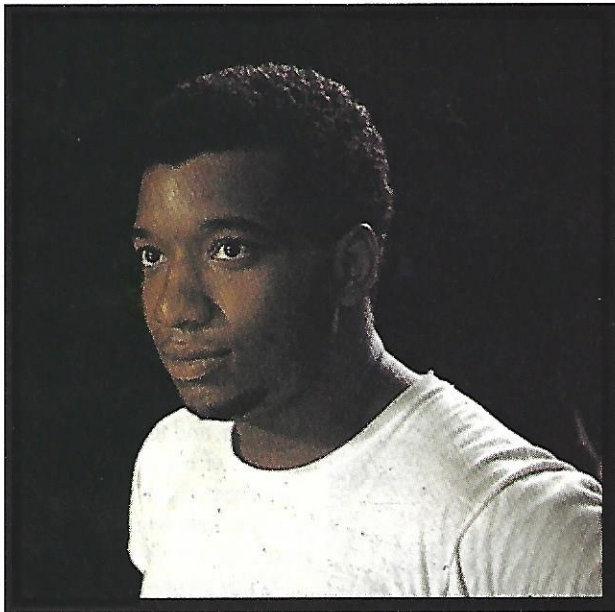


BY PAUL ENGLEMAN



# NIGHT OF THE HUNTERS

In a ferocious raid 25 years ago, Chicago police killed Illinois Black Panther chief Fred Hampton, eliminating a charismatic young leader and triggering a significant shift in city politics. It took a decade to sort through the official deceit shrouding what many believe was a government-sponsored assassination. For many, the agony of that night—and the unanswered questions—won't go away



*Fred Hampton (above, left) never got to prove whether he was menace or messiah, though the presence of thousands of mourners (left) at his memorial service suggested his potential.*

**T**he confrontation lasted only a few minutes, but its brutality was so shocking that it permanently changed the landscape of racial politics in Chicago. The bloody event ended the career of one of the city's most ambitious white politicians and the life of its most promising young black leader. In its wake, law enforcement was discredited and a media



*Chicago cops carry out Hampton's body after their predawn raid.*

apartment during tours conducted after the raid, it was clear that what the media initially called a shootout had been a "shoot-in." Though he had not yet viewed the apartment, state's attorney Edward V. Hanrahan claimed during a press conference following the raid that his men were victims of a vicious attack and managed to survive "by the grace of God."

Hanrahan's account was the first of many falsehoods that would be told, repeated, and revised by law-enforcement personnel during the course of a police inquiry, a coroner's inquest, three grand jury investigations, a criminal trial, and, at the time, the longest civil trial in U.S. history. Although the shooting lasted less than ten minutes, the story of what happened and how it came about took more than ten years to unfold. It emerged that Hanrahan and the police were minor players in a larger production staged by the FBI, a secret counterintelligence program—COINTELPRO—designed, in the words of J. Edgar Hoover, to "disrupt" and "neutralize" black groups and "prevent the rise of a 'messiah.'"

The COINTELPRO campaign was highly effective at all but destroying the Black Panther Party. At the time Hampton was killed, one out of every 15 Panthers was on the FBI payroll, some of them provocateurs engaged in criminal activity to incite confrontations with local police.

The FBI termed the raid a success and paid its informant a \$300 "bonus," but it wasn't entirely successful at silencing Hampton. His murder made him a martyr just as Panther influence was waning. "It was the last nail in the coffin for the Panthers," says Lu Palmer, who at the time was a *Chicago Daily News* reporter and today is head of the Black Independent Political Organization. "But we saw an extraordinary development in the black community. The so-called black middle class joined with us who were called radicals and came together like I hadn't seen before. Without question, it was a precursor to the election of Harold Washington."

But 25 years after the raid, Jeff Haas, a lawyer who worked on the case for 14 years, suggests a more enduring impact on the black community. "By destroying a lot of the leadership that might have directed black people in a different way," he says,

giant was humbled. And it all came about, many people believe, because of illicit activities sponsored by the United States Government.

At 4:45 a.m. on December 4, 1969, 14 state's attorney's police stormed the first-floor apartment at 2337 West Monroe Street, home of Fred Hampton, the 21-year-old chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party. Hampton was shot four

times, twice in the head. He had very likely been drugged, probably by an FBI informant, who also provided details for a floor plan that enabled police to direct about half of the 82 to 99 shots they fired during the raid at Hampton's bed. Panther Mark Clark, who fired the only return shot, also was killed. Four of the other seven people in the apartment were wounded.

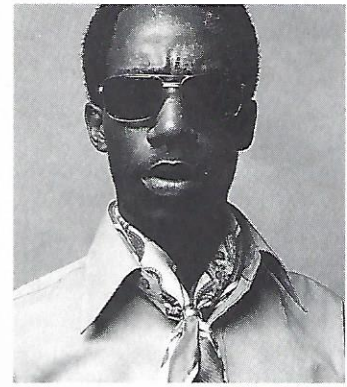
To the thousands who viewed the

“the government created the conditions for crime and violence that exist today.”

Although the background of the raid—the government plotting, the collaboration between the FBI and the Chicago cops—eventually came out, many questions remain unanswered. Here’s a summary analysis of what’s known and a look at what’s become of some of the key figures in an event that changed Chicago.

