

BLACK PANTHER PARTY

Part 2

Investigation of Seattle Chapter

TUESDAY, MAY 12, 1970

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

PUBLIC HEARING

A 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 Ichord, Preyer, and Ashbrook.

Committee member also present: Representative Albert W. Watson of South Carolina.

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

Mr. PREYER. The committee will come to order.

The hearing today is a continuation of the series of hearings concerning the Black Panther Party. The subjects of inquiry are the origin, history, organization, character, objectives, and activities of the Black Panther Party in Seattle, Washington.

I might add that this is a part of a series of hearings that have been long scheduled, and no special significance in Seattle should be read into the fact that hearings are being held at this time.

The initial hearing was concerning the Black Panther Party activities in Kansas City, Missouri.¹ Today we are directing our attention to Seattle, Washington. The witnesses who have been subpoenaed from Seattle and committee investigators who were assigned to the Seattle area will testify pertaining to the development of the Black Panther Party chapter in Seattle, its membership strength, its leadership, certain of its demands and activities in the Seattle area, its objectives, and the general reaction of the Seattle community to the Black Panther Party.

An individual who may feel aggrieved by the nature of the testimony or its personal effect on him may request that he be heard. Every

¹ For additional information concerning those hearings, see appendix A, pp. 4377, 4378.

consideration will be given by the committee to afford him an opportunity to testify if he so desires. However, it will be on condition that he will be sworn, that he will conduct himself with propriety and decorum, and that he will be available for cross-examination.

The hearing this morning may recess a little earlier than 12 o'clock because of some scheduling problems, but we will go forward tomorrow and we will make up any lost time tomorrow or later in the week.

Mr. Counsel, you may call your first witness.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant Archie Porter.

Mr. PREYER. Will you stand and raise your right hand.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. PORTER. I do.

Mr. PREYER. Proceed, Mr. Counsel.

Mr. ROMINES. Mr. Chairman, this first witness, Sergeant Archie Porter, is present this morning to answer any questions that the committee members may have pertaining to the Seattle Police Department's policies, practices, and procedures. To facilitate the committee questioning of the sergeant with respect to those policies and procedures, I intend to first ask the sergeant a number of questions to outline the general activities of the Black Panther Party in Seattle, Washington.

Subsequent witnesses will go into more specific detail with those activities.

TESTIMONY OF ARCHIE J. PORTER

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

Mr. PORTER. My name is Archie J. Porter.

Mr. ROMINES. By whom are you employed?

Mr. PORTER. I am employed by the city of Seattle, Seattle, Washington.

Mr. ROMINES. In what capacity?

Mr. PORTER. I am employed as a Seattle police sergeant.

Mr. ROMINES. Are you assigned to any specific unit or division, Sergeant Porter?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, I am.

Mr. ROMINES. What division or unit would that be?

Mr. PORTER. I am assigned to the intelligence division. I am in charge of the civil disturbance section of that division.

Mr. ROMINES. Could you give the committee a little information with respect to the civil disturbance unit? With what activities, organizations, groups, or individuals is it concerned?

Mr. PORTER. The civil disturbance section handles any disturbances that we might have in our city. I might cite some examples, such as college disorders, campus disorders, riots, any type of disturbances that we may have in our city.

Mr. ROMINES. How long have you been with the civil disturbance unit?

Mr. PORTER. Since December 1 of 1969. Prior to that I had a different assignment for 3 months and going back to September of '69, back to March of '68.

Mr. ROMINES. When did the civil disturbance unit actually come into existence, Sergeant Porter?

Mr. PORTER. The civil disturbance unit actually came into existence on December 1, 1969.

Mr. ROMINES. Under what circumstances did it come into existence?

Mr. PORTER. It came into existence as a result of the International Association of Chiefs of Police survey that was run on our police department. This was one of the many recommendations that this organization made, and it was followed through by our department.

Mr. ROMINES. So actually you have been head of the civil disturbance unit ever since the formation; is that correct?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

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

Mr. ROMINES. When did you first become aware of the existence of the Black Panther Party in the city of Seattle, Washington?

Mr. PORTER. It first came to our attention in the spring of 1968.

Mr. ROMINES. Did you have any specific date?

Mr. PORTER. Late March, early April 1968; I can't give you the exact date.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know, Sergeant, who was instrumental in forming the Black Panther Party in the city of Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. There were several people actually that were instrumental. It started out not particularly as the Black Panther Party. A person from out of town, from another city, came to Seattle and started to organize a group of black people, but not under the name of the Black Panther Party. As a result of this organization, the Black Panther Party was an offspring of it, shall we say?

Mr. ROMINES. So if I understand you, perhaps the nucleus of this black organization became the nucleus of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Who was the individual who came to town to form this first black group?

Mr. PORTER. This man's name was John Henry Wilson.

Mr. ROMINES. Did he have any nickname?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. What was that nickname?

Mr. PORTER. His nickname was the "Voodoo Man."

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know why he was called the "Voodoo Man?"

Mr. PORTER. It was his belief it had something to do—and I don't understand enough about it, I never studied it, but it had something to do with a type of religion in Africa.

Mr. ROMINES. Did John Henry Wilson, or the "Voodoo Man," actually become a member of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. No.

Mr. ROMINES. Who were the individuals who were instrumental in actually forming the Black Panther Party out of this nucleus of the organization formed by the "Voodoo Man"?

Mr. PORTER. The primary individuals were Aaron and Elmer Dixon, who are brothers, and Curtiss Harris. They were the three primary ones.

Mr. ROMINES. Where was the initial headquarters of the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. The northeast corner of the intersection of 28th Avenue and Madison Street.

Mr. ROMINES. What type of a building is located there?

Mr. PORTER. This is a two-story warehouse with one apartment in the top story.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know by whom it was rented?

Mr. PORTER. Do you mean who the lessee or lessor was?

Mr. ROMINES. Right.

Mr. PORTER. I can't give it to you, but the following witness has that information and will furnish that to you.

Mr. ROMINES. Did the Panther Party subsequently move its headquarters from 28th and Madison?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. To where did they move?

Mr. PORTER. They moved from there to 34th and East Union Street.

Mr. ROMINES. Would that be 1127½ 34th Avenue?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know, Sergeant, for what interval of time the Panthers maintained their headquarters at 28th and Madison?

Mr. PORTER. A very short time, roughly 3½ to 4 months.

Mr. ROMINES. So that would be from somewhere around March or April of '68 to about June of '68; is that correct?

Mr. PORTER. No, not June, about August.

Mr. ROMINES. What type of building is located at 1127½ 34th Avenue?

Mr. PORTER. That is an office building.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know from whom that building was rented?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Who was the individual?

