon III.
 Mr. ROMINES. What was he arrested for?
 Mr. FRIDELL. On February 16, 1969, he was arrested for armed robbery in Eugene, Oregon. He was convicted on 10/19/69.
 Mr. ROMINES. Was he subsequently incarcerated?
 Mr. FRIDELL. No; he is on appeal.
 Mr. ROMINES. He is out on appeal bond?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.
 Mr. ROMINES. Who is the next individual?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Cornell Garden.
 Mr. ROMINES. What was he arrested for?
 Mr. FRIDELL. On August 16, 1968, he was arrested for assault and attempted robbery. He was arrested on October 4, 1968, on another robbery charge and on October 22, 1969, he was in violation of probation and was sent to a juvenile home.
 Mr. ROMINES. He was a juvenile?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, he was.
 Mr. ROMINES. Was he ever actually convicted of those crimes?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.
 Mr. ROMINES. Since he was a juvenile what was done with him?
 Mr. FRIDELL. He was sent to a correction home.
 Mr. ROMINES. How about Curtiss Ray Harris?
 Mr. FRIDELL. On September 18, 1968, he was arrested on threats to kill. He was convicted on October 8 of 1968. He was fined \$100. On March 10 of 1969 he was arrested for possession of marijuana.
 Mr. ROMINES. Was he convicted?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, on June 9, 1969, and sentenced to 6 months, suspended.
 Mr. ROMINES. Who was the next individual?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Bruce Gordon Hayes. He was arrested on 4/4/69 on suspicion of narcotics and on 5/6/69 he was fined \$150.
 Mr. ROMINES. Who was the next individual?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Lewis Thomas Jackson. On 3/7/69 he was arrested for bank robbery with Willie Brazier. He was convicted on 11/24/69 and sentenced to 25 years.
 (At this point Mr. Ashbrook returned to the hearing room.)
 Mr. ROMINES. How about Earl Nelson?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Earl Nelson was arrested on September 25, 1968, and that was in the process of firebombing a building. He was charged with disorderly conduct, prowling, and was sentenced to 90 days.
 Mr. ROMINES. Since he was in the process of firebombing a building, why was he charged with disorderly conduct?
 Mr. FRIDELL. He had a container of gas and the rags, but they were not placed together as a bomb. There was no city ordinance at that time so we could convict him on firebombing.
 Mr. ROMINES. How about Richard Eugene Noble?
 Mr. FRIDELL. He was arrested on 8/19/69 on burglary. On 11/6/69 he was sentenced to 3 years, deferred.
 Mr. ROMINES. Deferred sentence?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.
 Mr. ROMINES. Chester Edward Northington?

