

# THE BLACK PANTHER

## INTERCOMMUNAL NEWS SERVICE

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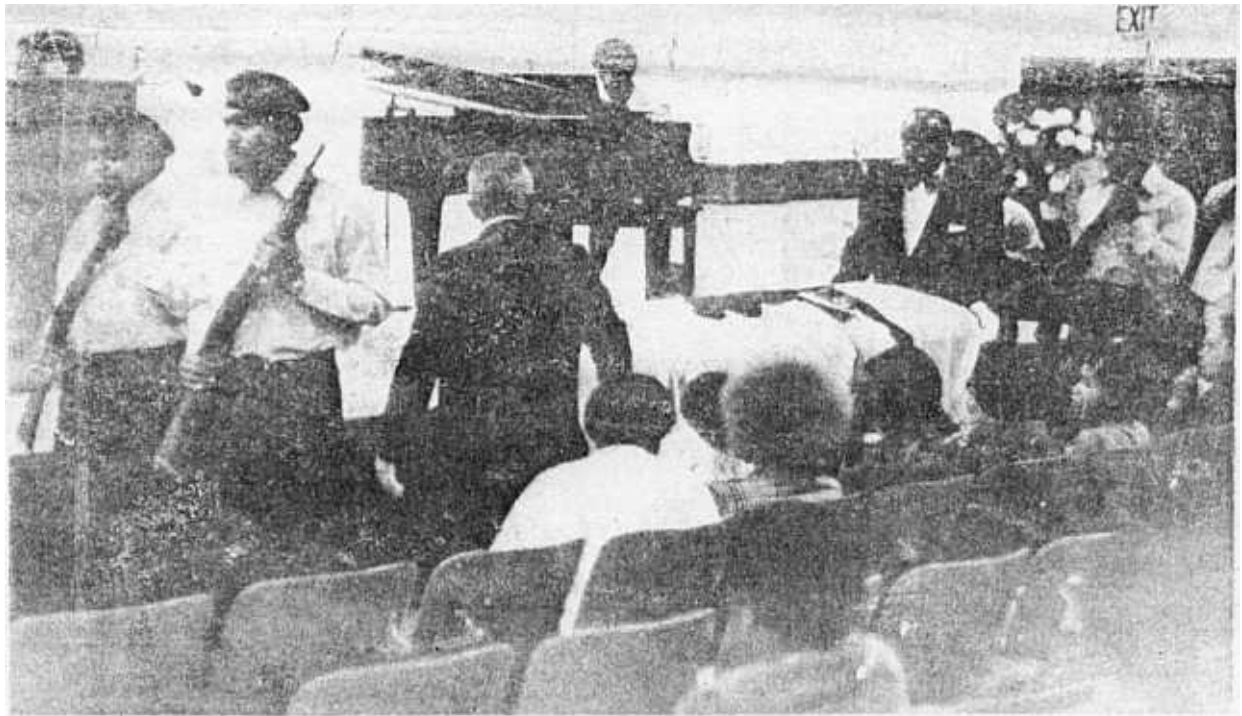
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# REVOLUTIONARY MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BRUCE (DEACON) WASHINGTON



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HELD AT SON OF MAN TEMPLE

# REVOLUTIONARY MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BRUCE (DEACON) WASHINGTON

(Oakland, Calif.) - Revolutionary Memorial Services were held last Wednesday afternoon at the Son of Man Temple for Bruce Lee (Deacon) Washington, a beloved 26-year-old comrade of the Black Panther Party shot in the back while protecting children from wild gunfire at a teen dance on Friday, October 5. Comrade Deacon died in the early morning hours of Saturday, October 6, after fighting for his life for more than eight hours on an operating table at Highland Hospital.

The Revolutionary Memorial Services began as the flag-draped casket bearing the body of Bruce (Deacon) Washington was brought, in silence, into the Temple auditorium, ceremoniously flanked on all sides by a special Honor Guard comprised of four Black Panther Party members who had known and worked with Comrade Deacon in the early development of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Party in the late 1960s and here in Oakland.

As the top of the casket was raised and the flag, bearing the emblem of a large solid, black panther was pulled back, the Son of Man Temple Choir, dressed in black robes, stood

and softly but firmly sang the very meaningful ballad, "We Are Soldiers":

*"We are soldiers  
In the army  
We have to fight*

*Although we have to die.*

*We have to hold up the blood-stained banner,  
We have to hold it up until we die..."*

Deacon had been an original member of the Son of Man Temple Choir, and had actively recruited others with whom he came in contact to join.