## BEFORE THE RAID

“We felt like we were under siege at the time. Police were looked upon by most people as being totally unfair to certain minorities and segments of society that were anti-government. We accepted the account that the Panthers had fired on the police. It wasn’t until years later that I found out it was an execution of a sort. That law-and-order-at-any-cost mentality went by the wayside.” —*Police lieutenant HUGH HOLTON, a rookie patrolman in 1969*



*One of the many unanswered questions: Did FBI informant William O’Neal (above) drug Hampton (left, after the shootout) the night of the raid? O’Neal was killed in 1990 on the Eisenhower Expressway; state’s attorney Edward Hanraban (below) experienced a much slower, political death.*

In 1968, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover declared that “the greatest threat” to the nation’s security was the Black Panther Party, a militant band of black men in berets who’d taken up arms in Oakland, California, to resist police brutality. Secretly, Hoover had already directed FBI offices to disrupt the group, which at the height of its brief existence had about 5,000 members—half as many people as the FBI had agents.

Around that time, Fred Hampton, a bright working-class black youth from Maywood, and Bobby Rush, who’d lived for a time in Chicago’s housing projects, founded the Chicago Black Panther Party in a ramshackle “headquarters” at 2350 West Madison Street. On the day it opened, an enigmatic car thief named William O’Neal signed up on instructions from Roy Martin Mitchell, the FBI agent who’d recruited him from the county jail.

Within a year, the Panthers opened five free-breakfast programs for children and were about to open a free medical



clinic. But critics charged the programs indoctrinated children into the Panthers’ radical philosophy, a blend of Maoism and anti-police rhetoric capsulized in the rallying cry “Off the pigs!”

The FBI went to extraordinary means to destroy the group. In January 1969, Chicago FBI chief Marlin Johnson got approval to send an anonymous note to Jeff

Fort, the leader of the Blackstone Rangers gang, saying the Panthers had “a hit” out on him. Johnson hoped the note would “occasion Fort to take retaliatory action” against Hampton. (Fort—who’s currently in prison—didn’t take the bait.)

While the FBI operated behind the scenes, Chicago police openly targeted the group during a year in which tough-talk-

## 'Fred was not a thug'

To state's attorney Edward V. Hanrahan and the police, he was a gang leader who received too much attention from a gullible media. The FBI considered him so dangerous that they placed him on their "agitator index" of people to be arrested during a national emergency. But people who knew Fred Hampton recall a dynamic young leader who, as one person recalls, was "always reading, always thinking."

One of three children whose parents moved north from Louisiana and worked at the Argo Starch Company, Hampton came of age in the early sixties when his hometown of Maywood was struggling with integration. While at Proviso East High School, he started a youth chapter of the NAACP that grew to 700 members.

"We really were in admiration of the kid," recalls former Maywood resident Ted Elbert, now a field producer at NBC News. "To have his level of articulateness and be that kind of a leader at such a young age was truly impressive."

Elbert and his wife, Joan, met Hampton, then 15, when he was lobbying the village council to build a community swimming pool. Whites in Maywood used pools in neighboring towns, but blacks were told they were "for residents only." The pool was eventually built and named for Hampton after his death.

The Rev. Thomas Strieter, who served on the Maywood village board, says Hampton had "charm and charisma coming out his ears. My impression of the Black Panthers in Oakland was that they were thugs. Fred was not a thug."

Hampton was closely monitored by police, helping form his view of them as an occupying army serving the interests of rich capitalists. "Paul Revere said, 'Get your guns, the British are coming.' The British were the police," Hampton once said.

In 1969, he was convicted of strong-arming \$71 worth of Good Humor bars and distributing them to kids. Maywood mayor Leonard Chabala charged that the vendor was coached to pick Hampton from a lineup by a cop with a personal vendetta. He was sentenced to two to five years and initially denied an appeal bond when he admitted supporting the beliefs of Chairman Mao.

When that decision was overturned and Hampton was released pending appeal, friends say he began working to form a coalition with neighborhood gangs, but there's no question that he was growing increasingly militant. He advocated carrying guns and carried one himself. As Thomas Sullivan, one of the lawyers who defended the police involved in the raid, points out, Hampton was not a member of "the Altar and Rosary Society."

Still, people who knew him say his strongest weapon was his ability to communicate. Hampton was "one of the most persuasive speakers I've ever heard," says former corporation counsel James Montgomery. And Dr. Quentin Young, Mayor Washington's nominee for president of the city's Board of Health, adds: "He was a giant, and this is not some idle white worship of a black man. This is a terrible way to put it, but the people who made it their business to kill the leaders of the black movement picked the right ones." P. E.

ing, Harvard-educated Cook County state's attorney Hanrahan declared "war on gangs." Although there were only 40 Panthers in Illinois at the time, they had been arrested 120 times collectively for everything from selling their newspaper to attempted murder of police. In most cases, including the serious counts, charges were dropped.

During the summer and fall of 1969, the cops and Panthers clashed repeatedly. Several shootouts resulted in injuries to seven police officers and three Panthers; one Panther was killed. The Panthers accused police of destroying food supplies and setting fire to their office. Hampton wasn't involved in the shootouts, but he traded insults with Hanrahan in the

press, which ran articles on the Panthers at the rate of one every three days.

Tensions boiled over in November after a gun battle in which two policemen and a Panther were killed. Later that day, FBI agent Mitchell told O'Neal to find out about the guns kept by the Panthers. Based on O'Neal's information, Mitchell then made a list of weapons and drew a detailed floor plan of Hampton's apartment, which he passed on to Hanrahan's top aide, Richard Jalovec, and Sergeant Daniel Groth, who would lead the raid.