Mr. FRIDELL. Arrested on 4/8/69 with Brazier, Brown, Buford on first degree arson.
 Mr. ROMINES. Did he also receive probation?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, 3 years' probation.
 Mr. ROMINES. How about Artis Allen Parker?
 Mr. FRIDELL. He was arrested on December 28, 1968, for armed robbery, along with Buddy Yates, of a Market Basket grocery store. He was sentenced on 6/20/69 and has 3 years of probation.
 Mr. ROMINES. Martha Jane Richard?
 Mr. FRIDELL. On 8/2/69 she was arrested for prostitution, loitering, profane language, fined \$100, suspended, and 5 days in jail.
 Mr. ROMINES. Ronald Louis Rolax?
 Mr. FRIDELL. On 11/8/68 he was arrested on burglary, second degree, reduced to unlawful trespassing. He received 6 months, with 4 months suspended, plus costs. On 12/17/68 he was arrested for robbery, convicted on 5/2/69, and sentenced to 20 years. On 3/12/69 he was arrested again for possession of marijuana and convicted on 4/2/69 and sentenced to 90 days. On 3/12/69 he was arrested for threats to kill, convicted on 3/14/69, sentenced to 180 days.
 Mr. ROMINES. Robert White?
 Mr. FRIDELL. He was arrested on 11/8/68, possession of dangerous drugs, placed on probation on 1/23/69 until 7/25/69.
 Mr. ROMINES. Buddy Eugene Yates?
 Mr. FRIDELL. He was arrested with Artis Allen Parker on the robbery of the Market Basket grocery store. He was convicted on 5/5/69 and sentenced to 20 years.
 Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, over the approximately 2 years you have been assigned to the Black Panther Party, have you known them to carry weapons?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.
 Mr. ROMINES. What general types of weapons do they carry?
 Mr. FRIDELL. They have their choice of either carrying a hand gun, rifle, or shotgun, but most prefer a hand gun so they can be concealed.
 Mr. ROMINES. Do they carry their weapons at all times?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; that is one of their general orders, that they have to be armed at all times.
 Mr. ROMINES. Have they ever, as an organization, displayed their weapons in some sort of a formation?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; they have on three different occasions.
 Mr. ROMINES. What would those three occasions be?
 Mr. FRIDELL. One was in the city of Seattle. It was after Welton Arnstead was shot by the police. They held a press conference.
 Mr. ROMINES. Do you know what day that was?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Offhand, no.
 Mr. ROMINES. Would that have been December 3, 1968?
 Mr. FRIDELL. It could have been, yes.
 Mr. ROMINES. I hand you what has been marked Committee Exhibit 3 and ask if you can identify that, please.
 Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; this is a photograph that appeared in the *Seattle Times* newspaper.
 Mr. ROMINES. What is it a photograph of?
 Mr. FRIDELL. Members of the Black Panther Party standing in front of their office at 34th Avenue. They were holding in their arms shot-guns and rifles.

Mr. ROMINES. There is a list of names which correspond to numbers, which numbers indicate individuals in the photographs. Are those all accurate identifications of the individuals in the photograph?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, they are.

Mr. ASHBROOK. May I see that photograph, Counsel?

Mr. ROMINES. I ask that be admitted as Committee Exhibit 3, please.

What were the other occasions that they displayed weapons as an organization?

Mr. FRIDELL. One was in the summer of 1968. They went to Vancouver, British Columbia, on a speaking engagement. There were newspaper clippings sent down by the Canadians showing two Panthers walking off the campus with rifles slung across their shoulders and bandoliers of arms across their chests.

In 1969 they went to Olympia, Washington, which is the State capital, and stood on the capitol steps displaying their weapons, which were also shotguns and rifles.

Mr. ROMINES. Did they actually go inside the capitol?

Mr. FRIDELL. Not armed, no.

Mr. ROMINES. For what reason were they at the capitol?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were protesting police brutality in the central area.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know if members of the Black Panthers keep weapons in their headquarters?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, they do.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know approximately how many they keep there?

Mr. FRIDELL. They do not stockpile a great number of arms at the present time due to the fact when we arrested the Voodoo Man we confiscated quite a number of their weapons.

Mr. ROMINES. When would that have been?

Mr. FRIDELL. In the summer of 1968.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know how many weapons they have in their headquarters?

Mr. FRIDELL. At the present it will vary from time to time, depending on how many members are staying there.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know what type of weapons they keep there?

Mr. FRIDELL. To my knowledge Aaron has an AR 15 which he keeps at the headquarters and an M-1 carbine. I believe there are some shotguns and rifles at the headquarters.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether the Black Panther Party headquarters is fortified in any way?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; we noticed them going to the beach at Alki and filling sandbags. These were brought back to their headquarters and placed inside the building.

Mr. ROMINES. Is their headquarters a one- or two-story building?

Mr. FRIDELL. A two-story building.

Mr. ROMINES. Are both the lower and upper stories fortified?

Mr. FRIDELL. To my knowledge it is just the upper floor because we had talked to people who had been on the first floor of the place and they said there are no sandbags down there.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Chairman, did you admit for the record Committee Exhibit 3?

Mr. PREYER. Yes, that is admitted.

