

Was Huey Newton a gifted leader of his people or a dangerous outlaw? Were the Black Panthers heroes or terrorists? Whether Newton and the Panthers are remembered in a positive or a negative light, no one questions his status as one of America's most dynamic and important revolutionaries.

This re-issue of *To Die for the People* opens a window on the past that has been shut for 20 years. In these selections from Newton's writings and speeches, readers can trace the development of the activist's personal and political thinking as well as the radical changes that took place in the politics, ideology, and actions of the Black Panther Party.

With a rare and persuasive honesty, *To Die for the People* records the Party's internal struggles, rivalries, and contradictions, and the result is a fascinating look back at a young revolutionary group determined to find ways to deal with the injustice it saw in American society.

Huey P. Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party and its chief theoretician, has long been a hero to radicals and is currently being rediscovered by young people interested in the history of black power in the United States. He died in 1989. Toni Morrison, whose acclaimed novels include Beloved, Sula, and Jazz, edited this book for its initial publication in 1972.

Cover Photo: Stephen Shames

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TO DIE FOR THE PEOPLE

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*Eulogy for Samuel Napier:
May 1, 1971*

There is very much in my heart today. And I have very few words to express it. Samuel L. Napier was one of the first brothers to join the Black Panther Party, and therefore he is a veteran of the struggle. He had always been attached to distribution of our paper, the Black Panther paper, which is the life of the Party. The voice of the people. Those who would cut off Samuel Napier would cut off the voice of the people. But because the voice is manifested in all of us, collectively, the voice will go on.

Death comes to all of us, but it varies in its significance. To die for the reactionaries, the racists, the capitalists is lighter than a feather. But to die in the service to the people is heavier than any mountain and deeper than any sea. Samuel's death is very significant. He will live on in spirit because we will make sure that we will advance the struggle. And we will cry for those who are living because we are in very bad shape. Samuel has now put down his burden; and it will be very heavy for us because he carried the burden for thousands. He was an extremely hard worker. We won't be able to replace him. No. We can only fill in the ranks with a hundred, with a thousand men.

Samuel Napier was a servant of the people; he gave the supreme gift to the people. So therefore Samuel Napier was the Supreme Servant of the people.

*On the Dismissal of the Case Against Bobby
and Ericka:
May 29, 1971*

The dismissal of the case by the State of Connecticut against our Chairman Bobby Seale and our Comrade Ericka Huggins is a clear indication that the might and power of the people is beginning to show. That the judge in New Haven was forced to say, "It is humanly impossible to find a jury," means several things: the State was not willing to spend another several million dollars, a retrial would be so obscene as to cause an even greater and louder demand from the people for Bobby and Ericka's freedom than ever before, and that nowhere could a jury of twelve people be found that would bring back a conviction.

We certainly will be glad to welcome Bobby and Ericka back among us, but we are not so foolish as to allow this compromise to cloud our vision. Bobby and Ericka will be back among the people, but they are not free, the people are not free, and there are hundreds more political prisoners: George Jackson and the Soledad Brothers, Ruchell Magee, Angela Davis, and all the unknowns, all the Black and poor people viciously incarcerated right now in this country's maximum security camps. Also there are the masses of oppressed people throughout the world that are still suffering under the direct or indirect boot of oppression from the U.S. ruling circle.

It is the power of the people and the people only to whom we will be thankful, and in whom our faith rests for the future. Bobby and Ericka have spent two long years in isolated and barbarous prisons. Nothing will justify those

least someone in connection with the killing and a trial. How do you feel about that?

NEWTON: In the first place I don't endorse the reactionary racist courts. I don't think they should deal with any of the people because they haven't earned that right. I think that the community should make rules to revolutionize its judicial system and handle its own problem. The community's problem is the judicial system. It is the judicial system that is the problem, not the people, just as the prison problem is not the prisoner. The real problem is the prison authorities. The prison administration needs to be separated and isolated for their racism and their reactionary attitudes. We contend that the prisons are not rehabilitation centers; they are concentration camps where racism is practiced and encouraged by the prison administration. They use the lack of social consciousness of the prisoners to institute this racism, therefore you have the race wars inside the prisons. I think this kind of thing is ending now because prisoners are more and more taking action against the real enemy. As far as this particular case, where Rackley was killed, he certainly should not have been killed. He was a member of the Black Panther Party in good standing. George Sams should be dealt with; he should have to stand before a revolutionary court. I don't even wish the reactionary racist courts upon George Sams. It hasn't improved him. He's been in and out of penitentiaries all his life. He has spent most of his life between going to mental institutions and prisons. As far as I'm concerned, George Sams is a madman and true revolutionary justice in his case would be putting him in a therapeutic environment. The only problem is that we don't have a therapeutic environment in the world today because of United States imperialism—bureaucratic capitalism at home and imperialism abroad. So what we have to do is move in such a fashion that we'll transform this society and therefore transform the world, and then we'll have a society where we can help madmen and where

we could really develop all human beings to their highest level.

PRESS: Do you have a revolutionary court system now, other than the Central Committee, that would handle this sort of situation?

NEWTON: At this point we can't really talk about any revolutionary institutions. We can talk about a process that is in the making. We have a provisional revolutionary judicial system which we realize can't function to its greatest capacity. Because you can't have isolated pockets of human treatment when reaction is pressing in all around you. So we don't claim to have developed any utopia in our commune system in which we live or in the Party itself. We have problems because we exist in a backward society. So we know our chief task at this point is to transform the society. It's not simply to erect just institutions because it's impossible to do that either in this country or in the world as a whole, today, until reaction, and that consists of the seventy-six companies that control the world, is killed once and for all.

people, it is the people's right and the people's duty to free themselves from the yoke of such laws.