Mr. PORTER. The individual that owned that building was a real estate man by the name of Benjamin Brill, who also had his own personal office next door.

Mr. ROMINES. Did the Panther Party subsequently move from the headquarters at 1127½ 34th Avenue to another address?

Mr. PORTER. Correct.

Mr. ROMINES. What is that subsequent address?

Mr. PORTER. That is the one at 20th and East Spruce.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know approximately when they moved into the building at 20th and Spruce?

Mr. PORTER. Oh, it would be about December of '69.

Mr. ROMINES. Are they presently located in the building at 20th and Spruce?

Mr. PORTER. Correct.

Mr. ROMINES. What is the type of building at 20th and Spruce?

Mr. PORTER. This is a two-story home.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether the Panthers own or rent that?

Mr. PORTER. They rent this.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know from whom they rent?

Mr. PORTER. No. The following witness will have that information.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, what was the peak membership that the Black Panther Party enjoyed in the city of Seattle between April or May of 1968, when it was formed, and at present?

Mr. PORTER. If we are talking about people that went to meetings and rallies, I would say it peaked off at the very top between 150 and 200.

Mr. ROMINES. Is it possible that the number of people who would attend their meetings and their rallies might have varied?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, very much.

Mr. ROMINES. Depending on what, for example?

Mr. PORTER. Depending upon, as an example, if it was a rally held in a park when there was entertainment being given and the weather was nice, of course, you would get a fairly good turnout of people. If the weather was bad, naturally there was a regularly scheduled weekly meeting like they had and still do have, why, the number would not go nearly that high.

Mr. ROMINES. What, Sergeant, would have been the peak number of individuals whom you might term activists, those who could always be counted upon to be present and to carry out any particular functions, at the peak?

Mr. PORTER. At the peak you could count on about 25 to 30.

Mr. ROMINES. Would you have any estimate as to the real hard-core central leaders at the peak?

Mr. PORTER. 12 to 15.

Mr. ROMINES. When did this peak in membership and activists occur, Sergeant?

Mr. PORTER. In the summer of 1968.

Mr. ROMINES. What is the current membership of the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. It would be between 8 and 11.

Mr. ROMINES. Now would that be individuals, such as those when we used the term "activists," who can always be counted upon to participate in party functions?

Mr. PORTER. This is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Would they be able to perhaps generate more membership, more attendance at their meetings and their rallies?

Mr. PORTER. No.

Mr. ROMINES. To what, Sergeant, would you attribute the decline of the strength of the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. Of course, there are obviously several reasons for it. When I speak of the top membership of 200, or at least 200 participants, not particularly 200 members, we are talking about many young people. When I say "young people," I am referring to youngsters 11, 12, 14, 15 years old. This particular age group has left the party for several reasons.

Mr. ROMINES. What would you say are those reasons, Sergeant?

Mr. PORTER. Well, in talking to many of these youngsters, naturally, myself, they felt that the party had nothing to offer them. To quote several of these youngsters, they didn't feel like going to a meeting and listening to lectures and studying out of Chairman Mao's "red book." They were not interested in that type of an education.

I think the finances had something to do with it; they were no longer able to hold rallies.

Chairman ICHORD. At this point may I interrupt, Mr. Counsel?

Sergeant, you say the members were not interested in studying Mao's "red book." If I may intervene, Mr. Chairman, how do you know

that? Have you talked to individual members and have they told you that? Is that the basis of your knowledge?

Mr. PORTER. I have talked to individual members of this group since they have left the party.

Chairman ICHORD. In that respect the minister of information, Eldridge Cleaver, has made several declarations allying the Black Panther Party with Chinese communists. For example, he was quoted in an article in the *Guardian*, July 19, 1969:

In order to transform the American social order, we have to destroy the present structure of power in the U.S., we have to overthrow the government * * * And we say that we will do this by any means necessary.

There are other references already in the record, by Cleaver and other national leaders of the Black Panthers, stating that the Black Panther Party is a revolutionary group allied with Chinese communists. Is this the only connection that you have seen between the Black Panther Party and Chinese communists, that is, teaching from Mao's so-called little red book?

Mr. PORTER. In answer to that, Mr. Congressman, I would have to say, in listening to public speeches given by the leadership of the Seattle Black Panther Party, they would, in addition, advocate what you were just mentioning in public speeches. I am sure you understand this, that I have never attended one of their meetings, obviously.

My information is obtained from intelligence sources and through people I have talked to and from public speeches that their leadership have given at different functions over the past 2½ to 3 years.

Chairman ICHORD. And several members have objected to you, though, personally, that they didn't go for the matter of instruction in Mao Tse-tung?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, several members, and let me state this clearly. Several members of the Seattle Black Panther Party that have left the party and are no longer active that I have personally talked to have indicated to me that they did not agree with the teaching of the party, and included in the teachings of the party was the violence that they taught plus the teachings and studying of Chairman Mao's "red book."

Chairman ICHORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to make clear the source of information.

Mr. ROMINES. We were discussing the reason for the decline. Would there be any other reasons that you know of that the Black Panther Party has declined in membership?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, there are. Several, shall we say, of the original hard-core members of the party have been arrested, charged, convicted, and sentenced to institutions. This is one reason.

Again, may I add the younger people that were originally in the party could see what was happening. The people were getting arrested, people were getting convicted, people were being sent to the penitentiary, and they didn't want any part of this.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, does the Black Panther Party in Seattle maintain a breakfast program?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, they do.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know at how many different locations they maintain such a program?

Mr. PORTER. I believe it is at three locations.

Mr. ROMINES. Are all three actually run by the Panthers?

Mr. PORTER. No; there is only one that is actually maintained and operated by members of the Black Panther Party.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether the Black Panther Party maintains a free medical clinic?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know where that is located?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Where is it located?

Mr. PORTER. That is located in their headquarters office, which happens to be this two-story home.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether the Panther Party maintains a clothing distribution center?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Where is that located?

Mr. PORTER. At the same place, in the home.

Mr. ROMINES. Have you ever visited the breakfast program, the free medical clinic, or the clothing distribution center?

Mr. PORTER. No, not myself.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, have any members of the Seattle Police Department been killed by members of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. No.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, have any members of the Seattle Police Department been shot at and wounded by members of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. Let me answer that thus. Sources indicate to me that the answer to that would be yes. We have had about seven or eight Seattle police officers shot and wounded, but there have been no charges or convictions. However, the sources indicate to me that Black Panther members were responsible for these shootings.

Mr. ROMINES. Under what general circumstances did these shootings occur, Sergeant?

