

# ***Elbert Howard, a Founder of the Black Panthers, Dies at 80***

By [Neil Genzlinger](#)

July 26, 2018

Elbert Howard, who was a founder of the Black Panther Party and, as its spokesman, in the thick of some of the most tumultuous events of the late 1960s and early '70s — but who was most enthusiastic about its social-service and community-organizing work — died on Monday in Santa Rosa, Calif. He was 80.

His wife, Carole Hyams, confirmed the death. She said he had been ill for some time but did not specify a cause.

Mr. Howard, widely known as Big Man because of his linebacker's build, did not have the high profile of the Panther leaders Bobby Seale, Huey P. Newton or Eldridge Cleaver as the group, which was formed in Oakland, Calif., in 1966, went national and took on issues like police brutality and racial injustice.

As the group's deputy minister of information, Mr. Howard was often quoted when the more prominent party figures were on trial or in the news for other reasons. (The minister of information, Mr. Cleaver, was in exile overseas.)

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