



## BIOGRAPHIES

that. We covered the world in our newspaper, not just oakland. So sometimes there might be an event that happened nationally that was of significance to black people, people of colour, poor people.

So I might be assigned to read an article in the New York Times and then talk about how it was applicable to black people everywhere in the United States or read something about the black liberation struggles that were going on in Africa at the time, the armed liberation struggle, and talk about how we were connected with those struggles.

So I was a writer. I wrote articles and as part of that sometimes the party would send me to meetings to represent the party. There were various coalitions the party belonged to, and in a lot of those cases, when I did that, I would write articles for the newspaper. But what about your period as an editor?

I was editor from March of 1978 until September of 1980, and that was the last time the newspaper was published. It was a weekly newspaper at its peak, and it had somewhere between 350,000 to 500,000 circulation at the time. Back in the late sixties, the circulation of the black panther newspaper, in terms of black newspapers, was second only to Mohammed Speaks. They're the only black newspaper that had a higher circulation than we did.

So the newspaper was a weekly for many years. But in time, the party began to have financial problems, and there got to be a time when it could not be published on a weekly basis because we did have to pay a printer to print it. So after a certain period of time, it became a bi weekly.

Then, as time went on, the party's financial situation just began to deteriorate. I became the editor of the newspaper at a period when it was maybe not declining in people's interest in it, but it was declining in terms of its frequency and how often it was able to come out.

**L:** Now, is it fair to say that the Black Panther Party newspaper was the primary source of political education for both party members and the black community or the community at large?

**J:** Yes, that was true. I know for myself personally a lot of the things that I was assigned to help write about in the Black Panther Party newspaper. If I hadn't been in that position as being part of the writing crew for the newspaper. I wouldn't have known about some of those things.