Mr. PORTER. The summer of 1968 was the so-called bad summer in Seattle as far as riots in the central area were concerned. These shootings would happen during these riots or immediately thereafter. When I say "immediately thereafter," I am talking about maybe the riot would quiet down at 12 or 1 o'clock in the morning, and then at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning we would have officers fired upon.

Mr. ROMINES. When you say officers fired upon, would that have been an actual gun battle between an officer and a member of the Negro community standing and facing each other and shooting at each other?

Mr. PORTER. No, at no time can I recall when that happened except, which I am sure we will get into later, during the results of a robbery. This was all sniper type fire.

Mr. ROMINES. Have any members of the Seattle Police Department been shot since 1968?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, we have had that; yes.

Mr. ROMINES. As to the officers who have been shot since 1968, are any attributable to members of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. No, I don't believe so. No, it has happened just in the normal course of police duties.

Mr. ROMINES. Have any members of the Seattle Police Department been shot at by members of the Black Panther Party and as a result not been either killed or wounded?

Mr. PORTER. Again, I can't say definitely and positively that it was Black Panthers that did the shooting. Sources indicate it to me, yes, but again may I add, I am being as honest and fair about this thing as I possibly can be, and I must add that at no time has anybody been charged or convicted of this particular crime.

Mr. ROMINES. Hasn't there been one member of the Black Panther Party arrested and convicted for actually shooting at a police officer?

Mr. PORTER. Well, the shot was actually not fired. Are we referring to Armstead?

Mr. ROMINES. No, this would be Earl Brooks.

Mr. PORTER. Excuse me, you are right. I beg your pardon. That was in late December or early January of 1969. There was one hard-core member of the Black Panther Party who fired upon a police car, and the shot went through the window of the police car. However, the officer was not hit.

Mr. ROMINES. Was Brooks subsequently arrested?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, he was arrested that night.

Mr. ROMINES. Was he tried?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, and convicted for assault.

Mr. ROMINES. For what reason was the police car in the vicinity where Mr. Brooks was?

Mr. PORTER. This was at night and it was a routine traffic stop. Two officers in a police car stopped this automobile for a routine traffic violation, and I don't recall the violation—speeding or running a red light or something of that nature.

Mr. ROMINES. So the only member of the Black Panther Party who has been arrested and convicted for shooting at police officers would be Earl Brooks; is that correct?

Mr. PORTER. This is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Have there been any members of the Seattle Black Panther Party killed by the Seattle Police Department?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. How many?

Mr. PORTER. One.

Mr. ROMINES. Who was that?

Mr. PORTER. Welton Armstead.

Mr. ROMINES. What were the circumstances surrounding that?

Mr. PORTER. Basically, there was a robbery of a motel out in King County, which is out of the city limits of the city of Seattle. A license number, make, and model of automobile was gotten by a witness; the description of suspects was gotten. This was relayed to the Seattle Police Department by the King County sheriff's office, who has the jurisdiction where the robbery took place.

The car returned to the city of Seattle and Seattle police officers spotted the automobile, stopped it, and subsequently there was one Panther killed.

Mr. ROMINES. That would be during the course of a lawful arrest; is that correct?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Have any members of the Seattle Black Panther Party been killed by merchants?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. How many?

Mr. PORTER. One definite and possibly two.

Mr. ROMINES. Why do you say possibly two?

Mr. PORTER. The second one, which was quite recently, the captain of the Black Panther Party at the time of this killing was asked if the victim was a member of the Black Panther Party and the captain, Mr. Dixon, stated "No." However, records indicate that he had prior been a member some months previous.

Mr. ROMINES. Who was the individual who you say definitely was a member of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. Sidney Miller.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is the individual you say may or may not have been a member of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. Billy Ray Sims.

Mr. ROMINES. As to these individuals who were killed by merchants, what were the circumstances?

Mr. PORTER. In the Sidney Miller case, Mr. Miller and another subject were in the process of an armed robbery of the 7-11 grocery store in West Seattle when—I say the owner, it may be the manager—but anyway, as they left the store, the manager or owner—I am not sure which it is—fired his personal gun and did kill Mr. Miller.

Mr. ROMINES. And the other individual?

Mr. PORTER. Sims?

Mr. ROMINES. Sims, was that also a robbery?

Mr. PORTER. Yes. Mr. Sims was killed. He and another subject went into a dry goods store operated by one man in the central area and there was some discussion about they wanted a particular type of cloth, or whatever it may be. I don't recall the particulars. Anyway, during the course of this armed robbery Mr. Sims pulled a gun on the victim and said, "I want your money," and the owner pulled a gun from underneath the counter, shot Mr. Sims, and killed him.

Mr. ROMINES. You used the term "central area." What are you referring to?

Mr. PORTER. The central area is predominantly populated by minority races.

Mr. ROMINES. Would this be an area in the city of Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. Correct, yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Would this be an area where the Panther Party headquarters are?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, and all their headquarters have been in this particular area.

Mr. ROMINES. Is this the general area where the Panthers are most likely to be found and most likely to operate?

Mr. PORTER. Correct.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, let me return to these shootings for one moment. Did all of these shootings occur in 1968?

Mr. PORTER. Are we talking about shootings or killings?

Mr. ROMINES. Killings.

Mr. PORTER. No, the Sims killing was 4 or 5 months ago, something like that, just recently.

Mr. ROMINES. Would it have been in 1969 or 1970?

Mr. PORTER. Probably early '70. I think February, I can't be sure.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, do members of the Black Panther Party carry weapons?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

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

Mr. PORTER. Mostly hand guns and on some occasions they carried rifles.

Mr. ROMINES. Have you known them to carry weapons since the party was formed in mid-1968?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know whether the Panther Party has conducted any type of organized practices with their weapons?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Do you know over what period of time the practice has occurred?

Mr. PORTER. Primarily they were all in the summer of 1968. There may have been one or two in '69 and since that there have been none.

Mr. ROMINES. Now I would like to return one moment to the area of questioning pertaining to the decline in the membership of the Panther Party.

Do you know whether the strength in the membership of the party declined because members of the party voluntarily disassociated themselves from the party or whether there was any active attempt by the party itself to, if I may use the term, purge members or ask members to leave when they did not want to be associated with the party?

Mr. PORTER. To the best of my knowledge and through my sources, there has never been a purge in the Black Panther Party of Seattle. I might add that in talking to many of the mothers and fathers, the older people in the central area, and discussing the problem we were having with the Black Panthers, parents that had children that were involved in this program, the parents, I think, had a lot to do with the decline of the party. In other words, mother and father say, "Son, no, we don't want you there. We don't go for this type of indoctrination."