Oppressed people in general, and Black people in particular, have suffered too long and we must draw the line somewhere. There is a big difference between thirty million unarmed Black people and thirty million Black people armed to the teeth.

We are not alone. We have allies everywhere. We find our comrades wherever in the world we hear the oppressor's whip. People all over the world are rising up. The high tide of revolution is about to sweep the shores of America, sweeping away the evil gentry and corrupt officials.

Our comrades Jonathan Jackson and William A. Christmas have taught us a revolutionary lesson. They have intensified the struggle and placed it on a higher level.

A picture is worth a thousand words, but action is supreme, Comrades Jonathan Jackson and William A. Christmas have made the ultimate sacrifice. They have given the revolution their lives.

Lonnie McLucas and the New Haven 9: August 29, 1970

HOWARD*: This press conference is to announce a mass demonstration rally that we are going to hold on the New Haven Green starting Tuesday, August 25. This is in relationship to the ending of the trial of Lonnie McLucas. The trial will end Tuesday, August 25, and we will hold a mass rally, demonstration and a vigil until the jury comes to a verdict. You can ask your questions then. We have the Minister of Defense, Supreme Commander, and the leader of our Party here. He'll respond to your questions.

NEWTON: First, I'd like to say it is very important that the community come out to support the rally because only with the power of the people are we able to achieve justice or to receive justice. The only reasons that the courts made a concession on my case and let me out on bail is because of the power of the people. It is not because of the justice of the court. So we are calling for the community to support all political prisoners and prisoners of war. At this time, the racist reactionary government is about to commit a legal lynching on Lonnie McLucas and the New Haven 9, and we are asking the community to come and issue a mandate against this. We were informed by McLucas that he was offered a deal by the district attorney. Whenever there is a serious case against a person and there is really substantial evidence, no deal is offered. McLucas was offered a sentence of fifteen to twenty years with a guarantee he would

* Captain of New Haven Headquarters of the Black Panther Party, New Haven, Conn.

freedom and dignity, there will be no prison which can hold our movement down. Ideas move from one person to another by the association of brothers and sisters who recognize that a most evil system of capitalism has set us against each other, although our real enemy is the exploiter who profits from our poverty. When we realize such an idea, then we come to love and appreciate our brothers and sisters who we may have seen as enemies, and those exploiters who we may have seen as friends are revealed for what they truly are to all oppressed people. The people are the idea. The respect and dignity of the people, as they move toward their freedom, are the sustaining force which reaches into and out of the prison. The walls, the bars, the guns and the guards can never encircle or hold down the idea of the people. And the people must always carry forward the idea which is their dignity and beauty.

The prison operates with the concept that since it has a person's body it has his entire being, because the whole cannot be greater than the sum of its parts. They put the body in a cell and seem to get some sense of relief and security from that fact. The idea of prison victory, then, is that when the person in jail begins to act, think, and believe the way they want him to, they have won the battle and the person is then "rehabilitated." But this cannot be the case because those who operate the prisons have failed to examine their own beliefs thoroughly, and they fail to understand the types of people they attempt to control. Therefore, even when the prison thinks it has won, there is no victory.

There are two types of prisoners. The largest number are those who accept the legitimacy of the assumptions upon which the society is based. They wish to acquire the same goals as everybody else: money, power, and conspicuous consumption. In order to do so, however, they adopt techniques and methods which the society has defined as illegitimate. When this is discovered such people are put in jail.

They may be called "illegitimate capitalists" since their aim is to acquire everything this capitalistic society defines as legitimate. The second type of prisoner is the one who rejects the legitimacy of the assumptions upon which the society is based. He argues that the people at the bottom of the society are exploited for the profit and advantage of those at the top. Thus, the oppressed exist and will always be used to maintain the privileged status of the exploiters. There is no sacredness, there is no dignity in either exploiting or being exploited. Although this system may make the society function at a high level of technological efficiency, it is an illegitimate system, since it rests upon the suffering of humans who are as worthy and as dignified as those who do not suffer. Thus, the second type of prisoner says that the society is corrupt and illegitimate and must be overthrown. This second type of prisoner is the "political prisoner." They do not accept the legitimacy of the society and cannot participate in its corrupting exploitation, whether they are in the prison or on the block.

The prison cannot gain a victory over either type of prisoner no matter how hard it tries. The "illegitimate capitalist" recognizes that if he plays the game the prison wants him to play he will have his time reduced and be released to continue his activities. Therefore, he is willing to go through the prison programs and say the things the prison authorities want to hear. The prison assumes he is "rehabilitated" and ready for the society. The prisoner has really played the prison's game so that he can be released to resume pursuit of his capitalistic goals. There is no victory, for the prisoner from the "git-go" accepted the idea of the society. He pretends to accept the idea of the prison as a part of the game he has always played.

The prison cannot gain a victory over the political prisoner because he has nothing to be rehabilitated from or to. He refuses to accept the legitimacy of the system and refuses to participate. To participate is to admit that the

Mozambique, how can we help? They need arms and other material aid. We have no weapons to give. We have no money for materials. Then how do we help? Or, how can they help our struggle? They cannot fight for us. We cannot fight in their place. We can each narrow the territory that our common oppressor occupies. We can liberate ourselves, learning from and teaching each other along the way. But the struggle is one; the enemy is the same. Eventually, we and our brothers in Mozambique, in all of Africa, throughout the world, can discuss a world without boundaries or national ties. We will have a human culture, a human language, the earth will be all our territory, serving all our interests; serving the interests of all the people.