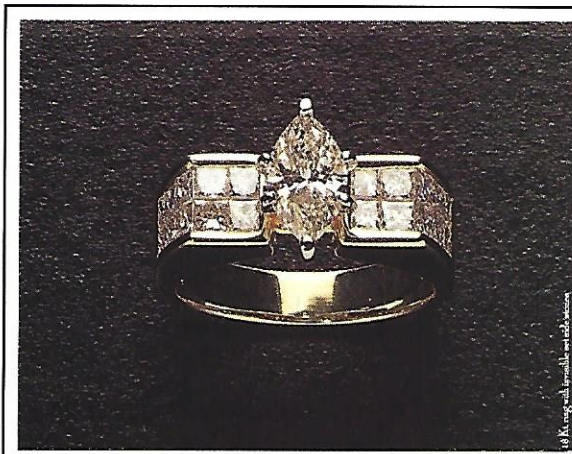
On December third, the state's attorney's office obtained a search warrant from Judge Robert Collins, very possibly through deliberate deception. (Collins declined to be interviewed, but a confidant says the judge specifically asked if the raid involved the Black Panthers and was told it did not.) As the raid was being organized, the Chicago FBI sent a memo to Washington saying the police planned "a positive course of action." Later that evening, about a dozen Panthers returned to the apartment and had a dinner of hot dogs and Kool-Aid prepared by O'Neal, who left shortly afterward. In addition to Hampton and his girlfriend, Deborah Johnson, who was eight months pregnant, several Panthers stayed overnight. Hampton fell asleep during a phone call to his mother—most likely after being drugged by O'Neal with secobarbital, which later showed up in autopsy reports. She was the last person he spoke to.

## THE RAID

"The raid reflects the historical story of America, which is: Bad niggers get killed."  
—JAMES MONTGOMERY, attorney for Deborah Johnson and corporation counsel under Harold Washington

The ostensible purpose of the raid was to serve a search warrant for illegal weapons. The police did not bring tear gas, a spotlight, or a loudspeaker. But some of them brought their own guns, part of an arsenal that included five shotguns, a machine gun, and a semiautomatic carbine.

How the shooting started has always been a matter of dispute. Attorneys for the police still maintain the Panthers fired several times, despite the finding of Robert Zimmers, the nation's top firearms examiner, that Mark Clark fired the only Panther shot, through the partially opened front (*continued on page 136*)



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## NIGHT OF THE HUNTERS

continued from page 103

door. The officers gave conflicting accounts, but on the record they always maintained that they were fired upon first. Even that crucial point was disputed by one of the raiding police officers, according to Circuit Court judge Ellis Reid.

Reid, who was an assistant prosecutor during one of the ensuing grand jury investigations, knew Fred Howard, an officer on the raid who died in 1971. Reid says Howard told him that the first shot was fired accidentally by officer George Jones when his sawed-off shotgun, equipped with a hair trigger, bumped against something in the cramped anteroom between the outer and inner doors of the apartment. (Zimmers found an impact point in that area "consistent" with a shell from Jones's gun.) James "Gloves" Davis, a black patrolman reputed to wear leather gloves for beating black youths, kicked in the door, and Groth fired the second shot. Reid says Howard told him that Clark fired the third shot before being killed by Davis, though Panther Brenda Harris, who was on a bed in the living room, claimed Clark was hit before he fired. At that point, several policemen were inside the apartment, including Edward Carmody, who broke in the back door the instant he heard gunfire.

Harris was shot twice; then Officer Joe Gorman, a former high-school football hero from the Southwest Side, began firing through the wall of the front bedroom with a machine gun. Panther Ronald "Doc" Satchel was hit four times, and Verlina Brewer and Blair Anderson were each hit twice.

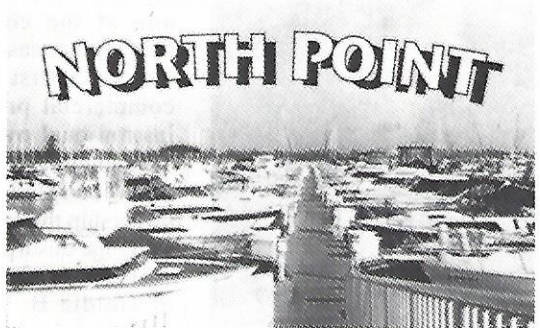
Meanwhile, the Panthers said, Panthers Harold Bell and Louis Truelock had rushed to the back bedroom to wake Hampton and Johnson. She woke up, but he did not. Truelock took cover next to Johnson on the bed while Bell hid behind the door. During a pause in gunfire they surrendered and were led into the kitchen. Bell testified he heard a policeman say, "That's Fred Hampton. Is he dead?" And Johnson said she heard a voice say, "He's barely alive"; then, after two shots, "He's good and dead now."

None of the police admitted killing Hampton, who was shot twice in the head, though Carmody's firearms report indicates he "critically wounded" someone from a distance of "10 feet." Carmody admitted he dragged Hampton off the bed and into the hall. Johnson's mug shot reveals no blood on her nightgown, indicat-

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ing Hampton was not killed while she was on the bed. The survivors were all charged with attempted murder.

When the call went out on police radios saying the raid was over, cheers could be heard from squadrols around the city. From one came the declaration, "That's when to get them—when they're in their beds."