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, are you familiar with the name Jack Freeman?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, I am.

Mr. ROMINES. Who is Jack Freeman?

Mr. PORTER. Jack Freeman is a resident of Seattle. I have talked to him in my office on several occasions. He is an admitted revolutionist. He has told me that he fought in Castro's army. He told me that a year ago, which would have been in the summer of '69, that he left Seattle to Vancouver, British Columbia, to Hong Kong, to Cambodia, and back. I have had several conversations with this man.

Mr. ROMINES. Does he have any connection with the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. ROMINES. Is he white or colored?

Mr. PORTER. He is white.

Mr. ROMINES. What are his connections with the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. I might start this out by saying I have seen him there.

Mr. ROMINES. When you say "there," where do you mean?

Mr. PORTER. At the party headquarters. Mr. Freeman has told me that he has given the Black Panther Party arms instructions, and I am repeating hearsay evidence that Mr. Freeman told me, that he

has knowledge of how to make bombs, et cetera, that he gained this information while fighting for Castro's army before the takeover of Cuba.

Mr. ROMINES. Did he indicate to you whether he had passed that information along to the Black Panther Party in Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, he did, definitely, indicate that he did.

Mr. ROMINES. Did he have anything to do with the Panther Party's first headquarters on 28th and Madison?

Mr. PORTER. I believe Detective Fridell will follow through on that.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, over the past 6 months to a year have you noticed any change in the press coverage in Seattle with respect to Black Panther Party activities?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, very definitely.

Mr. ROMINES. What would that change have been?

Mr. PORTER. There has been a marked decrease in coverage by the local news media in the Pacific Northwest of the Black Panther Party. They, of course, cover the national events as to what happened in Chicago, Los Angeles, et cetera, but the news media in the Pacific Northwest have had a marked decline in coverage.

Mr. ROMINES. Would you have any opinion as to whether that decline in news media coverage has had any effect upon the strength of the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, I definitely believe it has.

Mr. ROMINES. What would be your opinion?

Mr. PORTER. Well, it is the same old story. When you have a product to sell, the best advertising you can buy is word of mouth. Newspapers, television, radio, et cetera, are mighty fine advertising. They are just not getting this. I don't know why. I cannot give you the reason. Of course, I have no knowledge of why the media are operating this way, but I do believe it has effected a marked decline in the party membership.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, what is the policy of the Seattle Police Department with respect to the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. Speaking for the chief of police of the city of Seattle, Frank Moore, I can state the following: As far as the Seattle Police Department is concerned, the Black Panther Party is just another group of people. If a person commits a crime in the city of Seattle, the Seattle Police Department will do all that is possible to effect an arrest and conviction regardless of whether the man be black, white, or a Black Panther or what he might be. We just don't feel the Black Panther Party is worthy of any special attention. Possibly some of the members who may be involved in crime would be, yes.

Mr. ROMINES. So if I understand you correctly, then, there is no such thing as a specific policy directed toward the Black Panther Party?

Mr. PORTER. Absolutely not.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, I have in front of me a copy of "The Harris Survey" which appeared in yesterday's *Washington Post*. There are several questions enumerated in that survey, and I would like to read those questions to you and ask you what are your answers to the questions. The first question is: "In general, do you feel the Black Panthers are [1] a serious menace to this country, [2] annoying but not very serious, [or 3] a force for good in the country?"

Mr. PORTER. I would answer that as (2), if they are (1), (2), (3)—annoying but not very serious. But I would also like to expound upon it a little bit, if I may be allowed to.

Mr. ROMINES. Surely.

Mr. PORTER. At a future date I believe that there could be problems. In other words, if the Black Panther Party is doing this, this is common knowledge; it is known throughout the Nation. In their breakfast program they are attempting to indoctrinate the youngsters and if they are able to do this, then they could become a serious threat to our Nation and the security of our Nation.

Mr. ROMINES. The second question is, and I quote :

Over the past few years, a fairly sizable number of Black Panthers have been shot and killed by law enforcement officers. Generally, do you feel law enforcement officers are trying to systematically wipe out the Black Panthers, or do you feel the shootings have been the result of violence started by the Panthers themselves?

Mr. PORTER. I can only answer for what has happened in Seattle and what I have read and heard has happened across the Nation. I would have to answer that question with (B). I think it is problems that they have started themselves. I don't feel that there is, at least in the city of Seattle; there may be in some other cities, I don't know, but there is no concerted effort to wipe out the so-called Black Panther Party or members of it.

Mr. ROMINES [reads]. "*Now let me read you some statements that have been made about the Black Panthers. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.*" The first statement is: "Black Panthers give blacks a sense of pride."

Mr. PORTER. Absolutely not. I don't feel that they do.

Mr. ROMINES. "Panthers do good work among disadvantaged young people."

Mr. PORTER. That would be quite questionable to me. They are giving some advantages; they are feeding youngsters. If these youngsters are hungry, fine. But, again, are they just feeding the youngsters because they are hungry or are they trying to indoctrinate them into revolutionary thinking?

Mr. ROMINES. The third statement is: "Panthers are an extremist group who want to destroy America and cannot be tolerated."

Mr. PORTER. I believe this is true. Their beliefs cannot be tolerated, not the individual. The individual man or member of the Black Panther Party is a human being. When I say "cannot be tolerated," I believe the beliefs of the party cannot and should not be tolerated by this Nation.

Mr. ROMINES. The last statement is: "Panthers want to destroy police and should be put out of existence."

Mr. PORTER. Part of it is true. I believe that their policies, the teachings of the Black Panther Party, are true; they admit this.

Mr. ROMINES. Referring to destroying police?

Mr. PORTER. Right, true. But, again, let's not think of the individual member of the party, let's talk about the party itself and their beliefs and their teachings.

Mr. ROMINES. Sergeant, there has been some publicity in the past 3 or 4 months about an incident which occurred in Seattle with respect to a decision to execute or not execute—perhaps I should say "obtain"

or "not obtain"—a search warrant to search the Black Panther headquarters in Seattle for weapons which were allegedly in their possession.

Do you have any comments to make on that dispute or that argument?

Mr. PORTER. I would be happy to comment on that, if I may refer to some notes that I have with me.

Mr. ROMINES. Certainly. First of all, could you explain briefly for the committee what the problem was in Seattle, what the issue was?

Mr. PORTER. The actual issue at this time was that another law enforcement agency, which happened to be a Federal agency, apparently had some information that there was an—or some illegal weapons stored at the Black Panther Party headquarters in the city of Seattle. Our Seattle Police Department intelligence division sources indicated otherwise. Therefore, I think this is probably what caused the controversy, if we may call it that, or problem, if you wish to use that word.