III

The Bound and the Dead

*You can kill a revolutionary,
but you can't*

kill a revolution—FRED HAMPTON

plemented by and with the people here in America and those same basic People's Survival Programs being implemented in Mozambique by the Mozambique Liberation Front are essential to bringing about world unity, from Africa to the Black community inside America, developing and uniting against a common enemy. That enemy has rolled up into one large hand the power of the world. If we get rid of this enemy in a united common struggle it will be easy to transform this unity into a common scheme of things. We are not separate nations of men to continue the pattern of fighting amongst ourselves. We are a large collection of communities who can unite and fight together against our common enemy. The United States' domination over all our territories equals a reactionary (in opposition to the interests of all) set of circumstances among our communities: Reactionary Intercommunalism. We can transform these circumstances to all our benefit: Revolutionary Intercommunalism.

On the continent of Africa there are people who look like us. They are Black. We are brothers because our struggle is common. We have both suffered under White racism and under oppression. This is why we should not let the reactionaries of the world be the only ones communicating across the waters and masses of land. We have a common interest to serve, and therefore, we can learn from each other. What happens here affects our brothers in Africa; what happens in Africa affects us. The United States has seen to this. But this is good. We can learn to fight together, though separated.

There is a place in Africa called Mozambique. It lies on Africa's eastern shore, in the southern portion of the continent. It is a rich land, like most in Africa. In 1498 (six years after Columbus' famous "discovery") the Portuguese invader (if you remember, your elementary school books credit him as an "explorer") Vasco da Gama violated the shores of Mozambique. The rest of the troops landed

seven years later, in 1505. From that point on the Portuguese have dominated the economy and lives and the culture of the Mozambican people. Their national language became, and still is, Portuguese. To this day, the Portuguese lay claim to Mozambique, referring to "Portuguese" Mozambique.

This, of course, is not in agreement with our brothers and sisters in Mozambique. Mozambique is their home. They are not the invaders. Of course, the people of Mozambique have made many attempts throughout their long history of Portuguese colonial oppression to rid themselves of their chains. However, the most powerful and successful struggle is presently being waged under the guidance of the revolutionary organization FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique). The people support FRELIMO, for FRELIMO is of the people and is organizing struggle in the true interest of all the people. This great effort really began when FRELIMO was organized in 1962, primarily through the efforts of Dr. Eduardo Mondlane. In 1964 the first attack upon the Portuguese was launched by FRELIMO forces, which were by then organized and trained. Since then, armed struggle has been waged heroically by the Mozambican people under FRELIMO. This has resulted in the liberation of three key areas: Tete Province, Niassa Province and the Mueda Plateau. The ridiculous fact is that the Portuguese deny this. They deny the reality that they will eventually be pushed out of Mozambique (like the United States in Vietnam or in our Black and other oppressed communities). Portuguese Premier Marcello Caetano (who replaced fascist dictator Salazar) and his "official" Governor General, Eduardo De Oliveira, inside Mozambique, have consistently denied that their troops are being destroyed, their planes shot down.

Caetano denies that FRELIMO membership alone is more than 10,000; that one quarter of Mozambique is liberated territory; that liberated zones have a population

world: The U.S. soldiers to join forces with the victimized Vietnamese people; the guards and the families of the deceased guards at Attica and the guards of the state prisons across the U.S. to join forces with the victimized inmates.

It is clear that Mr. Nixon is trigger-happy and could trigger off World War III. And because we knew of his impending visit to the People's Republic of China, we asked the Chinese people to receive us first, so that we might ask the peace-and-freedom-loving Chairman Mao Tse-tung to be the chief negotiator to Mr. Nixon for the peace and freedom of the oppressed peoples of the world. And this is why we ask for unity of all the victims against the common enemy, the Nixon-Rockefeller regime.

So let it be done

Uniting Against the Common Enemy: *October 23, 1971*

What does the Black Panther Party mean when we say that we are revolutionary intercommunalists? In a few words, we believe that the world's people form a collection of communities, all dominated or controlled, either directly or indirectly, by the United States, by those few who rule the United States. The most common definition for a nation (as opposed to a community) is a group of human beings who have in common their own land or territory, economic system, culture (or way of day-to-day living), language, etc. At one time men from one nation would go out, and through warfare, conquer other nations. The conquerors would bring under their control the resources, the people, perhaps everything that was sovereign or sacred to the other nation. A variety of things would result: A government of the conquering nation might be established on the territory of the conquered nation; the foreign language may be imposed upon the people; the name of the nation might be changed; or most importantly, the economy of the conquered nation would be fully controlled by the conquerors.

Sometimes a nation is very small; sometimes, very large. But in this way, through these wars, the earth's people have over a very long period of time become divided up according to "national" boundaries, in varying ways at different times in history. These wars of conquest have changed world maps, or what one land mass is called. Sometimes one would look at a certain area and it might have a different name or boundary line, depending upon the date of

an accusation because I think we all should learn from each other.

SECHABA: Last year there was a United Front, The National Conference to Combat Fascism, which included a number of groups including SDS, the Dubois Club and the Communist Party of the United States. What is the Black Panther Party policy on this kind of relationship?

NEWTON: Our policy is that we are friends with all Marxists and want coalitions and allies within this country and all over the world. We could never have success without a popular movement, and when I speak of "popular" I mean it in the truest sense of the word, in the internationalist sense. We have to have a popular mass in order to achieve victory because victory is not for us, but the people. Therefore the people must be considered and the people must take a part in the struggle at every level.

We view part of our role as a vanguard is educating the people as we go, orientating them and providing an understanding of the social forces that are in operation and the dialectics at the time. We can only do this through involving the people in practical application, and involving them at every level of the struggle. And we do have relationships and coalitions and just comradesly love and work with all these groups, and we hope to even expand this to other groups, some we haven't even heard of yet.

