

Houston Chapter of the Black Panther Party Reunited at the National Council of Black Studies Annual Conference

After nearly 32 years, former members of the Houston Black Panther Party were reunited at the National Council of Black Studies annual conference at the Crown Plaza Hotel in downtown Houston from March 15-18, 2006.

The former Panthers participated in a roundtable discussion chaired by historian Dr. Charles Jones, President of the National Council of Black Studies, Chair of the African American Studies Department at Georgia State University, and author of the critically acclaimed book, The Black Panther Party Reconsidered, a collection of essays by former Black Panther Party members and Africana scholars. Members of the roundtable were Sister Ayanna Ade, John “Bunchy” Crear, Charles “Boko” Freeman, all former members of the Houston Black Panther Party and Billy “BJ” Jennings of the Oakland Chapter.

The session was attended by a large number of conference goers and community people including former members of the Houston chapter who had not seen each other in decades. There were plenty smiles and some solemn moments as they remembered the assassination of Comrade Carl Bernard Hampton by the Houston Police on July 26, 1970.

On Friday and Saturday evenings, the group got together for dinner at the home of one comrade to reminisce and catch up on their lives. The gatherings were quite spirited and the room exploded with great laughter late into the night as each shared memories of those exciting times.

On Saturday, March 18, the reunion continued with a free screening of the documentary, “All Power to the People” by Lee Lew Lee, also a former member of the Black Panther Party, at the Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center. Nearly one hundred Houstonians came out to see the film and ask questions of former Party members. Elders, youth and young children were on hand to hear the former Panthers share their experiences in the community.

Elders representing *Afrikans United for Sanity Now* presented the former Panthers with a Certificate of Recognition for their “sacrifice and hard work” during their youthful years as Black Panther Party members providing service to the Houston community. In remembrance of the supreme sacrifice of Carl Bernard Hampton buttons with his picture on it were made available to all in attendance.

CARL HAMPTON LIVES!