Mr. ROMINES. So the central issue, then, was whether or not to obtain a search warrant to search the Black Panther Party headquarters?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

At this time, if I may, I would like to read a prepared statement that I prepared by myself. It has been given an OK by the chief of police of Seattle, plus the mayor of Seattle, and it will explain, hopefully, to you gentlemen what actually took place and what our stand is and was on that particular issue.

Gentlemen: In answer to your question as to why the Seattle Police Department refused to assist a Federal agency in a so-called raid on the Seattle Black Panther Party, let me state:

1. That at no time was there any evidence presented to the Seattle Police Department by any law enforcement agency that would indicate a violation of any laws by the local Black Panther Party.

2. Mr. Stan Pitkin, U.S. attorney, Western Washington District, told Captain Williams of the Seattle Police Department intelligence division not to be concerned as he, Mr. Pitkin, had examined the evidence and under no circumstances did he feel the evidence presented to him warranted his recommendation that a search warrant be issued for the Seattle Black Panther Party headquarters.

A continuous survey of problems generated by the unlawful actions of the Black Panther Party in the city of Seattle and throughout the Nation is being conducted by the Seattle Police Department intelligence unit. We had and have knowledge that the Seattle Black Panthers were expecting a raid on their headquarters and, as a consequence, had fortified their office with sandbags and sheet metal. In addition, they were prepared to take full advantage of the publicity that would be gained as a result of any raid on their party headquarters.

We were also aware that raids on the Black Panther Parties in other cities and the resulting publicity had strengthened instead of weakened the party. As a result of the surveys and knowledge gained by such, Wesley Uhlman, mayor of the city of Seattle, Chief Moore of the Seattle Police Department, and the intelligence division of the Seattle Police Department are determined that we will enforce the law in the city of Seattle in a fair and logical manner. We do not intend to be stampeded into making martyrs out of any group. Any person will be

arrested and charged if and when he breaks the law, but any such arrest will be handled discreetly and legitimately for all citizens. We can see no reason for allowing the Black Panther Party or any other group any claim for charges of harassment or extermination. We simply feel in Seattle that they are worthy of no extra attention.

We appreciate the professional and cooperative manner in which the investigators of the House Committee on Internal Security have conducted their investigation of the Black Panther Party in Seattle. The Seattle Police Department is ready and willing to cooperate with any agency—Federal, State, or local—in matters of law enforcement.

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

Mr. PREYER. Thank you, Sergeant Porter. Mr. Ichord?

Chairman ICHORD. Yes, Mr. Preyer.

First of all, I want to thank Sergeant Porter for his cooperation with the committee and his testimony today. I do have one or two questions.

Sergeant, the chairman of the subcommittee stated the purpose of this investigation at the opening briefly. What we want to do is to find out all we can about the objectives, the tactics, the membership, the financing of the Black Panther Party and to assess the nature of the threat, if any, which the Black Panther Party constitutes to the security of America.

Apparently your testimony parallels what we found in the city of Kansas City, Missouri, to the effect that the Black Panther Party has not received widespread acceptance in the black community. Is that correct in your opinion?

Mr. PORTER. That is very true. They did at first, but if I may be allowed to explain just a little bit on that, please, when they first organized in the spring of 1968 they did receive a lot of publicity. It was something new to not only the black community, but to everybody.

I am sure that everybody in the Nation, black and white, were all interested in, well, who are these people, what are their ideals, what are they going to do? So as a result of this, there was a lot of publicity at that time.

However, when it was determined or when people began to see what was actually what the party stood for, what they advocated, then may I say the good Americans—and please don't get me wrong, I am not saying the Black Panthers are not good Americans—but the good Americans could see through the policies, the thinking of the party. I think this had a great deal to do with the degeneration of it.

Chairman ICHORD. You say you are talking about the possibility of a person who, in effect, may be a nonradical, but attracted to the Black Panther Party for a narrow specific reason where his purpose might be a laudable purpose, for example, working in the breakfast program of the Black Panther Party?

There is nothing apparently wrong with the Black Panther Party operating the breakfast program, is there?

Mr. PORTER. No. As a matter of fact, as an example of this, of the three breakfast programs that are operating in Seattle, only one of them is really being operated by members of the Black Panther Party, and the other two are being operated by other groups, primarily members—some of them, not all of them—but some of them are members of, well, we can call them SDS.

I am sure you gentlemen are aware there is no longer such an organization. We can call them Weathermen, but there is no longer such an organization. We will call them exactly what they are, the Seattle Student Union, and they change their name, of course, every time the University of Washington puts out an injunction against that particular group. They change their name, but it is still the same faces.

They are operating the two other Black Panther breakfast programs. There is one elderly white lady who is as American as you or I that is also assisting in the program. She thinks she is doing the right thing by feeding these children.

Chairman ICHORD. Apparently the Black Panther Party in Seattle has had the same experience as the Black Panther Party in Kansas City, declining strength. What was the top membership of the Black Panther Party in your estimation?

Mr. PORTER. Well, the top membership was about 125. However, like I stated earlier, they could get up to 200 at rallies, but the top membership was 125, 130, along in there. But now that has declined down to a maximum number of 12 and closer to 8.

Chairman ICHORD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PREYER. Sergeant Porter, I assume you have no objection if a copy of the written statement which you gave here was made available to the press.

Mr. PORTER. Absolutely not or to the committee either. I have several copies. I would be glad to introduce one into evidence if you so desire.

Mr. PREYER. Perhaps the committee might want to mimeograph that. The press will probably be interested in that.

Mr. Ashbrook?

Mr. ASHBROOK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sergeant Porter, I too thank you for your testimony here, your cooperation. I would like to expand on several points you made. You have made repeated reference to the Black Panther breakfast program. It is general information and leads to specific information of our committee that in some areas of the country the Black Panther program for providing breakfast also carries with it intensive propaganda efforts directed at those young people who are the recipients of the breakfast program.

In some areas, particularly California, a so-called Black Panther coloring book was used as a part of this propaganda effort. Are you aware of this Black Panther coloring book?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, sources have indicated it to me. I have never actually seen one, but I have been told about what it contains.

Mr. ASHBROOK. For the record, it contains all sorts of pictures indicating liberation of the black man from the pig oppressor and it shows the young hero shooting a policeman with a bullet going through his head, and all that type of thing.

Are you aware whether or not this so-called coloring book is used in Seattle or has been used as part of their breakfast program?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, sources indicate to me that has been used.

Mr. ASHBROOK. Secondly, you mentioned Panthers are known to carry weapons; was that not correct? I understand your testimony, in response to a question, that the Panthers do carry weapons—

Mr. PORTER. That is correct; yes, sir.