SECHABA: Would the Black Panther Party like to set up or establish more direct contacts with the liberation struggles of Africa, Latin America and Asia?

NEWTON: Yes, we think that we can learn even more from each other if we were to establish better means of communications. One of the chief difficulties is a matter of communications. It is an international struggle. The Black Panther Party even thinks in terms of a new International, an International based upon armed struggle and the socialist ideology. We feel the International that exists now is somewhat deteriorated, as far as the Third World is con-

cerned, especially the Third World countries involved in armed combat. The International has half-stepped and criticized many of the national wars of independence and the armed struggle tactic as being too hasty and without enough orthodox political development. We see the need to overthrow the evil gentry and corrupt officials and we see only one way to do this. We do not believe we can do it through negotiation or electoral politics or any kind of non-violent means. The enemy is a violent man and we must treat him in an appropriate way.

SECHABA: And more specifically, would you be interested in having contact with the liberation movement of Southern Africa and, if so, in what form?

NEWTON: As you know, we have offered troops to the Vietnamese people to show our international solidarity. At the same time we also made it clear that we would send troops or offer troops to any of our friends who would accept them. We think the ultimate gesture of friendship that we could offer is to send our comrades to shed blood on your soil in the name of freedom, in the interest of the people, and against the imperialist enemy. If there is anything else that we can do other than to struggle to break the chains that shackle us, then let us know about that and we will be willing to consider it.

SECHABA: Is there mass interest in the United States about the struggle in Southern Africa? What can *Sechaba* do to publicize the South African revolution among the Black people in the United States?

NEWTON: We, the Black Panther Party, are a vanguard group, so necessarily we are more enlightened than the masses and we are very interested in the international scope of things. The people are as people all over the world, so tied up and so involved in their survival from day to day that much of the time they overlook, or they don't understand, the international nature of the struggle. That is why it is our duty—one of our first duties—to raise the con-

controls the wealth of the world; it has stolen, usurped, the wealth of the people of the world, including the people who are in the Black colony here in America and who were stolen from Africa. We feel that the only way that we can combat an international enemy is through an international strategy of unity of all exploited people who will overthrow the international bourgeoisie and replace it with a dictatorship by the proletariat, the workers of the world. And we feel that after imperialism is destroyed, nationhood will no longer be necessary, for the state will then wither away. Then the whole world will belong to the people and the old national boundary lines will no longer exist. We think that the movement is at this stage; we think that the dialectics are now on the verge of taking socialism, social ideology, to its final goal: communism and the absence of statehood.

SECHABA: Do you want to say a little about the program of action in the immediate future for the Party and for yourself?

NEWTON: Our program is armed struggle. We have hooked up with the people who are rising up all over the world with arms because we feel that only with the power of the gun will the bourgeoisie be destroyed and the world transformed. We feel that the imperialists will not become Buddhists overnight; they will not lay down their butcher knives. Therefore, the people will have to use certain measures to restore peace to the world and to restrain the madmen who are running amuck throughout the world and oppressing people everywhere. The World-Enemy-Number-One is the ruling circle in the United States of America. We view the United States as the "city" of the world and all the other countries as a "countryside."

As one country becomes free, it makes each country stronger because it develops a base of liberated territory so that we'll be in a better strategic position to fight, and also it will be one step toward cutting off the raw materials that imperialism needs to feed its factories here at home. We will

slowly strangle imperialism by freeing one country after another. This is why we support the brothers and sisters in Southern and Northern Africa as well as those in Asia and Latin America who are struggling against capitalism and imperialism, for socialistic goals. We support all struggles where people are struggling for freedom, and we also support our European brothers and sisters who are struggling to overthrow the bourgeoisie in their country. While we are not nationalists, we support national wars of independence because this is a step again towards cutting off the international bourgeoisie which is based in the United States. We feel that every country has a right to be nationalistic to a point, as long as they are internationalists at the same time. We feel that Black people in America have a moral right to claim nationhood because we are a colonized people. But history won't allow us to claim nationhood. We must take socialist development to its final stage to rid the world of the imperialist threat—the threat of the capitalist and the warmonger. Once America is destroyed then there will be no need for nationhood because the nations will no longer need to defend themselves against imperialism, for this is the most powerful imperialist country in the world, and other imperialist countries depend on the backing of the U.S. At this point the imperialist is running rampant. Therefore any country has a right to claim nationhood or be nationalist as long as they are internationalists as well.

If they are only nationalist then they are chauvinist. If they are both nationalist and internationalist they realize that they need liberated territory, but they also realize that their interests are the same as every other people's interest who are fighting against imperialism. While we respect your fight for nationhood and independence, and we struggle with you, we feel that we must destroy the very necessity for countries to be nations in the first place. And this is the whole idea of making the world a place where territorial boundaries will no longer be necessary.

the Middle East. The Palestinian people are living in hovels, they don't have a land, they've been stripped and murdered; and we cannot support this for any reason. We also realize some of the shortcomings of the United Arab Republic. Our view is that the people led by the Palestinian people should be led into a struggle, a revolutionary struggle in order to transform the Middle East into truly a peoples' republic. And at the same time we support a small group of people who are in Israel who are revolutionary and working to see that the Zionist government of Israel is transformed into a secular peoples' state instead of a religious state.

We say that the way the country is operating at this time is the height of chauvinism and ethnocentrism. I say this because any state that requires its members to adhere to a certain religion is a reactionary state. We must transform the world into a place where people can live. We are chiefly interested in the survival of our people, but not at the expense of other people.