## REPORTING THE RAID

"[The raid] was a pivotal moment in the history of the *Tribune*, because from that time on they became far less willing to believe official versions of events. After the embarrassment, they were probably as eager to condemn Hanrahan as anyone." —Chicago Tribune columnist **MIKE ROYKO**, who was a Daily News columnist at the time of the raid

**T**he raid sparked one of the biggest media frenzies in Chicago history. Newspapers trumpeted the "gun battle," prominently reporting the account given by Hanrahan and Groth at a press conference that morning. Standing beside a confiscated cache of weapons and ammunition, Hanrahan pointed to a pistol that he said Hampton had fired at police. (Paraffin tests subsequently showed that Hampton had not fired a weapon.) Groth said he twice had called for a ceasefire, but a Panther had yelled, "Shoot it out!"

The *Daily News* also carried a small front-page story by columnist Lu Palmer in which Bobby Rush said Hampton had been murdered. Rush repeated the charge on WMAQ-TV. Palmer also wrote an "analysis" raising the possibility of an FBI campaign to eliminate the Panthers. The *Sun-Times* initially buried the Panthers' version of events, but it also ran reporter Brian Boyer's account of his "tour" through the "apartment of death."

Boyer was not alone. The police had failed to seal the apartment, and within hours, a line of curious people stretched down the frozen sidewalk, waiting to be escorted through by Panther guides.

News outlets reported a groundswell of opposition. Scores of civic and civil-rights groups denounced the raid. Thousands attended rallies and demonstrations. Maywood mayor Leonard Chabala called for murder charges against the police. Aldermen Leon Despres and A. A. "Sammy" Rayner and nine congressmen demanded a Federal investigation. An independent

autopsy challenged the findings of the county coroner. Five thousand people attended Hampton's memorial service, where he was eulogized by the Rev. Jesse Jackson and by the Rev. Ralph Abernathy of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In the *Daily News*, Mike Royko ridiculed Hanrahan's comment about the police miraculously avoiding injury: "Indeed, it does appear that miracles occurred. The Panthers' bullets must have dissolved in the air before they hit anybody or anything. Either that or the Panthers were shooting in the wrong direction—namely, at themselves."

To counter the media's "orgy of sensationalism," Hanrahan and his subordinates supervised a "re-enactment" on WBBM-TV, using a mockup of the apartment that he'd had built. Technicians reported that police officers seemed confused while reconstructing their roles.

Hanrahan also arranged an "exclusive" in the *Tribune* in which police recounted the terror of dodging Panther bullets and Hanrahan claimed they did not know it was Hampton's apartment until the raid was over.

The story was accompanied by photos purporting to show bullet holes from Panther shots. One of the reporters, Robert Wiedrich, wrote that the "faltering recollection of the detectives gave credence to their story." But the *Tribune* photos did not. The next day, the *Sun-Times* ran pictures showing that the "bullet holes" were actually nail heads.

## INVESTIGATING THE RAID

"I look upon the case as a sad note for the police officers and Mr. Hanrahan, who stood beside them. Thank God none of the officers were killed." —Attorney **CAMILLO VOLINI**, who represented Hanrahan and the police

**I**nitial investigations of the raid were transparent attempts to exonerate the police and implicate the Panthers. The first was conducted by the police department's Internal Inspections Division. Superintendent James Conlisk appointed deputy superintendent John Mulchrone to head the probe, but he did not probe deeply.

In what an IID officer admitted was a "whitewash," Mulchrone helped compose not only the questions asked of the police, but their answers as well. John Sadunas

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## NIGHT OF THE HUNTERS

of the crime lab issued a ballistics report without examining any of the police weapons. Despite allegations of Panther gunfire, the only link Sadunas could make was to incorrectly match two shells with a shotgun that police said had been fired by Brenda Harris.

On the basis of this false report about a single weapon, Hanrahan impeached a Cook County grand jury that indicted all seven survivors for attempted murder. Meanwhile, a coroner's inquest ruled police actions to be "justifiable homicide."

## THE FEDERAL GRAND JURY

"The government sent everything at its disposal to defeat the Black Power Movement of the sixties. More than anything, they feared the programs of the Panthers. With the government parading the body of Fred Hampton with his brains blown out, they were saying, 'This is what happens when you fight for liberation and freedom.'" —AKUA NJERI, formerly Deborah Johnson

Public outcry also led to the appointment of a Federal grand jury, but its record, too, was compromised. The man picked by Attorney General John Mitchell to lead the probe was Jerris Leonard, head of the Civil Rights Division of the Nixon Justice Department.

With the state's attempted-murder charges pending, survivors of the raid refused to testify. One person who did was Chicago FBI chief Marlin Johnson, supervisor of evidence gathering for the proceeding. Johnson gave the impression that the FBI had no connection with the raid, even though his office had secretly claimed credit for its success, which was later discovered in an internal memo. He made no mention of COINTELPRO, the floor plan, or his own attempts to provoke a confrontation between Jeff Fort and Hampton.

Overall, the most crucial evidence that emerged was FBI firearms examiner Robert Zimmers's finding that police had fired at least 82 shots to the Panthers' one. Instead of returning indictments, the grand jury issued a 132-page report criticizing the police, the Panthers, and the media. The Federal grand jury disbanded in May 1970.

Four years later, a secret memo from the Chicago FBI office to Hoover was discovered. Dated a month before the grand jury concluded its work, the memo stated

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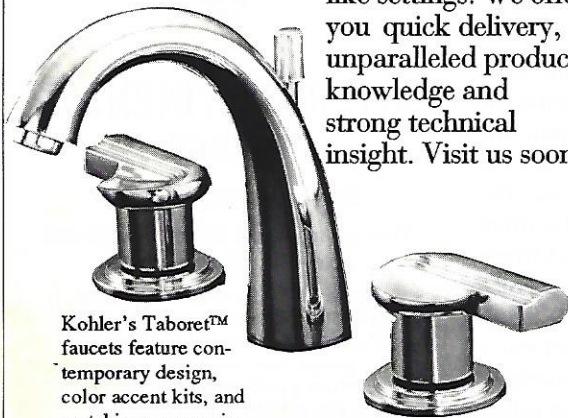
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that Leonard had "advised Marlin Johnson in strictest confidence that no indictments of police officers are planned." It cited "an agreement whereby Hanrahan will dismiss the local indictment against Black Panther Party members" in 30 days. A month later, Hanrahan did just that.

Leonard today denies the agreement was an attempt to cover up the FBI's role in the raid. "That's a bunch of crap, *c-r-a-p*," he says. "There couldn't have been a conspiracy without me being involved."

### THE THIRD GRAND JURY

"It was *Alice in Wonderland*—up was down and down was up. We had *carte blanche* to send some cops to jail. But the green light went red the instant we indicted Ed Hanrahan." —*Ellis Reid, assistant to special prosecutor Barnabas Sears and now a Circuit Court judge*

**W**ith details of the raid and the Internal Inspections cover-up laid bare in the Federal grand jury report, public clamor led to the appointment of Barnabas Sears as special prose-

cutor of yet another state grand jury. Sears was known as a no-nonsense attorney who'd built a reputation on his successful prosecution of the Summerdale case, which, in the early 1960s, had put a burglary ring of Chicago police officers behind bars. No longer under indictment, the Panther survivors agreed to testify, and in April 1971, the grand jury voted to indict Hanrahan, Jalovec, eight raiding policemen, and four who investigated the raid, all for obstruction of justice. But the presiding judge, Joseph Power, a former law partner of Mayor Richard J. Daley and widely believed to be a tool of the Democratic Machine, publicly accused Sears of misconduct and refused to unseal the indictment. To get it released, Sears had to appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court.

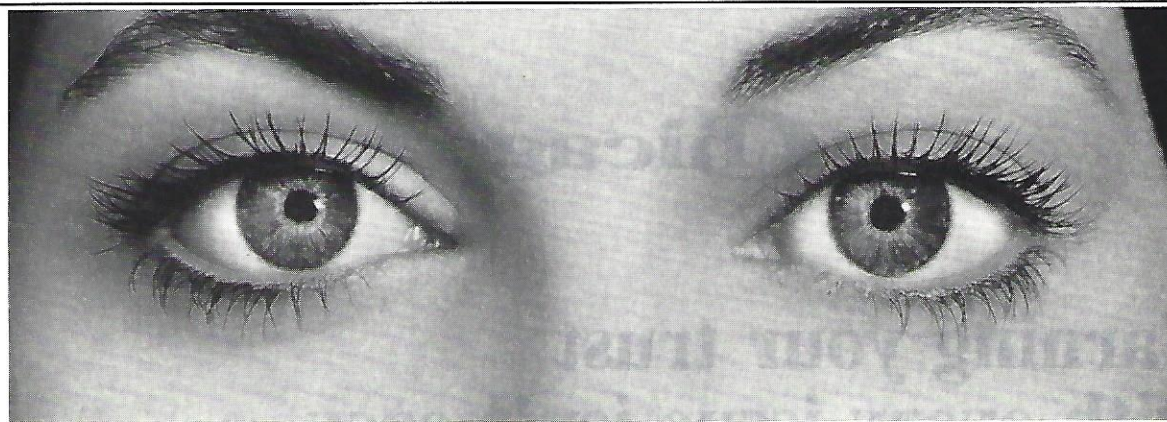
Eventually Power stepped down in favor of Judge Philip Romiti, and the case finally went to trial in July 1972. By that time, the police department was the focus of a Federal corruption probe, and Mayor Daley had named Marlin Johnson president of the police board in an effort to restore confidence. Although the case had figured in the primary election in March,

Hanrahan won renomination and the Black Panthers were little more than a memory, no longer shooting it out with police or providing free health care and breakfasts to the poor. Former Panther Chaka Walls says, "The government adopted those programs," administering them in a "barbaric" way. Walls says the FBI destroyed the Panthers, but "we also got complacent; one day everybody just went home."

### THE CRIMINAL TRIAL

"The case was the high point of my career. I believed then and believe now that it was a mistake to bring the case in a criminal court against these splendid policemen who were doing their job to protect the community." —*THOMAS SULLIVAN, attorney for eight police officers and U.S. attorney from 1977 to 1981*

**T**he trial of Hanrahan and the police was the only criminal proceeding resulting from the raid. The defendants requested a bench trial, putting Philip Romiti in the dual role of judge and jury. Three weeks into the proceedings,



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attorney Thomas Sullivan recalls, the prosecution's case "blew up" when assistant prosecutor Wayland Cedarquist revealed that, on a visit to a Panther attorney's law office, he had discovered never-before-revealed statements made right after the raid by Louis Truelock and "Doc" Satchel, saying they had shot at police. Even the Internal Inspections probe had found no evidence that Panther weapons had been fired, but the pair apparently had lied so that no one would think they had been cowards during the raid.

Defense attorneys pounced on the mystifying revelations, accusing the Panthers of perjury and charging Sears, who ironically had turned the statements over to the court, with concealing evidence. From then on, the prosecution was on the defensive. The case hinged on ballistics evidence and the testimony of police superintendent James Conlisk.

Previously Conlisk had told the Federal grand jury he was "flabbergasted" by the sloppiness of the IID inquiry. But now he declared it "a complete and thorough investigation."

The prosecution rested its case on Fri-

day, October 20th. At a press conference that weekend, Hanrahan, Conlisk, and Sheriff Richard Elrod announced the arrest of seven members of an alleged secret terrorist network of black Vietnam veterans called De Mau Mau, which was accused of randomly killing suburban whites.

To anyone with a memory, the event was déjà vu. Against a backdrop of headlines about a mysterious new black hate group, Judge Romiti acquitted the defendants without requiring them to present their case. His verdict came two weeks before the election in which Hanrahan was seeking another term as state's attorney.

During that time Hanrahan was again the toast of the Democrats. Party boss Daley, who had put up another candidate against him in the primary, now embraced Hanrahan, saying, "The great lesson here for all of us is not to be too willing to believe charges until there is a thorough airing of the facts. I think the black people of Chicago feel the same way."

Daley thought wrong. Dramatically splitting ranks with the Machine, blacks voted with a vengeance: Hanrahan was defeated by Republican Bernard Carey.

## UNCOVERING THE FBI'S ROLE

"We knew there was an FBI informant. To me that's immaterial. The place to look [for blame] is [in] the fact that the Chicago Police Department wasn't properly trained, didn't act properly, wasn't properly led. This was a confrontation provoked by the police. It was so poorly handled that it made the bad guys—the Panthers—look like the victims, which they were in this case." —JERRIS LEONARD, former assistant attorney general who headed the Federal grand jury

The families of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark and survivors of the raid filed suit against Hanrahan and the police in 1970, but Federal judge Joseph Sam Perry delayed the case until criminal proceedings were concluded. In the meantime, two unrelated events enabled the plaintiffs to add William O'Neal and FBI agents Marlin Johnson, Roy Mitchell, and Robert Piper to the suit.

In 1971, a group called the Citizens Commission to Investigate the FBI stole classified files (*continued on page 142*)

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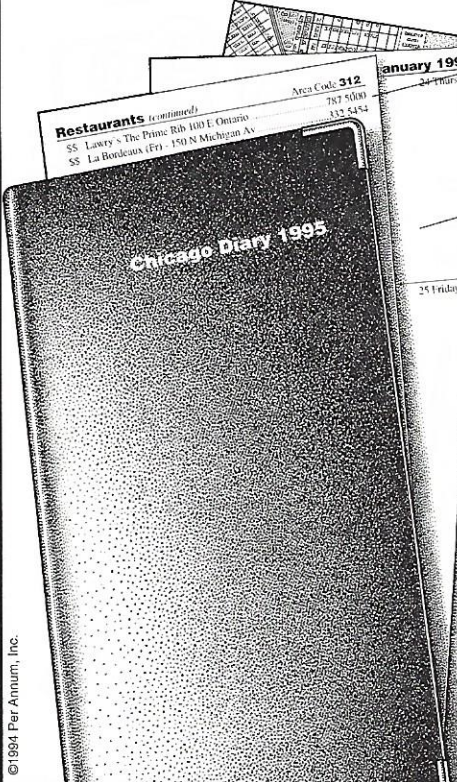
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## NIGHT OF THE HUNTERS

*continued from page 140*

from an FBI office in Media, Pennsylvania, and distributed them to the press. Although the documents seem tame compared with Watergate-era revelations about government spying, they proved that the FBI had conducted a massive intelligence-gathering operation on prominent blacks and black organizations.

Two years later, in an unrelated case, a Chicago police sergeant was charged in the murder of a drug dealer. To convict him, the government had to reveal the name of the FBI informant who'd been an accomplice in the murder: former Panther William O'Neal.

Hearing O'Neal named as an FBI informant, the plaintiffs' lawyers, Flint Taylor and Jeff Haas of the People's Law Office, sought, and in 1974 finally received, permission to take testimony from the ex-Panther, who was then in the government's witness protection program. O'Neal denied there was a floor plan, but it turned up among 34 documents released by the FBI in response to a subpoena for files relevant to the raid. By that time, the existence of COINTELPRO was becoming public, largely as a result of U.S. Senate hearings on domestic spying.

The suit became a cat-and-mouse paper chase, as plaintiffs' lawyers repeatedly filed subpoenas for relevant documents and Justice Department lawyers filed motions to keep them hidden. The government found an ally in Judge Perry, who privately examined numerous documents and ruled them "irrelevant and immaterial," including the FBI's "hit" letter to Jeff Fort.

### THE CIVIL TRIAL

"The Panthers were a fairly militant group. By the same token they also had some good programs. I showed the floor plan to the state's attorney's police, but they weren't interested in it. The raid was completely unknown to me and, as far as I know, in the FBI. That's one of the reasons why I was surprised I was named as a defendant." —Former FBI agent ROY MARTIN MITCHELL

If the raid demonstrated the power of the police to subdue with deadly force, the civil trial revealed the power of the government to overwhelm through bureaucratic deception.

The trial began in January 1976 with 28 defendants. It ran for 18 months—at the time, the longest civil trial in U.S. history. It ended only because the 80-year-old

Judge Perry, who was prone to irritability, memory lapses, and afternoon naps, set an arbitrary date for its conclusion.

At the start, the FBI had turned over 210 highly excised memos, with assistant U.S. attorney Arnold Kanter assuring Perry that these were all the documents relevant to the case. Two months later, Mitchell inadvertently referred to a document that had not been provided. The plaintiffs demanded to see it, and during ensuing arguments, Perry ordered Kanter to provide all relevant material. The next morning, government aides wheeled shopping carts into the courtroom containing more than 25,000 pages of FBI memos that had been withheld.