Mr. ASHBROOK. Further studying this matter of carrying of weapons, is this something that happens on occasion? Is it something that is a normal situation, an isolated situation? What would be the extent to which you would ascertain the carrying of weapons by the Panthers? Is this a normal thing, do they do it regularly, or is this something you run across in isolated instances?

Mr. PORTER. Later on there will be photographs introduced as exhibits showing actual photographs of Seattle Black Panthers carrying weapons at demonstrations. In addition to that, during the summer of 1968 each and every member of the Black Panther Party was required to gain, purchase, or however he or she may get a weapon, and have it available immediately, if not on his or her person, at least in the car that they were riding in.

Now this does not hold true today. Some of the Black Panthers may be walking around with a gun under their coat or something. This is probably true.

Mr. ASHBROOK. There is such a thing as legally carrying weapons and such a thing as illegally carrying weapons. In your experience in the past has the average Black Panther tended to carry his weapon illegally or legally?

Mr. PORTER. Primarily legally. We are talking about and the pictures will show Black Panthers carrying rifles.

Now if I may, we have a city ordinance which is called "carrying a concealed weapon."

Mr. ASHBROOK. That is primarily what I was getting at. I know in the California legislature they went into the legislature with rifles.

Mr. PORTER. They also did that with our State legislature.

Mr. ASHBROOK. So in some cases it is legal and in other cases illegal?

Mr. PORTER. Correct. The city of Seattle has arrested members of the Black Panther Party for CCW, carrying concealed weapons.

Mr. ASHBROOK. You mentioned in testimony that a number of Black Panthers have been committed and are now incarcerated in institutions. Were any of these convicted of carrying concealed weapons?

Mr. ROMINES. There will be other witnesses who will give testimony as to all Panthers who have been arrested.

Mr. ASHBROOK. I just wanted to get the witness' testimony as to whether or not he considered the weapons aspect a potential threat to citizens of Seattle and to the law enforcement officer.

Mr. PORTER. Yes; it is rising. If they maintain the momentum in this particular field that they are, as they are stockpiling weapons in the city of Seattle, the Black Panther Party is, and have been for several months. Again I can't say what they are going to do, but if they decide to have a so-called shootout with the police, obviously this is going to present some grave problems, or if they get a stockpile.

Now I am talking about all national Black Panthers. If they get a stockpile of weapons large enough that they think they might be able to overthrow the Government, then definitely it will be a problem. There is no question about it.

Mr. ASHBROOK. When you can build a broad-based program and attract hundreds and thousands, you don't really need to resort to violence because you have the strength in numbers. As the membership declines and the membership is a problem, there is always—histori-

cally, anyway, in this country and elsewhere—the tendency to resort to violence and use weapons to achieve your purpose if you can't do it by building a mass organization.

So I would certainly tend to agree with you that if the numbers have declined from 100 to 25, down to 8, 10, or 12, it certainly leaves the 8, 10, or 12 with more of a hard-core threat of danger.

Mr. PORTER. I think this is true and I believe it is just under or just over 2 percent of the population of Russia are actually members of the Communist Party, so you see what a small minority of a nucleus of the group can do if given the right opportunity.

Mr. ASHBROOK. I would just close by commenting on one aspect of what you have said, referring to the so-called "good Black Panther." I know we have investigated other areas and we have always had the allegation on the part of witnesses that there was such a thing as a good Ku Klux Klan member and there was such a thing as a good Nazi.

I would have to be listed among those who would say it was hard to visualize a good Nazi. Anyone who accepts the principles on which the organization is based, whatever his motive could be, certainly could not list himself as a good American.

I think the same thing could be said of the Ku Klux Klan. Whether the same thing could be said for the Panthers, I would have to withhold my judgment at this time. Maybe we will find there is such a thing as a "good Black Panther." But I will withhold my judgment on that.

Mr. PREYER. Sergeant Porter, you mentioned in discussing the membership that peak membership was in the summer of 1968 and you broke that into three categories—the general membership of about 150 to 200, the activists of about 25 to 30, and the hard-core leaders, 12 to 15.

Then you mentioned the current membership and you say it is 8 to 11. Is that counting all of the categories or is it 8 to 11, at the present time, of just activists or hard-core people?

Mr. PORTER. No, Mr. Congressman, that is the total figure of members of the Black Panther Party in the city of Seattle.

Mr. PREYER. Eight to eleven is the total figure?

Mr. PORTER. I think I could give you the exact one, but I will leave it as just 8 to 11.

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

Mr. PREYER. This is an interesting thing because we have run into this in other cities. There seem to be a few among part of the public that think the Black Panthers are Robin Hoods of some kind, but when you get to the individual Black Panther Party in a specific city, that doesn't seem to be the effect they are having in areas among the people they are really working with.

You mentioned the name of Jack Freeman and you gave some testimony of what he told you and described him as a revolutionist. Does he live in Seattle now?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, he does.

Mr. PREYER. The only reason I bring that up is you did testify as to what he told you and I think this is an example of where, if Mr. Freeman wants to testify or contradict, that we will be glad to hear from him.

I was interested in your statement about your policy at the Seattle Police Department and in your general approach to the Black Panthers. I think one of the basic problems that the country is considering on the Panthers is, Are they rightfully prosecuted or are they unfairly persecuted?

You have made clear that in Seattle, at least, it seems to me you are leaning over backward to make sure that they are rightfully prosecuted rather than being unfairly persecuted. I gather you have even declined to raid the party headquarters because you were afraid you didn't have sufficient evidence. I think this is evidence which bears on this general question which young people, for example, may want to consider, that all Panthers are being unfairly persecuted.

Another question is, Are the Panthers purposeful terrorists or are they mostly big talkers? Another part of that is, Are they romantic heroes or are they criminals, either petty or vicious?

Your answers to those questions seemed to me to say your police department's attitude is that they are not worthy of special attention; that you consider them annoying, but not very serious. So I think your answer to that is that they are not romantic heroes and that perhaps they are more big talkers than highly effective revolutionaries.

I will qualify that in a minute, as you did.

I want to mention one thing. In the decline of membership, do you attribute any of that to the fact that the Panthers may be going underground? We know that the Panther uniform of the black beret and the turtle-neck sweater and the black coat is now being worn mostly by non-Panthers, and the Black Panthers, the real Panthers, are going back to civilian clothes.

Do you feel that the decline of membership is related to a substantial number of Panthers going underground?

Mr. PORTER. At least locally, no. Nationally there have been some, of course, as we are all aware of who have gone underground. But not locally, I don't believe so.

