

FBI

Date: 7/15/70

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TO : DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM : SAC, CHICAGO (157-2209)
SUBJECT: BLACK PANTHER PARTY (BPP)
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

Re Bureau airtel to SACs Chicago, New York and San Francisco 6/29/70.

Careful consideration has been given to the Bureau's suggestion proposing the creation of friction between the Nation of Islam (NOI) and the Black Panther Party (BPP) in the form of causing retaliatory reaction by the NOI in reprisal for loss of newspaper sales revenue by the NOI due to infringement thereon by the sale of the BPP newspaper.

Chicago, based on its knowledge of BPP activity in Chicago and in other cities covered by the Chicago field office and based on its knowledge of NOI activity at NOI headquarters in Chicago and in other cities throughout the United States as is made available to this office, does not believe the Bureau should involve itself at this time, in any effort to create an open dispute between the NOI and the BPP. Chicago bases the above on the fact available information indicates the BPP and the NOI are already at odds. It is felt this trend should be

- 2 - Bureau (RM)
- 1 - New York (Info) (RM)
- 1 - San Francisco (Info) (RM)
- 1 - Chicago

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allowed to continue unmolested as, regardless of how remote such a happening might be, if it ever became public knowledge that the Bureau was a participant in creating a dispute between black groups it could prove most embarrassing to this organization. It would appear that if such strategy became public knowledge undesirable black groups would be given excessive favorable publicity and could tend to draw undesirable groups together rather than separate them. It certainly would seem possible that the extreme liberal movement present in this country would lend much support to the militant black groups involved. The possibility of a coalition being formed would not be remote. It is sincerely felt by this office that the mood of the militant blacks, the liberal community and liberal journalists would only benefit by any activity which could be traced, however remote this possibility might be, to the "white establishment" as they refer to the United States Government.

In an effort to substantiate the above observation the following data, received over a period of recent weeks and months from such sources as CG 7392-R*, CG 6896-R, CG 6870-R, CG 7251-R (PROB), and others throughout the country who are familiar with activity and policy of both the NOI and the BPP, is being set forth. Much of the data is national in scope. In this connection, attention is drawn to the report of SA JOSEPH R. SHEA dated 6/16/70 at Chicago, titled "NOI, RM - NOI", page 39 and pages 54 through 65, which sets forth detailed data regarding NOI policy as relates to "Muhammad Speaks" (MS) newspaper and NOI thinking as relates to other black groups including the BPP.

Information available this office indicates the Illinois chapter of the BPP, Chicago, receives approximately 13,000 to 18,000 of the BPP newspaper weekly. The paper is distributed, in the main, to community centers set up by the BPP which then utilizes young black children to sell the paper on the streets. There is strong evidence that many of the papers are given away and that money derived from the sale of these papers is not all turned in, some being pocketed by the seller. The BPP, of course, also puts the paper on various newsstands throughout the city, some newsstands also handling other militant papers such as MS. The BPP also sends the papers to other cities in Illinois for possible sale.

In contrast, the NOI forces its membership to purchase MS in quantity and to pay for same before peddling it on the street corners. The NOI, therefore, is assured of income before the papers are put up for sale to the public. This is especially true insofar as dedicated members are concerned.

There has been no evidence thus far which would indicate the BPP in Chicago is in competition with the NOI as relates to the sale of newspapers. There is no information the NOI is in competition with the BPP in this connection either. By this it is meant that there have been no known confrontations between members of the two groups insofar as the sale of the respective papers is concerned.

It is interesting to note that information available indicates the BPP in Chicago always calls the offices of the NOI newspaper and asks that its reporters cover proposed BPP press conferences. NOI responses to such calls have been limited.

CG 157-2209

As was stated earlier, there has been no evidence, as of this date, that there has been any serious dispute between the NOI and the BPP in Chicago over the sale of newspapers.

The NOI report referred to above on page 39, reflects the circulation of MS had declined from a weekly high of some 520,000 copies to some 390,000 copies. According to CG 6896-R this is directly attributed to ELIJAH MUHAMMAD's publicly announced policy whereby news relating to organizations or individuals not supporting his principles would not be allowed to appear in MS. This source has repeatedly advised to date that high NOI officials have discussed this policy with MUHAMMAD but he remains unyielding in his stand. There has been no evidence the decline in the sale of MS is due to BPP competition. Information strongly indicates the decline is related solely to MUHAMMAD's policy and to his repeated attacks on MALCOLM X LITTLE both in speeches and in MS which attacks have alienated many of the black militants who are utilizing MALCOLM as an idol. MUHAMMAD's attacks on MALCOLM continue.

Insofar as loss of funds created by the decline in circulation of MS is concerned, MUHAMMAD, as he has done in the past, implemented another fund drive same being called the "Emergency Fund Drive" which has as its purpose the raising of money from all blacks to buy a hospital. This fund drive has been advertised in MS and members of the NOI, at least in Chicago, have been assessed \$25. Such fund drives are seemingly MUHAMMAD's answer to any need he might have for more money.

Pages 54 through 65 of the above referenced report sets forth information showing MUHAMMAD has

publicly attacked all black militants including the BPP, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, etc. He has accused them of stealing his ideas, of being wrong in their activities, of being poor groups or individuals, not effective insofar as being able to lead the black man is concerned, and of not having Divine guidance - meaning they do not follow his principles. As will be noted, NOI leaders in Chicago have referred to the BPP as boys and have stated the BPP had better not start any trouble with the NOI as they would not run away from the BPP but would not be aggressors in the event of a confrontation.

As was reported, members of the NOI and the BPP in Philadelphia were at odds over selling their respective organizational papers, had a fight in Philadelphia at a MALCOLM X Fund Raising Rally, and the BPP subsequently attacked MUHAMMAD and the NOI in the BPP newspaper. Information strongly indicates the disagreement in Philadelphia between the two groups centered around BPP admiration for MALCOLM X and NOI hatred of him rather than the sale of the papers. Subsequent information from CG 6096-R reflected JEREMIAH SHABAZZ, Minister of MUHAMMAD's Mosque #12, Philadelphia, was removed from this position for militant remarks he had made, presumably in connection with the BPP-NOI disagreement in Philadelphia. It is interesting to note that JEREMIAH wrote a lengthy article which appeared in 4/3/70 issue of MS, page 15, same defending MUHAMMAD and the NOI for their activities at the above rally and attacking the BPP. The above is set forth in the referred to NOI report.

Information also indicates officials of the BPP in Chicago have developed no rapport with MUHAMMAD and will "forget all about MUHAMMAD". A BPP national official is reported to believe the NOI is not a revolutionary group and should be publicly referred to as "pigs".

CG 157-2209

BPP and NOI sources report these organizations have formed no coalition with any other organization. It is interesting to note that these sources report the reason coalitions have not been formed is because both would want to control and direct the activities of any group they became involved with and would also demand the group follow their tenets totally and that would include all of the funds involved.

It is believed the above clearly shows the seeds of open conflict between the NOI and the BPP are present and could flare up at any time.

Chicago recommends the Bureau not involve itself in the matter at this time and let the two organizations develop their animosities further as it is believed will occur.