Black people in America have been persecuted; therefore it is easy for us to identify with other people who are suffering. We have a long history of being enslaved and murdered. We have wrestled with the question of nationalism and we have concluded that we have a moral right to embrace nationalism. We have a moral right to choose separatism, to move into a separate state just as the Jewish people have that moral right. But we realize that United States imperialism will not allow us to separate and live side-by-side with United States imperialism. It's obvious that we could not become self-determined because the United States will not let countries exist 15 million miles away in freedom. They will not let these countries exist in freedom 15 million miles away so they certainly will not let us exist in a separate state in North America in freedom. So the question can be put into the future.

The first task is to transform society so the people can

live in freedom. Our central task is to overthrow the ruling circle, who will not permit self-determination to exist in the world. After we achieve this goal the question of nationalism can be handled. Black nationalists could then go to the U.N. and ask for a plebiscite in order to ask the people which way they want to go. After transformation into a socialist society, there may be no need for separation. This transformation can only take place by wiping out United States imperialism and establishing a new earth, a new society, and a new world. So politically and strategically the correct action to take is not separation but world revolution in order to wipe out imperialism. Then people will be free to decide their destiny. Self-determination and national independence cannot really exist while United States imperialism is alive. That is why we don't support nationalism as our goal. In some instances we might support nationalism as a strategy; we call this revolutionary nationalism. The motives are internationalist because the revolutionaries are attempting to secure liberated territory in order to choke imperialism by cutting them off from the countryside. When the motive for national liberation is solely to create a capitalist state so that the ruling circle of that capitalist state can align itself with United States imperialism, then it is reactionary nationalism, and it cannot be supported by revolutionaries.

Israel was created by Western imperialism and maintained by Western fire power. The Jewish people have a right to exist as long as they solely exist to down the reactionary expansionist Israeli Government. Our situation is similar in so many ways; we say, that morally perhaps, the Jewish people can make a case for separatism and a Zionist state based upon their religion for self-defense. We say, morally, perhaps we could accept this, but politically and strategically we know that it is incorrect. In the first place it is perpetuating nationalism; perpetuating reaction, if nationalism is reaction, and I think that the United States

and killing in My Lai, in Phnom Penh and many other places. The same ruling class which controls the military and government here also controls the military and government in South Vietnam and Cambodia.

America is World-Enemy-Number-One and the military is its strong arm. We feel that it is imperative (necessary) to defend people of color when they are attacked by American troops in other lands. These attacks are designed to continue the profit-mongering of the ruling class and their carbon lackeys.

Black people in America have long been affected in a negative way by America's war of imperialism. The Black Panther Party now understands what is going on and is moving to develop appropriate responses. We are internationalists because our struggle must proceed on many fronts. While we feed and clothe the poor at home we must meet and attack the oppressor wherever he may be found.

It is clear, however, that you are also an internationalist, but in support of imperialism and at the expense of Black people who contribute so much to you. Recently you signed a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* urging this government to send jets to Israel. We challenge you to show the people how your support of this ad is designed to improve their lot rather than your own self-interests. That advertisement cost several thousand dollars of somebody's money which could have been put to good use by those very Black people you accuse me of ignoring. Why do you support imperialism and ignore the reality which indicates so clearly that the lowly conditions of Blacks are caused by a complex intermingling of capitalism, imperialism and racism? All of these must be dealt with at the same time if we are to end our oppression.

I am sorry you felt the need to attack me and that this response must be made. We will be free and we will settle for nothing less. Our number-one priority is survival of Black people in this land, and we will use all necessary and sufficient means to do so.

On the Middle East: September 5, 1970

DAVID*: The press conference was called in response to the allegations that the Black Panther Party had a delegation of Panther members led by Stokely Carmichael in Jordan. The Minister of Defense, Huey P. Newton, is here to repudiate those statements because we do not have any Panthers in Jordan; but we do have an international section in Algeria headed by the Minister of Information, Eldridge Cleaver, and our Field Marshal, Donald Cox. They are representatives of our Party who are in daily contact with the Palestinian Liberation organization, and they're the only authorized Panthers outside of the United States of America.

NEWTON: We further charge that Stokely Carmichael is operating as an agent of the CIA. We have no proof of this but we have some evidence. His actions are speaking for themselves. We notice that when the House of Un-American Activities (HUAC) investigated the Black Panther Party, Stokely Carmichael, shortly after or during the investigation, came out with a statement that the Party was dishonest. He also made other charges that were not based upon fact. When he was approached about this he said that perhaps he was untimely in his charge, and that he was sorry about this. We further charge that he's in cahoots with his wife Miriam Makeba who is also an agent. And as I said before we have no proof, but Stokely Carmichael's behavior infers that he is an agent. Now we hear through the wire

* David Hilliard, Chief of Staff of the Black Panther Party.

*Reply to Roy Wilkins re: Vietnam:
September 26, 1970*

ROY WILKINS:

Negro Americans who celebrated the release of Huey Newton, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, from a California prison, had their jubilation doused in cold water by Newton's first interview.

He announced that his No. 1 priority was the recruiting of a Black American unit to fight with the National Liberation Front. He wants to help the Viet Cong in Indochina, not with street rallies, parades and hot rhetoric here in the United States, but with guns in the hands of a fighting unit in Vietnam.

If the rank and file Negro Americans expected anything from the Panther leader that would aid them in their daily problems, they were disappointed. But Black Americans have had so many disappointments that they have become cynical. Some of them thought Huey was railroaded to prison just as some of them believe that the Black Panthers are being hounded and killed by the authorities. Accordingly, they were glad of the legal technicality that freed him. It was a victory of sorts over the system.

But what did Huey think about during his nearly two years in custody? The Viet Cong may be hurting, but nothing like the hurting of John Q. Black American. Is a young Black American, as smart and as articulate as Huey Newton, so overcome with the anguish of a people 9,000 miles from the United States that he downgrades the suffering of his own people in the slums of Los Angeles or in the shacks in rural Alabama?

Of course, Huey knows about this suffering. It was the resentment over this treatment that led, at least in part, to the founding of the Black Panthers. But Huey, for all his talents, is also a revolutionary. Revolutionaries get confused. They think that following a "line" is more important than winning an improvement for their people. They are worried about keeping straight with some revolutionary leader in a far country. They are moved but little by the plight of Black Americans cooped up on Indiana Avenue in Chicago or on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta.

What about the Black migrant workers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York who need smart and dedicated Huey Newtons to help them out of the misery of their camps? And there are the nearly two million Black public school children who are being crippled for life in the inferior school systems perpetrated by politicians who are juggling desegregation and quality education.

Huey should know that the Black people of Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, are holed up in their homes each night, terror stricken over robberies, rapes and murder. In all cities, big and little, coalitions and officials and just plain Black citizens are battling for jobs and paychecks.

They need low-income housing in suburbs. Mississippi has just reapportioned several districts and wants to reduce the Black vote by requiring re-registration. In short, as the late Bert Williams, the Black comedian, once said, "we need everything from an overcoat in."

In this state, a Newton top priority plan for a company of Black American soldiers to fight for the Viet Cong generates only damp enthusiasm. Newton, an attractive and personable young man, is described in one news dispatch as being the darling of White revolutionaries. It figures.

NEWTON:

It is clear that your published criticism of my statement regarding the commitment of Black Panthers to the revolu-

*Letter From Nguyen Thi Dinh:
October 31, 1970*

To: Mr. Huey P. Newton
Minister of Defense
Black Panther Party

Dear Comrade:

We are deeply moved by your letter informing us that the Black Panther Party is intending to send to the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam an undetermined number of troops, assisting us in our struggle against the U.S. imperialist aggressors.

This news was communicated to all the cadres and fighters of the PLAF in South Vietnam; and all of us are delighted to get more comrades-in-arms, so brave as you, on the very soil of the United States.

On behalf of the cadres and fighters of the SVN PLAF I would welcome your noble deed and convey to you our sincere thanks for your warm support to our struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation. We consider it as a great contribution from your side, an important event of the peace and democratic movement in the United States giving us active support, a friendly gesture voicing your determination to fight side-by-side with the South Vietnamese people for the victory of the common cause of revolution.

In the spirit of international solidarity, you have put forward your responsibility towards history, towards the necessity of uniting actions, sharing joys and sorrows, participating in the struggle against U.S. imperialism.

You have highly appreciated the close relation between our both uncompromising struggles against U.S. imperialism, our common enemy. It is well known now that the U.S. government is the most warlike, not only oppresses and exploits the American people, especially the Black and the coloured ones, but also oppresses and exploits various peoples the world over by all means, irrespective of morality and justice. They have the hunger of dollars and profits which they deprived by the most barbarous ways, including genocide, as they have acted for years in South Vietnam.

In the past years, your just struggle in the U.S. has stimulated us to strengthen unity, and rush forward toward bigger successes.

The U.S. imperialists, although driven by the South Vietnamese and Indochinese people in a defeated position, still have not given up their evil design, still seek to gain the military victories and to negotiate on the position of strength. On the SVN battle-fields, they are actively realizing their policy of "Vietnamization" of the war with a view to maintaining the neocolonialism in South Vietnam and prolonging the partition of our country.

The very nature of the policy of "Vietnamization" is prolonging indefinitely the aggressive war at a degree ever so cruel and barbarous. While Nixon puts forward his "initiative for peace," in SVN the aggressive war got harder and harder; after the "urgent pacification" came the "Eagle campaign"; after that, by the "special pacification" in the countryside and the "for the people" campaign in the towns, Nixon and the Thieu Ky Khiem clique have perpetrated innumerable barbarous crimes towards the people of all strata in SVN.

*To the National Liberation Front of
South Vietnam:
August 29, 1970*

In the spirit of international revolutionary solidarity the Black Panther Party hereby offers to the National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam an undetermined number of troops to assist you in your fight against American imperialism. It is appropriate for the Black Panther Party to take this action at this time in recognition of the fact that your struggle is also our struggle, for we recognize that our common enemy is the American imperialist who is the leader of international bourgeois domination. There is not one fascist or reactionary government in the world today that could stand without the support of United States imperialism. Therefore our problem is international, and we offer these troops in recognition of the necessity for international alliances to deal with this problem.

Such alliances will advance the struggle toward the final act of dealing with American imperialism. The Black Panther Party views the United States as the "city" of the world, while we view the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America as the "countryside" of the world. The developing

countries are like the Sierra Maestra in Cuba and the United States is like Havana. We note that in Cuba the people's army set up bases in the Sierra Maestra and choked off Havana because it was dependent upon the raw materials of the countryside. After they won all the battles in this countryside the last and final act was for the people to march upon Havana.

The Black Panther Party believes that the revolutionary process will operate in a similar fashion on an international level. A small ruling circle of seventy-six major companies controls the American economy. This elite not only exploits and oppresses Black people within the United States; they are exploiting and oppressing everyone in the world because of the overdeveloped nature of capitalism. Having expanded industry within the United States until it can grow no more, and depleting the raw materials of this nation, they have run amuck abroad in their attempts to extend their economic domination. To end this oppression we must liberate the developing nation—the countryside of the world—and then our final act will be the strike against the "city." As one nation is liberated elsewhere it gives us a better chance to be free here.

The Black Panther Party recognizes that we have certain national problems confined to the continental United States, but we are also aware that while our oppressor has domestic problems these do not stop him from oppressing people all over the world. Therefore we will keep fighting and resisting within the "city" so as to cause as much turmoil as possible and aid our brothers by dividing the troops of the ruling circle.

The Black Panther Party offers these troops because we are the *vanguard party of revolutionary internationalists who give up all claim to nationalism*. We take this position because the United States has acted in a very chauvinistic manner and lost its claim to nationalism. *The United States is an empire which has raped the world to build its wealth*

armed forces follow orders. Orders flow from the top down." Patterson will not admit that the Panther Party leadership understood this relationship from the very beginning because he is a revisionist and opposed to armed struggle. He tries to hide my major point in the article on "Functional Definition of Politics" because he does not want to meet those arguments head-on. The Black Panther Party picked up the gun and concentrated on Point 7 of the program because in this way we could most clearly communicate to the Black community the necessity of picking up the gun to gain liberation and freedom. It was not because we could end police terror merely by "sharply challenging" the police. This of course is not to say that by challenging the police the Party did not begin to show that if a few people with guns challenged the police they could have some effect, but it was done in the context of educating the masses of the potential power of an armed Black community. Our program is an attack upon U.S. imperialism in all its forms and faces. We have used the police as a catalyst because the people on the bottom of the bottom are most affected by that government agency. We call it a government agency because the police act like a government in our community. We realize that the police departments are arms of the decision makers who tell their unleashed dogs whom and when to kill. This is true of the military as well as the police. The Vietnamese who are fighting the military realize that the military is but a foot soldier with a decision maker behind him; nevertheless, the military exists and is reckoned with in an appropriate manner. The police are the foot soldiers in our community and that is why the Vietnamese people call for American people to unite and topple the reactionary regime in this country in order to win their fight for liberation.

We call upon the people of the world to struggle with us (which they are doing) to topple imperialism so that we'll become free from the local evil gentry and corrupt officials.

This is all the way up the line from the foot soldier to his master somewhere in Standard Oil, General Motors, Bell Telephone, Chrysler Motors, etc. We do not even acknowledge the electoral administrative civil government because we realize they're only puppets of the avaricious businessmen.

Patterson's comment about the bourgeoisie needing to smash the natural trend of unity that was developing between Black and White workers is crap. What evidence can he present of this upsurge under imperialism. Do White workers independently of vanguard leadership and Black struggle automatically begin to see common interests with Black workers? Did the ruling class really have to begin anew to paint racist conceptions of Blacks? Did these conceptions ever stop? This whole position seems to be a cover-up to justify the CP's position on World War II and Roosevelt.

He tries to explain the Party with some brand of Oakland particularism. As if the oppression was not as great or greater elsewhere in the large Black ghettos in Chicago, New York, Boston, Newark, etc. This is actually a cover to say that Southern workers were more racist than their Northern counterparts. As if racism is not rampant all over the country. As if our native-grown racists in California are not every bit as vicious as the ones from the South. It was Malcolm who pointed out that the Mason-Dixon line was at the Canadian border.

The Party never had a program of self-defense in the sense that Patterson speaks of. He fails to understand that the Party wanted to explain and demonstrate that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

He gets hung-up on the formalism of changing the name of the Party as if that represented a broadening of the Party's views. He does not understand the conception of self-defense that the Black Panther Party originally formulated. When we used "for Self-Defense" we realized that all op-

opinion in which conflicting interpretation from Right revisionism to Left dogmatism, foist off their reactionary and blind philosophies as revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. Around the world and in every nation, people, all who call themselves Marxist-Leninists are at each other's throats." American imperialism seeks to inject this line of thought into the heads of all who seek a scientifically developed program of struggle against its wars, its racism, its persecution of the working class. But one who wishes to be a revolutionary should mark well the centenary of the birth of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin which so recently took place in Moscow to say nothing about studying the theoretical conferences on "Leninism and Contemporaneity" which took place in Prague late in 1969.

Representatives of Marxist-Leninist thought were present from most of the countries of the world. And to the dismay of world imperialism the voices of the representatives of Marxist-Leninist parties of the world were almost as one. Gus Hall, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., speaking in Moscow, said among other things:

"The revisionist opponents of Marxism-Leninism have adopted the typical capitalist tactic of divide and destroy . . . they are out to separate the national liberation struggles from their socialist source of strength . . .

"The attempt is to destroy the teachings of Marx and Lenin. Then separate them and by so doing to destroy the science of Marxism-Leninism . . ." Gus Hall concluded: "On this, the Centennial of Lenin's birth we can confidently say to the vulgar revisionists: your attempts are coming too late in history; your efforts may cause disruption here and there. But the very processes of life and the class struggle have condemned you to failure. Marxism-Leninism is the process of truth. It is indispensable and indestructible." The same can be said to the Left sectarians of whom there are some among the Panthers.

It cannot be denied that the relentless struggle for equality of rights and human dignity pursued by the Black Panthers has both awakened and inspired millions of White youth who, until

the emergence of the Panthers, paid little heed to the dehumanizing effects of racism on them or of its effect on national morality.

There are among the leaders of the Panthers those who believe that the United States is already in the throes of fascist terror; they generalize their own experiences. That is wrong. Despite the fascist-like nature of the terror from which Black nationals have suffered for a century and the fascist-like racist terror now rampant, the possibilities that remain openly to fight for the completion of the bourgeois revolution and its transfer into a Socialist revolution offers irrefutable proof that this position that fascism dominates the American scene is not consistent with reality. The Court's reversal of the vicious decision that had sent Huey Newton, a founder of the Panther Party, to prison, is also proof that the trend toward fascism in the U.S.A. can successfully be fought.