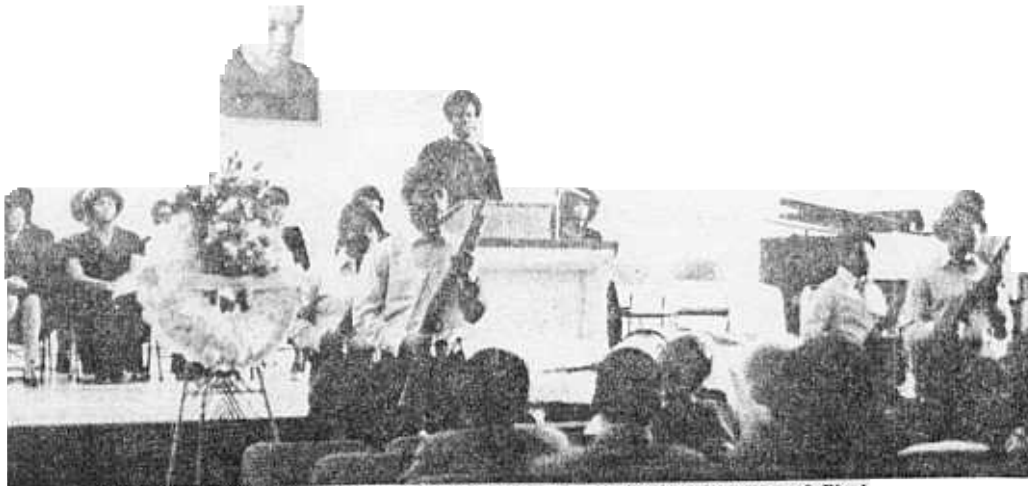
Following the Choir, Brother Emory Douglas, the internationally-acclaimed People's Artist for the Black Panther Party, read a selection from *Revolutionary Suicide*, written by Huey P. Newton, the Party's leader and chief theoretician. The passage which Brother Emory read was appropriate, for Comrade Deacon was conscious of the dangers involved with his work in the Black Panther Party, but as all who knew him will readily testify, Comrade Deacon refused to compromise his own integrity and dignity:

*"...Revolutionary suicide does not mean that I and my comrades have a death wish; it means just the opposite. We have such a strong desire to live with hope and human dignity that existence without them is impossible. When reactionary forces crush us, we must move against these forces, even at the risk of death..."*

The moving poem, "For Deacon," read by Sister Ericka Huggins, was filled with words expressing a realism that could not be denied:

*We come into life  
without a wish,  
a dream,  
a desire.  
life is so simple—to eat, to sleep  
then with knowledge comes  
pain  
life is no longer simple—  
how do we eat?/where do we  
sleep?  
we think  
we want to do*

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CHARLES JACKSON (center) sings "Tobacco Road," the favorite song of Black Panther Party fallen Comrade Bruce Washington



BRUCE (DEACON) Deacon  
fired his l

# REVOLUTIONARY MEMORIAL SERVICE

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—something,  
change things.  
life is complex—  
to struggle, to die.  
so we struggle



Brother EMORY DOUGLAS reads selection from Revolutionary Suicide.

*we regain what we lost,  
we take what we never had,  
we keep what is ours,  
as men and women.  
we wish for happiness,  
we dream of peace,  
we desire freedom.*

*we will have food  
shelter  
clothing  
justice*

*we will control our lives.  
and if some of us must die, it will be so that  
our children and theirs will live—a simple  
life.*

A new, beautiful and inspiring ballad written and sung by Ms. Elaine Brown, "We Can Do Anything," had an even more powerful meaning to it, coming as it did when the president of the Son of Man Temple Swingers was unable to finish her statement, leaving the stage in tears. Without mincing any words, young sister Rose had been explaining the events which took place at the Swingers-sponsored teen dance that Friday night, and, obviously holding back her tears, was speaking of the deep mutual love between Comrade Deacon and the Swingers group when she could not go on. It was Ms. Brown's first performance of "We Can Do Anything," and

she sang it in an emotional style that was unforgettable.