(Document marked Committee Exhibit No. 3. See appendix B, page 4393.)

Mr. ROMINES. You have already discussed with the committee the Black Panther Party members conducting firearm drills. Did they ever conduct any type of organized firearm practice?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes. They would go out once a week over the weekends and have target practice.

Mr. ROMINES. Over what interval of time did this occur?

Mr. FRIDELL. This would be in the summer of 1968. I am not sure if it went into 1969 or not.

Mr. ROMINES. Are they conducting any organized firearm practice at the present time?

Mr. FRIDELL. At the present time, no.

Mr. ROMINES. Where did this firing practice occur?

Mr. FRIDELL. It took place on different rifle ranges and also in gravel pits

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know the names of any of the rifle ranges?

Mr. FRIDELL. I believe one is the Redmond Gun Club; another is the Issaquah Gun Club.

Mr. ROMINES. How about the Kenmore Gun Club?

Mr. FRIDELL. The Kenmore Gun Club and also the gravel pit which is located in Bellevue.

Mr. ROMINES. Was this a regular type thing they did during this period of time?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were supposed to go out once a week.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know how many members of the party actually participated in this fire practice?

Mr. FRIDELL. This would change due to the weather. In good weather they would have quite a few out firing; if it was bad weather, it would be just a few.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know what type of weapons?

Mr. FRIDELL. 30-06 rifles, carbines, .38 revolvers, shotguns between 20 gauge and 12 gauge.

Mr. ROMINES. As to firing practice and, I might add also, the drills that they participated in, did that include only males or both males and females?

Mr. FRIDELL. Both males and females.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know who conducted the firing practice?

Mr. FRIDELL. It would be Aaron and Elmer Dixon.

Mr. ROMINES. Are you familiar with the name Herman Moore?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, Herman Moore was a Black Panther.

Mr. ROMINES. You say "was." What happen to him?

Mr. FRIDELL. On April 1 of 1969 he had an argument with his girl friend. He went to her house carrying a bomb. We can assume he was going to throw this bomb into her house, but it went off instead killing him.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, do you know whether any merchants in the Seattle area have been approached by members of the Black Panther Party soliciting funds?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. In what particular area or areas?

Mr. FRIDELL. This would be in the central area.

Mr. ROMINES. Have you, in your official duties as a police officer, ever interviewed any of these merchants?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I have talked to a few.

Mr. ROMINES. What were the results, generally speaking, of those interviews?

Mr. FRIDELL. Most of these individuals have Black Panther posters displayed in their stores. We asked them about it, and they refused to talk about it.

Mr. ROMINES. I am sorry, I did not hear you.

Mr. FRIDELL. Most of these stores had Black Panther posters appearing in their stores and, when we asked them about it, why they had them displayed, they refused to talk to us about it.

Mr. ROMINES. Did any merchants with whom you attempted to conduct an interview discuss with you the attempts by Black Panther Party members to solicit funds?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes. One would be the Safeway Store at 23d and Union.

Mr. ROMINES. What was the result of that interview?

Mr. FRIDELL. They wanted \$25 a week donation for their breakfast fund, and every day they refused to give them the money they wanted to add another \$25.

Mr. ROMINES. Did Safeway, in fact, ever contribute any funds to the members of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. No, they did not.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether any action was taken against Safeway for so failing to contribute?

Mr. FRIDELL. On two occasions; one occasion there was a firebomb thrown on the roof, which did no damage, and there was also some dynamite placed at the back door, which did minor damage.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether members of the Black Panther Party were responsible for either of those incidents?

Mr. FRIDELL. Only through our sources of information.

Mr. ROMINES. But you have no definite proof?

Mr. FRIDELL. No definite proof of the charge, no.

Mr. ROMINES. Can you give me the locations of any merchants other than Safeway who refused to contribute funds to the members of the Black Panther Party and were subsequently firebombed?

Mr. FRIDELL. There are two places firebombed; whether or not they refused to donate money or not, I do not know. These two places did not display posters. One was a cleaning establishment on Union Street in the 3300 block, and another was a small grocery store on 34th just north of Cherry Street.

Mr. ROMINES. As I understand, neither of these establishments displayed a Black Panther Party picture; is that correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Both were firebombed.

Mr. FRIDELL. Right.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you have any opinion, therefore, as to the reason for the display of the Black Panther Party picture by the merchants?

Mr. FRIDELL. In my opinion it was a protection deal.

Mr. ROMINES. I would like to return to Herman Moore for just one moment, Mr. Fridell. Do you know whether he had any specific assignment within the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. Through our sources, he was supposed to be making bombs for the Panthers and would use them for them.

Mr. ROMINES. To your knowledge, Mr. Fridell, have any members of the Black Panther Party ever used stolen credit cards?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; they would use these credit cards to travel from Seattle to California or when they left the State.

Mr. ROMINES. Over what interval of time did this happen?

Mr. FRIDELL. This would go on starting in '68, and I think it is still going at the present time.

Mr. ROMINES. Have there been any arrests and/or convictions for this?

Mr. FRIDELL. No.

Mr. ROMINES. Why not?

Mr. FRIDELL. Lack of evidence on handwriting samples.

Mr. ROMINES. How do you know then the Panthers are using stolen credit cards?

Mr. FRIDELL. On one occasion we had one identified at a gas station as someone using a stolen credit card.

Mr. ROMINES. Why was there no prosecution?

Mr. FRIDELL. There was not enough evidence on the handwriting analysis to convict.

Mr. ROMINES. Was there anybody who could have testified who saw what happened?

Mr. FRIDELL. No.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, I hand you what has been marked Committee Exhibit No. 4 and ask you if you can identify that, please.

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; this is a quotation from the Black Panther Party, Seattle, Washington.

Mr. ROMINES. Quotations used there?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Has that document been prepared by the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. I hand you what has been marked Committee Exhibit 5 and I ask you if you can identify that, please.

Mr. FRIDELL. This is an application for membership in the Black Panther Party.

Mr. ROMINES. I hand you what has been marked Committee Exhibit 6 and I ask you if you can identify that, please.

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; this is an instruction sheet prepared by the Black Panther Party for the women members, what their duties should be during the time of a riot.

Mr. ROMINES. This was prepared by the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, it was.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, on Committee Exhibit 4, I note at the bottom it says, "Produced by Ministry of Information, Washington State Chapter, BLACK PANTHER PARTY." What is the relation of the Washington State Chapter of the Black Panther Party to the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. It started out it was going to be the Washington State Chapter of the Black Panther Party, and then they changed it to Seattle.

Mr. ROMINES. I ask that Committee Exhibits 4, 5, and 6 be included in the record this morning.

Mr. PREYER. Without objection it is so ordered that they be included.

(Documents marked Committee Exhibits Nos. 4, 5, and 6, respectively. See appendix B, pages 4394-4399.)

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Fridell, did you hear Sergeant Porter's testimony yesterday with respect to the initial headquarters of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I did.

Mr. ROMINES. And its location?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; this was located at 28th and East Madison Street. That is when the Panthers broke off with the Voodoo Man's group and they moved down there.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know who rented that building?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; it was rented by Robert Patrick and his wife, Josephine Patrick.

Mr. ROMINES. Were they members of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. No; they were members of the Communist Party.

Mr. ROMINES. Were they white or colored?

Mr. FRIDELL. White.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether Mr. Patrick has continued to furnish any support to the Black Panther Party?

Mr. FRIDELL. I have no knowledge at the present time if he is or not.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions of this witness at this time.

Mr. PREYER. Mr. Ashbrook.

Mr. ASHBROOK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You made repeated reference to training in firearms, target practice, and so forth. Would it be your opinion that arms and the use of arms would be central to the strategy and philosophy of the Black Panther movement in your area?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, it was.

