

Lodge 7's Response to renaming a street for a panther...

It is outrageous that certain elected officials are attempting to re-write history in an effort to make a martyr out of an individual who promoted the killing of Police Officers both personally and through his efforts as leadership of one of the most notorious street gangs in the history of the United States. No matter how often an untruth is told, it will never become a truth. We have been reading for days now about the "opinions" that these elected officials have in regards to what the Black Panthers and Fred Hampton stood for. The decisions of our elected officials as to whether or not name a street after Hampton should be based on fact and not opinions. If there had been a shred of evidence that his killing was an assassination, the federal Government would have discovered it during their investigation in 1969 and 1970. They did not.

The facts are that the Panthers promoted the killing of Police Offices here and across the country. Unfortunately their preaching met with a certain amount of success. Nine law enforcement officers have been killed by members of the Panthers and countless others have been wounded. In 1969, Chicago Police Officers John J. Gilhooly and Frank G. Rappaport were ambushed by members of the Panthers who used a shotgun to shoot and kill both officers. There is an effort currently underway to deport a former Panther back to the United States from Canada for shooting and disabling another Chicago Police Officer.

Attempts to turn this issue into one of race in 2006 smacks of personal agenda and will be shown to be nothing more than an integrity deficiency on the part of those who claim to be stewards of a movement that 37 years ago was as despicable as it is today. The attempts to showcase positive deeds of the Black Panthers and its leaders as reason to honor Hampton are purely transparent. The Panthers sponsored programs that sought to feed the stomachs of youth while at the same time poisoning their minds. The Panthers continually victimized their communities and the larger community of Chicago as well. In 1969, as damaging as a Black Panther Deputy Defense Minister making irresponsible charges which had no evidence to substantiate them were, they are even more damaging now especially when they are made by the same person who has become a United States Congressman.

The Fraternal Order of Police Chicago Lodge 7 is vehemently opposed to honoring any gang member. Doing so to one who promoted the killing of Law Enforcement Officers is disgusting and insulting. We will continue to do all that is necessary to ensure that this disgrace does not occur. We are grateful to all our members and the citizens who have called in with their offers of support.