I might say, if I may add, regarding the coats and the caps, one thing that we have noticed in the city of Seattle and our other problem areas, the schools and the colleges, we have had the long hair and the odd type dress, where now the younger people are going away from that.

They are getting the short, so-called—as I have—square haircut. And the reason for that, they tell me, is, one, for an obvious reason, because they cannot be identified as easily, which is true. Maybe this is why the Black Panther Party has gone from the black beret and the black jacket.

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

Mr. PREYER. I believe you did make some comment as to the effect that they are an extremist group and we can't live with their beliefs in this country. They are witnesses against themselves as to what their beliefs are, what they have in their minds.

Mr. PORTER. Unless the problem gets to where they are teaching enough of our young, like through the breakfast program, et cetera. As I stated earlier, then we could run into a grave problem.

Mr. PREYER. Sergeant Porter, we thank you for your testimony. We will hear more about the Panthers here in Seattle. It is a little difficult to see, when we hear your type of testimony and the unromantic hero

aspect of it, why the Black Panthers have support among white liberals in the country and among young people.

Yet in action in a specific area it doesn't seem to have that charisma.

Mr. WATSON, do you have any questions?

Mr. WATSON. No.

Chairman ICHORD. I have one more question.

Did I understand you to say you thought one of the reasons for the decline was the diminishing attention given to the Black Panthers in the Seattle community by the news media?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, I definitely believe this.

Chairman ICHORD. You feel they have to have the publicity in order to survive, in order to thrive?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

Chairman ICHORD. Of course, the news media get it from all quarters. I have heard members of the Black Panther Party criticize the news media for what they consider lack of objective reporting. I, too, have joined in the criticism and in several respects have been quite frank about it.

I think the news media do have to evaluate methods of reporting in order not to aggravate the situation. Of course, even this committee has been criticized in conducting investigations at various times trying to find out the facts.

The charge is made that we ourselves, by merely holding a committee meeting, a committee investigation, give publicity. However, I can't particularly buy that unless we are resigned to the possibility of only reading newspaper reports and listening to the news media reports, which I don't necessarily consider objective. That depends upon the particular reporter. Isn't this one of the things you find in your experience in dealing with such disturbances?

Mr. PORTER. Yes; I have to agree with you. However, as you say, and I am sure this is correct, your committee gets it from all sides, our police department gets it from all sides, and the news media gets it from all sides. So it is a matter of a job to be done and done the best that your committee, our police department, and the news media can.

Chairman ICHORD. This is what we are trying to do in this investigation by bringing in people like you who have firsthand experience, by bringing in people who have direct knowledge.

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

Chairman ICHORD (presiding). I am not being critical in the sense that newspaper reports are erroneous, but I think we have to recognize we all have our prejudices; we are standing in a particular spot when we see an event happen. I know when I was practicing law, for a long time I was quite concerned why three people who witnessed an accident, for example, would give you three different versions. I was quite disturbed that at least two of them might be lying, but later on I understood that it all depends on where the person stands, what his particular beliefs are, what his particular biases may well be.

This is one of the problems, I think, that the news media do have in reporting these matters. It is a very difficult problem and I am not criticizing the individuals concerned. It is an inherent difficulty. These things can be blown out of proportion one way or the other. I think the news media do have to evaluate their methods of reporting and try to improve them.

Mr. PORTER. As well as law enforcement and everybody, we all have to improve; nobody is perfect. I think probably, if I might say it,

the news media, at least in the city of Seattle, our two major newspapers and the television, radio, probably think, and the reason there has been a decline in their coverage of the Black Panther Party is they feel if there are only 8 or 10 people, what is newsworthy of that? There are more and larger things happening in our Nation today. Maybe that is the reason. I don't know what their policies are. However, I do say it has definitely had an effect on the party.

Chairman ICHORD. You would evaluate, then, the Black Panther Party, at least in the Seattle area, as a minor threat to the security of the Seattle area?

Mr. PORTER. At this time; in 1968 it was different.

Chairman ICHORD. Because of the decline in the influence on the members of the black community of Seattle?

Mr. PORTER. That is correct.

Chairman ICHORD. I have one more question, Mr. Watson, and then I will yield to you.

I have stated many times that at this time—I am speaking at the present time—that you could put all of the violent revolutionary groups in the United States together working for the same purpose completely united, which they are not, and they would still not have the capability of overthrowing this society.

I make that statement primarily because of the way this society is organized. You have such a broad power structure, national police officers, you have local police officers, State police officers, reserve strength which can be called upon, National Guard, Army units, et cetera. It is pretty hard to pick out a single target which revolutionaries who would overthrow the society can aim at.

I do think their greatest immediate threat is the possibility of causing society to enact laws to control this type of activity that, in turn, will restrict the liberty of all. Would you basically agree with my conclusion?

Mr. PORTER. Well, I think if we are going to talk about the broad spectrum of people in our Nation, and I am getting away from just the Black Panther Party, if I may, let's talk about the SDS. These particular groups basically all have the same purpose. It has been from my studying of their groups, talking to their leaders, and reading their propaganda that they put out, or literature, if I may, or vice versa, it is all the same thing. It is all coming from the same place. Whether they be black people speaking it or white people, basically it is all the same thing.

Chairman ICHORD. Let me put my question in this way. We have demands coming from several quarters for the passage of legislation which, in effect, would put the Federal Government into the business of keeping law and order in the Seattle area.

If the situation gets so bad, in my opinion the legislation will probably be passed. There are some pieces of legislation that have been passed, and I am not particularly quarreling with the particular piece of legislation because society does demand some kind of order. But the thing that does concern me, if we go into legislation from the Federal level designed to keep the peace in Seattle we must establish a national police force. It does no good to pass a law if you don't enforce it.

You are just fanning the breeze, so to speak. We have to have a national police force to go out into Podunk, into Seattle, and, of course, if that is done, we will have lost a great part, in my opinion, of what this country stands for.

Mr. PORTER. I certainly agree with you 100 percent. I would hate to see it come in this Nation where it would become, what we are saying in essence, a police state. I don't think this is necessary.

Certainly I agree with you, there is some legislation we need on the Federal level, State, and local, that I am sure, hopefully anyway, that will come about in this present session. There happens to be one bill I am thinking of in particular that I would personally like to see passed.

Chairman ICHORD. The legislation in regard to bombing?

Mr. PORTER. Yes, that and also on the denial of bail for convicted felons. I think Attorney General Mitchell has actually backed or introduced or written this.

Chairman ICHORD. That would apply only to federally convicted felons?

Mr. PORTER. Right.

Chairman ICHORD. Mr. Watson?

Mr. WATSON. Thank you.

