



FRED HAMPTON



Fred Hampton was a high school student and a promising leader when he joined the Black Panther Party at the age of 19. His status as a leader grew very quickly. By the age of 20 he became the leader for the Chicago Chapter of the Black Panther Party. He was involved in a lot of activities to improve the black community in Chicago. He maintained regular speaking engagements and organized weekly rallies at the Chicago federal building on behalf of the BPP. He worked with a free People's Clinic, taught political education classes every morning at 6am, and launched a community control of police project. Hampton

was also instrumental in the BPP's [Free Breakfast Program](#). Hampton had the charisma to excite crowds during rallies; he was supposed to be appointed to the Party's Central Committee. His position would have been Chief of Staff if he did not have an untimely death on the evening of December 4, 1969.

Events Leading up to The Death of Fred Hampton

The social climate of the late 1960s was definitely NOT on Hampton's side. The government was not supportive of any radical political organization, and in fact turned out to be downright suspicious at any attempt to challenge or change the status-quo.

Discriminating against the black community was the norm. When word of a "Days of Rage" rally came to the government's attention, it was known that some members of the BPP supported this "attack on the pig power structure." Allegedly, Fred Hampton and the majority of the Chicago Panthers did not support this rally, but to the FBI they were guilty by association. This information, combined with the general suspicion the government had of the BPP, and Fred's powerful speaking and organizing skills, made Fred Hampton a wanted man. The Federal Bureau of Investigation saw Fred Hampton as a threat to society that needed to be eliminated. They conspired with the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and William O'Neal to spy on Fred to give them information about his daily itinerary in order to have O'Neal's felony charges dropped. His job was to serve as a bodyguard of Fred and director of the Chapter's security. He was supposed to notify the FBI of the Panther's apartment floor plan and how many residents lived in the apartment. When the FBI got its information a raid was authorized by the state attorney Hanrahan. FBI special agents sent a memo to J. Edgar Hoover stating that "a positive course of action (was) being affected under the counterintelligence program." (Quoted information from [Shane Smith's Fred Hampton Page](#))

That Unforgettable Morning

That evening Fred Hampton and several Party members including William O'Neal came home to the BPP Headquarters after a political education class. O'Neal volunteered to make the group dinner. He slipped a large dose of secobarbital in Fred's kool-aid and left the apartment around 1:30am, a little while later, Fred fell asleep. Around 4:30am on December 4, 1969 the heavily armed Chicago Police attacked the Panthers' apartment. They entered the apartment by kicking the front door down and then shooting Mark Clark pointblank in the chest. Clark was sleeping in the living room with a shotgun in his hand. His reflexes responded by firing one shot at the police before he died. That bullet was then discovered to be the only shot fired at the police by the Panthers. Their automatic gunfire entered through the walls of Fred and his pregnant girlfriend's room. Fred was shot in the shoulder. Then two officers entered the bedroom and shot Fred at pointblank in his head to make sure that he was dead, and no longer a so-called menace to society. It has been said that one officer stated, "He's good and dead now." The officers then dragged Fred's body out of his

bedroom and again open fired on the members in the apartment. The Panthers were then beaten and dragged across the street where they were arrested on charges of attempted murder of the police and aggravated assault. The incident also wounded four other Panther members. For more information look at our page about [COINTELPRO and Government Oppression](#) of the BPP.

The Big Conspiracy

Immediately after the incident FBI, CPD, and state attorney Hanrahan started their cover-up. They showed false re-enactments on TV, fabricated photographic evidence, and went as far as making a fake investigation. Hanrahan had the audacity of saying, "We wholeheartedly commend the police officers bravery, their remarkable restraint and discipline in the face of this vicious Black Panther attack, and we expect every decent citizen of our community to do likewise." The members of the Black Panther Party did not take this incident lightly. They immediately opened up the apartment to the public to show the brutality of the police. A later investigation found that no more than four bullets left the Panther's apartment while approximately two hundred entered the apartment. As explained by this [resource](#), there are many inconsistencies in the accounts of what really happened when Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were murdered. Information about the civil trial that the BPP filed against the government can be found [here](#) also. The civil trial was the longest civil lawsuit in the history of the United States of America according to the National People's Democratic Uhuru Movement (NPDUM). Despite a ridiculously long trial, not one officer spent a day in jail. Fred Hampton's murder has never been vindicated, other than through speaking engagements, accusations of government wrong-doing on the web, and literature published on the subject. The facts presented by this case seem so crystal clear in retrospect that it is difficult to see how a jury could acquit the perpetrators of such blatant violence. One would hope that the passing of time and increased social awareness has changed behavior in this country enough to prevent something like this from happening again. Sadly, accusations of conspiracies past and present seem to surface daily. These violations of Civil Rights endanger the freedom of all Americans and the integrity of the structures that govern us. Suppressing those who express controversial ideas are surprising the voices of justice. Motivated by fear, oppressing these voices oppresses the voices of all Americans.

Fred Hampton's Legacy Lives on

His legacy is still alive in the members of the Black Panther Party. They are following the statement that Fred once said, "You can kill a revolutionary, but you can't kill a revolution!" The son of Fred Hampton, [Fred Hampton, Jr.](#) is a political prisoner in Chicago. He has not stopped his crusade, even from jail he struggles to keep his father's name alive.



[Listen to Fred Hampton, Sr. speak about being a revolutionary](#)

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