Mr. ASHBROOK. To what extent do you think they have been successful in extending this idea of the use of arms to a particular community in which they operate and to the people whom they are trying to gather for their cause? Has this been a positive response or has it, in the last year, faded out? I notice you mention mostly 1968 and 1969, not too much 1970. Is it a growing threat or a diminishing threat?

Mr. FRIDELL. At the present time it is diminishing—on producing these guns, trying to show them in public, or going out for target practice. They are trying to change their image, I believe.

Mr. ASHBROOK. In what direction, away from firearm use?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. ASHBROOK. More or less appealing on a philosophy basis, would that be your judgment?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ASHBROOK. Noting yesterday the testimony that the membership of the Panthers has continually gone down in the area from something, say a high of 125, to anywhere from 10 to 25 at the present time, would you say they have been failing in this effort in this transition of philosophy and policy?

Mr. FRIDELL. I don't believe they are failing. Between the 12 and 15 members they believe they can control these people more readily. These people will go out in the community and talk to all the neighbors, and they believe when the revolution comes these people will fall in behind them.

Mr. ASHBROOK. I think this is one of the key points we find continually, looking into the revolutionary groups. The impact of the group is not necessarily determined by the number, but it is determined by their influence.

Twelve people influencing several hundred to several thousand would be adequate. To what extent would you say—by extent I mean numbers—would be the impact of influence of the Panther group in your territory?

Mr. FRIDELL. I don't believe they are influencing too many of the people in the central area.

Mr. ASHBROOK. Would you list this in scores or hundreds or thousands?

Mr. FRIDELL. We have had quite a few complaints of the people calling in and saying these Panthers are trying to influence them and they don't want to be influenced by the Panthers. The ones that are not complaining are not talking to us.

Mr. ASHBROOK. So you would think the impact would be minimal at the present time as far as influencing public opinion favorably?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. ASHBROOK. It has been our experience in most areas—short of some tragic or important event of news value, confrontations, raiding of headquarters, somebody being shot, a shootout, that type of thing—short of this type of incident the Panthers for the most part have had a hard time getting through to public opinion.

Would you say in your area one of the reasons they have not gotten through to public opinion is there have not been important incidents of this type happening in your area, or what other reason would you give?

Mr. FRIDELL. We don't have too many incidents happening in the city of Seattle area, and also I believe the people just don't want to be involved with the Panthers.

Mr. ASHBROOK. It is my understanding—correct me if I am wrong—that there have been in your area a large number of bombings comparable to what might be happening in other areas of the country; is this correct?

Mr. FRIDELL. It is correct, but we can't place who the responsibility belongs on, either the white or the black race.

Mr. ASHBROOK. At the present time you don't know what the source of the bombing epidemic in your particular area would be?

Mr. FRIDELL. We have made some arrests. One of the arrests we made was white, one colored, involved with a white group.

Mr. ASHBROOK. That is all the questions I have.

Mr. PREYER. Thank you, Mr. Ashbrook.

I think the list of convictions you read off are of interest in view of the idea in the country that the Panthers in many areas are unfairly persecuted. From listening to the list of convictions you have read, there were a sizable number of fines and suspended sentences, especially on initial arrests.

For example, the arson charge was a suspended sentence, followed by the violation of probation. There are some heavy sentences in there, also. I think it is interesting to note, first, that I did not hear you read any charges that were of what we might call a political nature. There were no "conspiracies to create a riot" or "conspiracy to overthrow the Government" or any sort of conspiracy charges listed, were there?

Mr. FRIDELL. No.

Mr. PREYER. Nothing that could be interpreted as political charges?

Mr. FRIDELL. No.

Mr. PREYER. These are all common law charges, arson, bank robbery, and so forth. On the first arson charge you listed, you listed a sentence as 10 years. Then you stated that the original sentence was probation. This same man was then caught in a bank robbery?