Perry refused to grant a recess so the plaintiffs' attorneys could review the documents, which should have been provided two years earlier. The memos had to be screened so classified information could be deleted, and it was revealed that the supervisor of this process was FBI defendant Robert Piper.

In May, thousands more documents were discovered. O'Neal disappeared for several days while testifying, apparently holding out for an increase in his monthly stipend of \$1,080. The trial took on a Kafkaesque flavor, reflected in this exchange between Judge Perry and Haas:

Haas: "Judge, I just don't like the rules changing as we go along. That is what I object to."

Perry: "Well, you don't like anything, as far as you are concerned, except your way . . . and you are not going to have your way."

Haas: "I know. My way is a fair trial, and I know I'm not going to get it, Judge."

Perry: "You bet your life you are not going to get it."

In April 1977, Perry acquitted all defendants except the seven police who'd fired during the raid—the fates of whom the jury still had to deliberate. As in the 1972 trial, the verdict came a week before an election in which Hanrahan was a candidate—this time, in the special Democratic primary for mayor, in which he was defeated by Michael Bilandic. Two months later, the jury was deadlocked on the charges against the raiding cops. Rather than order a mistrial, Perry acquitted the police.

In 1979, a Federal appeals court overturned Perry's verdict and recommended sanctions against the FBI and its attorneys for "actively obstructing the judicial



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## NIGHT OF THE HUNTERS

process." In June 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the ruling.

The suit was settled with a whimper on February 28, 1983, more than 13 years after the raid and six days after Harold Washington won the Democratic nomination for mayor. The plaintiffs received \$1.85 million, paid equally by city, county, and Federal taxpayers. The city and county taxpayers also paid \$2.2 million in legal fees to attorneys John Coghlan and Camillo Volini for defending Hanrahan and the police.

## THE POLITICAL LEGACY

"The legacy of Fred's murder was that the black community totally and completely broke the chains that bound them to the Democratic Machine. His assassination created conditions that were sufficient and necessary to elect Harold Washington mayor of the city of Chicago some 14 years later." —*Ex-Panther BOBBY RUSH, now First District congressman*

**H**arold Washington has been dead for seven years now, and it doesn't take a weatherman to know which way the political winds have been blowing for Chicago's black movement since his death. Lu Palmer, who was instrumental in persuading Washington to run for mayor, promises "there will be a black candidate" in the upcoming mayoral election. But Palmer is too much of a realist to predict that that candidate will be elected.

Rush says that "even today, there remains a gaping hole in leadership in Chicago because of Hampton's murder." But despite Rush's political rise, few insiders think that he is the one to fill it.

With the black movement in disarray, it now seems clear that Washington's victory was linked to his extraordinary ability to inspire and rally discontented blacks. People who knew Fred Hampton say he had the same kind of ability.

## RAZING HELL

"If you're asked to make a commitment at the age of 20, and you say, 'I don't want to make no commitment only because of the simple reason that I'm too young to die, I want to live a little longer,' what you did is . . . you're dead already." —*Panther leader FRED HAMPTON*

**T**he building at 2337 West Monroe Street was razed a few years ago. Hampton's girlfriend, who took the African name Akua Njeri in later years,

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lived at the Monroe Street address for two months before the raid and remembers the apartment vividly. "I can see the bathtub that didn't work, the stove we kept on for heat, the door we had in the kitchen that they said was a barricade but was actually to keep the rats out. Although the state came in the dead of night to level that building in the midst of hundreds of ragged buildings, they can't erase the memory of what was there."

For Njeri, who lived through the ordeal, that may well be true. But 25 years later, with another mayor named Daley in office and the former Panther minister of defense in Congress, the prevailing view is probably more in line with the advice given to an inquiring reporter by someone else who lived through the raid, policeman Edward Carmody. "Forget it, pal," he says. "Forget it."

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### FBI

Informant/provocateur WILLIAM O'NEAL was the central figure, and arguably a tragic one, in the raid. As a Panther he built an electric chair for torturing suspected informants, but was himself suspected of druging Hampton and planting illegal weapons in his apartment. In 1990, while using the name William Hart, he was killed when he ran onto the Eisenhower Expressway. His death was ruled a suicide.

MARLIN JOHNSON left the FBI in 1970 to become vice-president of the Canteen Corporation. He retired in 1984 and no longer lives in Chicago.

ROY MARTIN MITCHELL was transferred to the Indianapolis FBI in 1975. He retired in 1985 and lives in Indiana.

### BLACK PANTHERS

Illinois Panther Party cofounder BOBBY RUSH became Second Ward alderman and currently is U.S. congressman from the First District.

AKUA NJERI, formerly Deborah Johnson, heads the National People's Democratic Uhuru Movement (*uhuru* is Swahili for "freedom"), an African separatist group advocating self-determination. She ran for Congress against Bobby Rush in a crowded field in the 1992 Democratic primary, but was soundly defeated.



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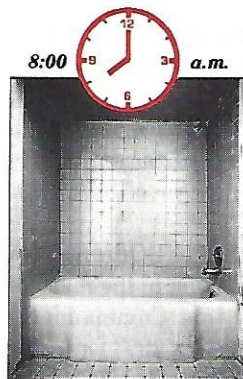
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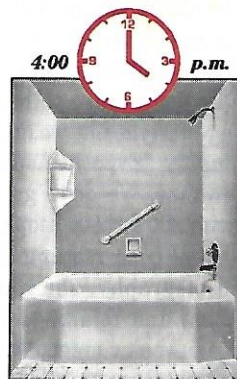
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## MODERN TIMES

continued from page 44

"It really is a fairy-tale kind of story," says Michael.