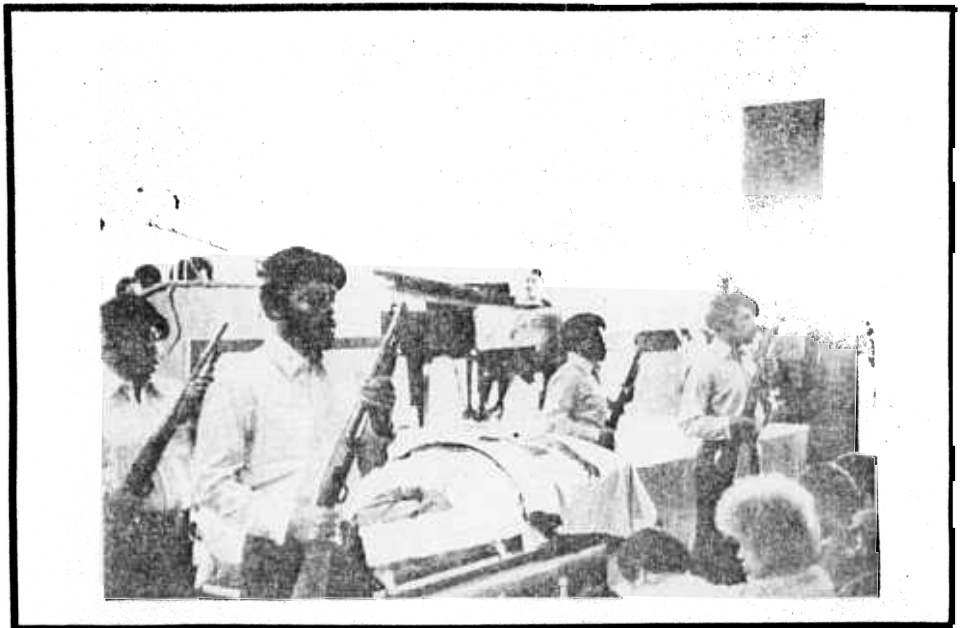
The message for the Revolutionary Memorial Service was delivered by Reverend J. Alfred



Black Panther Party members carry Comrade Washington into the



WASHINGTON sacri  
cting youth.



Members of Honor Guard stand at attention as ELAINE BROWN  
sings, "We Can Do Anything."

## FOR BRUCE (DEACON) WASHINGTON

th, pastor of Allen Temple Baptist Church  
East Oakland. Drawing on a parable  
cerning the relationship of the arch-traitor  
as to Jesus, Pastor Smith declared that



casket of Bruce (Deacon)  
of Man Temple.

"There are still some Judases in our midst," and  
commented that "We must all come to  
understand the true meaning of calling  
ourselves Brother and Sister." Describing  
Comrade Deacon as a revolutionary, Pastor  
Smith ended his moving message expressing  
the hope that the constructive programs for  
which Comrade Deacon dedicated his life  
would continue to develop and grow, serving  
the interests of the community.

Following his delivery of the eulogy, which  
described in glowing terms Comrade Deacon's  
commitment to the people, Brother Charles  
Brunson read two messages that the Party had  
received:

*Dear Elaine,*

*We are together once again as com-  
rades and friends to mourn the death  
of yet another beloved brother. You  
must know that only the need of ano-  
ther brother or sister who is still alive  
would interfere with my standing and  
walking proudly beside you today.*

*Amid the enormous sadness of this  
week let us not forget who we are and  
why we are here. Our work must go  
forward despite the seemingly impos-  
sible obstacles placed in our way by  
the power of our oppressors.*

*The future belongs to the children —  
it is our duty to follow the examples  
and capture the spirit of all our fallen  
brothers and sisters.*

*All Power to the People,  
Charles R. Garry  
Attorney, Black Panther Party*

*Bruce Washington served his com-  
munity in vitally needed programs. It  
is our hope that the tragedy of his  
death will not result in cessation of  
these programs, but inspire renewed  
efforts as a memorial to his life. We  
join his family in their sorrow.*

*Congressman Ronald V. Dellums and Staff*

Brother Brunson also mentioned that the  
American Federation of Teachers, Local 771,  
had made a contribution to the Community  
Learning Center in memory of Bruce Lee  
Washington.

The Revolutionary Memorial Services ended  
as Ms. Brown, accompanied by the Son of Man  
Temple Choir, sang, "We Shall Meet Again." Haunting words of struggle and sacrifice  
flowed throughout the auditorium and the  
audience stood silently and respectfully as the  
casket was removed. That evening Comrade  
Deacon's body was flown to his family in  
Philadelphia for funeral and burial services.

Bruce (Deacon) Washington was a revolu-  
tionary, a member of the Black Panther Party.  
He will not be forgotten.

**ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE**