

## Community Control of Police:

The BPP brought the petition to attention as a way to educate and challenge the status quo of Oakland and Berkeley. The basic focus of the petition was to shift the power of the police department to the community. This would be done by: 1. having police live in the community in which they serve, 2. Decentralize the Police dept by making three different departments to serve specific areas, 3 Having a Community Board made up of community members with the power to hire and fire police and make policy decisions.

In 1970, W. Berkeley BPP members and the Berkeley NCCF launched the Community Control of Police Petition in Berkeley. During this time there were a number of confrontations between students and community member and the Berkeley Police Dept. On a few occasions the Police fired weapons at the crowd of protesters with more than 35 people being shot. The Berkeley Police also planned a raid of the BPP National office in 1970. The plans for the raid were discovered, and the BPP ran the plans in their National newspaper. In 1970 after gathering over 15, 000 signatures for the Community Control of Police Initiative, the Committee had to fight the City Council and go to court to get the petition on the ballot.

In April 1971, the election was held. There was a nationally financed campaign of misleading information against the proposal. The petition lost, but the ideal lives on in different communities across the nation. Similar proposals were introduced in Chicago and Milwaukee; and today the need for Community Control is still mentioned and seems to be coming back as a way to control the police.

A positive result of the movement was the development of community review boards across the country.