"In fiction, we never write about things that have actually happened to us," says Judith. "The only time we did was in *Pot of Gold*. A woman wins the lottery and a lot of her lifestyle changes were ours. [The character buys two Mercedeses with a personal check and picks up cashmere turtlenecks and Mont Blanc fountain pens in the blink of an eye.] I can say this, the size of the price tag at which I blanch has gone up. Significantly."

Some of the shopping scenes in *Pot of Gold* are sensuous, almost lyrical. "The days blurred into each other as they went from store to store, checking off items on their lists and wandering into other departments to find treasures they had never thought of," one section reads. "For [her], everything was like a dream; wherever she looked, objects of beauty glistened before her. She reached out and curved her fingers around vases and bowls, the frames of paintings, a set of silver goblets. . . everything was within her reach, and everything was desirable."

"In 1981 and '82, we had \$2,000," says Judith. "So there is a relaxation over what things cost. You suddenly realize that if you want this, you can buy it. I think we did indulge our whims. It's great fun. And we give more money to causes we believe in now and we can help out our kids."

"Other than having more money to play with, though," says Michael, "I think our basic lifestyle hasn't changed that much. We don't go to big parties; we socialize with small groups of old friends."

"I'm sure people would love to hear about our glittering lifestyle, but we don't have one," says Judith. "Even in Aspen, we ski, hike, snowshoe. We don't go to those big parties with 300 famous people."

"We spend a lot of time reading [he likes history and biography, she likes 19th-century fiction] and relaxing," he says. "Those things haven't changed with our success. I don't think we've changed much as people."

"No," she says, "I think we're still as nice as we always were."

OK. But don't believe them when they say—the joy of having money aside—that they never write about themselves. Consider the themes of their lives: true love springing from tragedy. Fame, big bucks, indulgent luxuries. Enduring passion, enduring niceness. Sounds distinctly like a Judith Michael novel. ~

## NIGHT OF THE HUNTERS

RONALD "DOC" SATCHEL, who was in charge of the Panther medical clinic and was shot four times in the raid, lives in California.

BRENDA HARRIS lives in Chicago.

BLAIR "B. J." ANDERSON, who was in prison on a weapons charge when the Panthers finally went to trial against Hanrahan and the police in 1976, was released several years ago and is living with his family in Michigan.

HAROLD BELL, who ran an African import business for a while, lives in Chicago and now works in construction.

VERLINA BREWER is believed to be living in Michigan.

LOUIS TRUELOCK, also known as Louis "Trueluck," lives in Chicago.

FRED HAMPTON, JR., was born a month after the Panther raid, and most recently worked as a community organizer with the Uhuru Movement. In 1993, he was convicted of igniting a Molotov cocktail in a Korean-owned shop in Englewood and sentenced to 18 years in prison.

### POLICE OFFICERS

Raid leader DANIEL GROTH retired and is currently security director of Hawthorne Race Course.

EDWARD CARMODY is a private investigator in Palos Hills.

GEORGE JONES, who likely fired the first shot, became security director, then general manager, of Thistle Downs in Cleveland.

JOSEPH GORMAN, who fired the machine gun in the raid, gained such notoriety that Commander Jon Burge, dismissed in 1993 for torturing suspects, reportedly introduced Gorman as "the guy who killed Fred Hampton." Gorman died in February 1990.

### JUDGES AND ATTORNEYS

Judge JOSEPH SAM PERRY died in 1984; Judges PHILIP ROMITI and JOSEPH POWER died in 1985.

EDWARD V. HANRAHAN, defeated for re-election as state's attorney in 1972, ran unsuccessfully for Congress, for mayor,

and finally, in 1980, for alderman. Once a high-profile politician who reveled in the spotlight, he retired from public view an embittered man. Hanrahan currently is an attorney in private practice in Oak Park, where he has lived for more than 25 years. Asked by *Chicago Tribune* reporter James Warren in 1985 to offer his New Year's resolutions for the legal system or anything else, he said: "Minding my own business and no longer being the subject of constant carping by the press. . . ." Asked more recently to comment on the raid, he would say only, "I wouldn't talk about that with anyone."

RICHARD JALOVEC, who selected the police for the raid, is a Chicago attorney. In a high-profile case in 1992, he represented Peter Anding, a former *Sun-Times* sports clerk charged with sexually assaulting young athletes.

JERRIS LEONARD, the assistant U.S. attorney general who headed up the Federal grand jury, is now a partner in a Washington, D.C., law firm and has crusaded over the years against child pornography.

ARNOLD KANTER, the assistant U.S. attorney who represented the FBI in the civil case, became chief counsel to Governor Jim Edgar. He resigned that post and later resigned from the bar following questions about his handling of a case in private practice and about possible conflicts in his work for the governor (*Chicago*, June 1994).

Special prosecutor BARNABAS SEARS died in 1985.

JOHN P. COGHLAN, Hanrahan's attorney in the civil suit, was disbarred voluntarily in 1989 after he was accused of financial mismanagement of a client's settlement account.

JEFF HAAS and FLINT TAYLOR continue at the People's Law Office; their work in the police-torture case involving Commander Jon Burge led to Burge's dismissal by the police board on February 11, 1993. Says Taylor now: "People say it was a different era [when the Hampton raid occurred], which is true, but they shouldn't assume it can't happen again. If there's any doubt about that, just look to the torture ring that was run by a police commander here as recently as 1991." P. E.