Mr. FRIDELL. That is correct.

Mr. PREYER. So he was given 20 years on the bank robbery?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. PREYER. And was given 10 years on the arson violation on probation; did they run concurrently?

Mr. FRIDELL. No; I believe the State dismissed the 10 years and let the Federal Government handle them on the bank robbery.

Mr. PREYER. In other words, what he really got was 20 years for the bank robbery and did not get 10 years for arson?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. PREYER. What were the circumstances at the bank robbery, were they apprehended at the scene, or what was the nature?

Mr. FRIDELL. They were apprehended leaving the scene of the bank robbery.

Mr. PREYER. Do you have the rule in Washington State that you are eligible for parole after you have served a third of your sentence?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. PREYER. I would say 20 years for bank robbery in my part of the country would be about a standard sentence for it where you have the one-third sentence for parole.

You mention another 25-year sentence, was that a bank robbery or a burglary?

Mr. FRIDELL. That was a grocery store robbery. This man was involved in numerous other armed robberies where he was identified, but not charged. He was just charged on this one case.

Mr. PREYER. Of burglary?

Mr. FRIDELL. No; armed robbery.

Mr. PREYER. So he was given a 25-year sentence?

Mr. FRIDELL. On armed robbery, yes, sir. You are talking about Buddy Yates.

Mr. PREYER. I didn't have his name down. I imagine that is who it was.

Mr. ROMINES. Buddy Yates was sentenced 20 years for armed robbery. I believe you are referring to Lewis Thomas Jackson who was sentenced to 25 years for bank robbery.

Mr. FRIDELL. The armed robbery was Fidelity Bank, but witnesses were threatened.

Mr. PREYER. So that again was a bank robbery case?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; with threats to witnesses if they testified in court. And one was an FBI agent, and that is why there was a heavier sentence on that.

Mr. PREYER. So the longest sentence was the 25-year robbery sentence?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. PREYER. So the pattern seemed to be for the first offense there were an unusual number of fines—fining \$100 for threats to kill, and burglary being reduced to petty larceny, arson getting probation, and this doesn't sound like persecution, exactly, to me. Where these severe sentences were given, 20 years is not out of line, it doesn't seem to me, for armed robbery and bank robbery and burglary. There is no evidence here of wrongful persecution of the Panthers, of treating them any differently from other defendants.

Looking at the application form here for the Black Panther Party, it has a number of items to check, such as "Student," "Unskilled Laborer," "Skilled Laborer," and so forth, and one of the items is "Hustler." Then another question further on says, "Do you have any special 'hustling' skills? Yes () or No ()." What are "hustling skills"?

Mr. FRIDELL. It could vary, Your Honor.

Mr. PREYER. Are they street skills?

Mr. FRIDELL. I believe so. I am not sure.

Mr. PREYER. I will ask someone else about that.

Herman Moore blew himself up. Was Mr. Moore considered a demolition expert of the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. FRIDELL. I believe so.

Mr. PREYER. And as I understand it, he was in the process of throwing a bomb at his girl friend's house?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; his charge was set up with an electrical blasting cap. And in my opinion, I believe he thought he had enough time to touch these two wires to the battery and throw the bomb.

Mr. PREYER. Was he killed at the scene of the house?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes; he was blown up on the front porch.

Mr. PREYER. Well, with regard to the view of the Panthers as Robin Hoods, I would say, considering Mr. Moore's effort to blow up his girl friend, that is not exactly an act of a Robin Hood.

Was Aaron Dixon the one who had the title of minister of defense?

Mr. FRIDELL. Elmer Dixon.

Mr. PREYER. Elmer Dixon?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. PREYER. It is interesting that when you read the objectives and the application forms of the Black Panthers, which I understand Bobby Seale was author of, they are couched in terms of the Declaration of Independence, and he gave titles to his people again in this vein, such as minister of defense, the purpose being, I gather, to indicate that the Black Panthers are a nation within a nation, that the original idea was to establish a separate nation.