I apologize that I was not here to hear the testimony of Sergeant Porter. In fact, I am not a member, officially, of the subcommittee, but I am interested in this particular investigation or study, and some of the questions of the chairman prompted a question or two on my part.

You say, as I gather now, the Black Panthers are of no real consequence in your area?

Mr. PORTER. This is true.

Mr. WATSON. And did I understand the figure 8 or 10 as your estimate of the actual membership of the Black Panthers?

Mr. PORTER. That is true.

Mr. WATSON. That is today. What was your estimate of the membership in '68, as I concluded it was a factor in '68?

Mr. PORTER. It was a definite factor, sir, in 1968, and it was about 125 membership.

Mr. WATSON. And in '68 you say it was a definite factor. Would you mind amplifying that a little bit, to what extent?

Mr. PORTER. In the spring and summer of 1968 the city of Seattle suffered; I have forgotten how many riots we had, but there were several. It was my opinion that each and every single one of these riots that we had was at least agitated by the Black Panther Party leadership.

Mr. WATSON. And at that time you had around a hundred or so?

Mr. PORTER. About 125, yes.

Mr. WATSON. So if 125 could bring about that much disruption, destruction, and violence, then, although you have only 8 or 10, I assume that they are pretty well surveyed and under surveillance by your department, are they not?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. WATSON. Let me ask you this. We have found a proliferation of these so-called leftist groups that in their idealism have their arguments and as a result they will fragment or they will start another

group. We find that there is always someone in the group who is trying to outmilitarize the other members, and so as a consequence they will become upset and they will start another group.

Instead of the Black Panthers, they would call them the Black Cats or something. Have you found that these 125 have left town or gone over into another group?

Mr. PORTER. There is another group in Seattle, a small group called the Black Cultural Center.

Mr. WATSON. Have you found some of these Black Panthers over in that group?

Mr. PORTER. Very few, only two or three. This is also a small group that consists of about five or six people. It just has tried to get off the ground and generate some membership and power, but it has not been able to do it.

Mr. WATSON. Sergeant, it has been a matter of concern to me to see what happened in Seattle. As you related a moment ago, these people were deeply involved in the riots and difficulties out there. I think Mark Rudd boasted of less than 75 members of SDS at Columbia University, yet they were able to bring that institution to a standstill for some 18,000 students.

I hope we are not overlooking the threat simply because of a small numerical strength. I would assume that even these 8 or 10, according to your intelligence, are pretty well versed in the nature of formulating unrest and even in bringing about violence. Would that be an accurate statement?

Mr. PORTER. This is true. However, let me cite an example, if I may. I don't recall the day because I happened to have been out of town all week long last week, but on my return to Seattle last Friday night we had a meeting in the office. And, during the week, I was told, there was a demonstration held in front of the Federal courthouse by the militant groups, the SDS, et cetera, et cetera.

What their reason was I don't recall, but anyway one of the local members of the Black Panther Party got up to speak on "Power of the People," et cetera, et cetera, and he was actually booed down by these other people.

They have been asked to join the other groups like the Seattle Liberation Front, the Seattle Students Union, the SWP, and all these other parties in their demonstrations and rallies, and once in a great while you see one member of the Black Panther Party show up. I understand that member is subpoenaed and will be here in front of this committee. And that is about the extent of the effect they have.

Mr. WATSON. Now you had 120 and you now have 8 identified. What happened to the 90-odd? Did they leave Seattle to go to other areas to form trouble or did they join other groups? I assume somewhere along the line you probably followed their whereabouts or their movements. Could you give us a little idea as to where they are or whether they have repented; hopefully they have repented. I can tell by the reaction of the audience that there is not much prospect of that.

Mr. PORTER. It might not be as bad as it sounds, quite frankly.

Mr. WATSON. If they would not destroy buildings, if they let those people get an education who wanted to do so, and permitted those who

wanted to walk along the streets, I think it would be the most humorous thing in the world, but when they start stepping on others' rights, then I think it is serious.

Mr. PORTER. I agree with you 100 percent, sir. Some of the hard-core ones have changed addresses, like the State penitentiary at Walla Walla, the State correctional institution at Shelton, Washington.

When I say 125 originally, those were not 125 hard-core members, and I don't believe that you were in the committee room at that time when I testified the number of hard core originally as about 12 to 15, maybe 18 at the most.

As you see, we are talking really about 105 or 110 ex-Panthers that you are talking about, that you are asking what happened to them, where did they go, what did they do? Some of them have moved away from Seattle and gone to other cities and are not active.

We, of course, communicate with other cities cross the Nation as they well do with us. Some of them have taken jobs. There have been a lot of Federal programs instituted in the city of Seattle, a lot of Federal money pumped into the city, where jobs have been available for minority races.

I have to admit—and it is not a matter of admission, it is the truth—that these people are doing the same as you and I are doing. They are out working for a living. They are causing no problems.

But again we are just talking about the 105 or 110 or so that were members because they probably thought at the time that was the thing to do. As I testified earlier this morning, these people didn't particularly believe in the teachings of the party, and this is one of the reasons they left.

Mr. WATSON. So finally it is your opinion, despite the literature or the propaganda, whichever word you choose, despite all of that, the party is really not maintaining support? The young people are not buying this propaganda?

Mr. PORTER. No, the young people are not. The only thing I am concerned about is the breakfast program and the youngsters that they are feeding. Now you have to remember that these are young people. Are they pumping enough revolution into their heads, to their thinking, so that when these children, who are now 8, 10, 11, 12, when they become 16, 18, 20 years old—let's say 10 years from now—are we going to have a problem with these people?

This is my big worry right at the moment. I am not really concerned too greatly about the 8 or 10 Panthers that hold an office at 20th and Spruce. I am worried about the youngsters out in those centers where they are feeding them.

Mr. WATSON. That is precisely my concern, because I rather believe now that we have the generation that some 10 or 12 years ago was instructed as youngsters that it is all right to violate a law if you think it is morally wrong. I think now we are reaping the whirlwind, and that is what I am apprehensive about in the years ahead.

While we all share the same object in eliminating the pockets of poverty and bringing about greater benefits for all of the people, if we have a generation who has been taught disrespect for the law, then regardless of what law you might change, they will still disrespect it or treat it according to their own interpretation.

Mr. PORTER. I recall who made that statement.

Mr. WATSON. I had no one in mind, so many have made that statement.

Mr. PORTER. I certainly agree with the statement and I am sure the majority of our Nation does feel the same way about it.

Chairman ICHORD. The meeting will be adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., Tuesday, May 12, 1970, the subcommittee recessed, to reconvene at 10 a.m., Wednesday, May 13, 1970.)