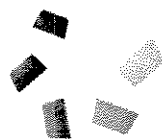


Guide to
the Microfilm Edition
of the
FBI File on the
BLACK PANTHER PARTY
NORTH CAROLINA

Introduction by
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INTRODUCTION

The FBI files on the Black Panther Party–North Carolina trace apparent efforts of the Black Panther Party (BPP) to establish chapters and, perhaps, a statewide organization in North Carolina. Spanning the years from 1968 to 1976, a time of extraordinary unrest in the United States, these files not only contain extensive information about the Black Panthers but also provide data about such other groups as:

National Committee to Combat Facism

United Front Against Facism

Young Patriots

Progressive Labor Party

Southern Student Organizing Committee

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

Organization of Afro-American Unity

American Civil Liberties Union

Students for a Democratic Society

Southern Conference Education Fund

In addition to these, the FBI's Black Panther Party–North Carolina files furnish researchers with significant insights into other student organizations at various campuses, including: University of North Carolina, Duke University, North Carolina A & T, and the University of California at Berkeley.

Simultaneously urging yet abating civil rights and personal liberties, the Black Panther Party with its calls for violent revolution early drew the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Operating under the 1940 Smith Act, the FBI's investigation of the Black Panthers centered on questions of "seditious conspiracy," "rebellion," and "insurrection." A seriously increased volume of threats and atrocities affecting race relations in North Carolina provided the tragic backdrop, setting the stage for the FBI's investigation of Black Panther activities in that state.

The Bureau's "prosecutive theory" centered on two elements: first, that Black Panther publications widely disseminated "revolutionary" doctrine; and second, that the Panthers had built "cohesion or unity" between their national and state/local units. FBI investigative technique included telephone interception at the Panthers' national headquarters in Berkeley/Oakland, California; tight monitoring of the shipments of The Black Panther and other BPP publications; and close surveillance of meetings, rallies, and headquarters buildings of the Panthers as well as ancillary organizations. At times, it seemed that the Bureau's best intentions to anticipate and prevent both interracial and intraracial violence were frustrated by the sheer increase of ever-more-broadly distributed incidents of racial unrest. At one point, admitting that their activities sometimes hovered near the "outer perimeter of official duties," agents were urged by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to eschew "shotgun" investigative methods so that the Bureau's resources could be concentrated on seeking the hard, unimpeachable evidence that would hold up in court.

Documents in the Black Panther Party--North Carolina files, while mainly surveillance reports and associated investigation memoranda, include correspondence within the FBI as well as with other federal and some state and local agencies, legal memoranda, Black Panther Party publications, transcriptions of speeches by spokespersons of the BPP and associated groups, digests and partial transcriptions of FBI phone intercepts at BPP national headquarters, and special reports with speech transcriptions covering such rallies of the era as the 1969 University of North Carolina Counterorientation Week and the 1970 Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention in

Washington, DC. A considerable amount of data can be gleaned from these files about the Black Panthers' national headquarters as well as its operations in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Newark, New York, and New Haven. A small amount of Black Panther internal records and correspondence is included in these files.

The FBI's files on the Black Panther Party–North Carolina are astonishingly rich sources and keys to any understanding of the anxieties suffusing the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

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Sections are arranged chronologically but, within each section, documents are ordered in reverse chronology usually according to dates when documents were received in FBI Washington headquarters. Enclosures generally are found with transmission documents, notwithstanding dates of enclosures. Copies of some documents occur at multiple points throughout these files.

Dates of first and final documents in each section follow:

- Roll 1:**
- Section 1 — 6/11/69-10/29/68
 - Section 2 — 7/24/69-5/27/69
 - Section 3 — 10/29/69-7/30/69
 - Section 4 — 5/22/70-10/30/69
 - Section 5 — 7/31/70-5/21/70
 - Section 6 — 10/15/70-8/3/70
 - Section 7 — 11/30/70-10/17/70
- Roll 2:**
- Section 8 — 1/19/71-12/8/70
 - Section 9 — 1/22/71-1/27/71
 - Section 10 — 4/7/71-1/29/71
 - Section 11 — 4/22/71-4/9/71
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 - Section 13 — 1/4/73-12/8/71
 - Section 14 — 4/5/76-1/15/73