Has there been any special emphasis in Seattle on the separatist idea by the Black Panthers there, that they are a nation within a nation? In the testimony I have heard, there has not been any testimony indicating this.

Mr. FRIDELL. They didn't want white policemen in their area. If you drove by their office they would yell at you, "Pigs, get out of the district, you don't belong here." And on one occasion you see, arrest of Elmer Dixon, there was an assault. Thirty-fourth avenue headquarters used to be the end of the line for the city buses, and they would come out and tell the bus drivers to leave. This one bus driver did not move fast enough so Elmer Dixon and other Panthers assaulted him.

Mr. PREYER. But as a matter of philosophy, they are not in sympathy with this Nation?

Mr. FRIDELL. No.

Mr. PREYER. One final question, Mr. Fridell. I gather from your answers to Mr. Ashbrook and from some of your testimony that the Black Panther Party in Seattle, as far as its influence goes, has been running downhill.

You mentioned the Dirty Dozen were effective at one stage and are no longer effective. You mention that target practice is being discontinued, was being done less and less, and you mentioned Jack Freeman conducted close order drills at one time and that is no longer being done.

So would you say it is a fair statement that the Black Panther Party is going downhill in Seattle, rather than in any other direction?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes, I believe it is going downhill.

Mr. PREYER. Thank you, Mr. Fridell, we appreciate your being here and your testimony today.

Mr. ROMINES. I have one further question, Mr. Chairman.

Carrying this line of questioning one step further with respect to the influence or the impact the members of the Black Panther Party have in Seattle, what would be your opinion of the results of their breakfast programs, where they attempt to indoctrinate the younger people?

Mr. FRIDELL. I believe at a future date as these children grow up we will have some trouble.

Mr. ROMINES. So, if I may summarize what you are saying, at present you do not consider the party too much of a threat; however, in the long range it may very well be so?

Mr. FRIDELL. Yes.

Mr. PREYER. Have you run across the names of Robert Webes or John Turner in Seattle?

Mr. FRIDELL. No, sir.

Mr. PREYER. I should think that is good news. They were identified by the press as having gone to Cleveland and as having been regarded as the demolition experts for the Black Panther Party.

Thank you, Mr. Fridell.

Mr. Romines, I wonder if our next witness is the one involving rule XI, 27(m)?

Mr. ROMINES. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. I would anticipate that portions of the testimony of the next witness may fall within the purview of House rule XI, 27(m). I would therefore request, since part of that testimony could fall within that rule and for certain other reasons, that we adjourn the public session and go into executive session.

Mr. PREYER. The Chair has been previously advised that significant portions of the testimony of the next witness may fall within the purview of House rule XI, 27(m). That rule reads as follows:

- (m) If the committee determines that evidence or testimony at an investigative hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person, it shall—
- (1) receive such evidence or testimony in executive session;
 - (2) afford such person an opportunity voluntarily to appear as a witness; and
 - (3) receive and dispose of requests from such person to subpoena additional witnesses.

In order for the subcommittee to comply with that rule, the testimony of the next witness will be heard in executive session. It would be our intention to release, at a subsequent date, that part of the testimony taken in executive session to which the committee determines rule 27(m) is not applicable.¹

Any individuals to whom the committee determines rule 27(m) applies will be accorded all of their rights under that rule before any portion of the testimony pertaining to them is released.

It is regretted that the public and the press representatives cannot at this time have the benefit of what is anticipated to be some interesting evidence within the witness's own personal knowledge. However, we are bound by present existing requirements of the House.

In view of that, the public session is recessed until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning and the hearing room will please be cleared at this time.

(Whereupon, at 11:04 a.m., Wednesday, May 13, 1970, the subcommittee recessed, to reconvene at 10 a.m., Thursday, May 14, 1970.)

¹ For a summary of this executive testimony, see appendix D, pp. 4424-4428.