Propagation of the idea of existing fascism can only weaken the struggle to destroy fascist trends, and the development of an anti-fascist coalition. As has been said in the introduction to the New Program of the Communist Party, U.S.A.:

"Wherever one looks, there is struggle in the United States today. People are on the march. More and more are engaged in struggles for peace, for Black and Brown liberation, for economic advancement. More and more are seeking fundamental solution. There is radicalization. . . ."

We will fight increasingly for the constitutional rights of the Black Panther Party for we know that:

"Through immediate struggle workers organize and learn the need to battle further. They learn who the enemy is and how to fight ultimately to the socialist revolution . . .

"Class consciousness begins with recognition of the fundamental community interests of Black and White workers.

The Black Panther Party is in the process of growth and development at a moment when the anti-imperialist struggle sharpens and deepens. It is on a vital front of that struggle. History demands that all aid to overcome its weaknesses of

painting anew the picture of Blacks as a shiftless cowardly people with incurable criminal tendencies. Blacks were terrorists!

The situation in Oakland was worse than in many other places because the war and the depression before it brought an influx of politically backward White Southerners literally steeped in the myths of White superiority. The picture of Blacks painted by ruling class ideologists was acceptable to those Whites now that a new fight for jobs had been sharpened. Labor had done little or nothing to help its rank and file study the complexities of the question of racial persecution.

The leadership of White labor had been bought off or duped by the "Establishment." It ignored the democratic demands of Blacks even though these demands clearly reflected the needs of all of American labor. The political demands advanced by Blacks should have been embraced by labor as it developed as a class for itself. It was wise to sing "We ain't goin' study war no more" but wiser not to stop studying . . . the class nature and consequences of racism.

Communists on the West Coast had called for unity in struggle of Black and White. They spoke sharply of the menace of racism to labor. The call though clear was ineffective in the ghetto save around questions of Civil Rights. Reaction had launched a systematic and persistent anti-Communist crusade in the ghetto. It had no little effect because it was picked up by Black middle-class leaders who felt their own organizations challenged by a scientific approach to the struggle.

The leading Black organization on the liberation front, the NAACP, was anti-Communist. It was under the leadership of White philanthropists and their Black sycophants. It was not prepared or able to wage a militant class struggle for the rights of Blacks or for labor's unity with Blacks. The leadership of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense stepped into what seemed to be a political vacuum.

But a program of self-defense, no matter how militant in and of itself, gets an oppressed people nowhere. The police of an oppressor use force and violence under the direction of busi-

ness and political leaders who label it "law and order." It is a method of political relationship of the administrative branch of the government with minority groups.

It is to the great credit of the Black Panther leadership that it quickly recognized this structural set-up. The Party's name was changed. "For Self-Defense" was dropped. The organization became THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY. The Party's outlook was broadened. It was now a more effective weapon for self-defense because it sought a line of offensive activities that could, if consistently pursued, put an end to police terror. It now began to see the historical necessity to remove the racist from the seats of power in the economic and political life of the country. That Party had taken a leap forward in its theoretical outlook but by no means had it mastered the science it espoused.

The Black Panther Party called itself a Marxist-guided organization. It made the study of Marxism-Leninism compulsory among the leading cadre. This step was unprecedented in the history of the Black Liberation struggle. The Panthers did not lift the Black Liberation movement to an international level. The Communist Party of the U.S.A. had already done that. That is why it was feared and all progressive steps were charged to it. Black and White Communists had stood in international bodies to proclaim that inseparable relation of the struggle of Blacks in the U.S.A. to the world-wide freedom struggle. The Black Liberation struggle no less needs the guidance of a science than does every other liberation struggle. Social revolution is a science, as the Communists have said many times, a science to be creatively used has to be mastered and the science guiding revolution must of historical necessity be a universal science. That science is Marxism-Leninism.

During the war against slavery, Karl Marx has said that labor in a White skin could not emancipate itself while labor in a Black skin was branded. That axiom still holds true. It reveals the inseparable relationship of labor and national liberation.

For the first time in the history of the Black Liberation strug-

those goals which give them respect and dignity while permitting the same privileges for every other man regardless of his condition or status.

The sacredness of man and of the human spirit requires that human dignity and integrity ought to be always respected by every other man. We will settle for nothing less, for at this point in history anything less is but a living death. WE WILL BE FREE and we are here to ordain a new Constitution which will ensure our freedom by enshrining (cherishing) the dignity of the human spirit.

Reply to William Patterson: September 19, 1970

The excerpts below are from an article by William L. Patterson, Communist Party, U.S.A. They are included here to clarify Huey Newton's reply which follows. Mr. Patterson's article was entitled "The Black Panther Party: A Force Against U.S. Imperialism," and reprinted in the July 4, 1970, issue of the Black Panther newspaper.

PATTERSON:

Emerging in the Fall of 1966 from the most depressed sections of the white police-ridden Black ghetto of Oakland, California, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense has in a remarkable short time been raised by its leadership to be an extremely significant force in the political battles against American reaction. Frenzied-like imperialist top governmental agents have continuously sought the extermination of the Black Panther leadership and the destruction of its Party.

What social phenomena brought the Black Panther Party into being?

First: police brutality, unrestricted, unrestrained and officially endorsed as constituting "law and order."

Second: Deep emotional and political frustrations brought on by the failure of White labor leadership and liberals among the White masses to recognize not only the validity of the demands of Blacks for equality of rights and opportunities NOW but as well the inseparable relation of those demands to the progressive American political scene. More, exactly how support of those demands would revitalize national morality and check the process of dehumanization initiated by racism.

Third: The consequent political conclusion that Blacks seek-

minorities achieved alienation from the lands of their fathers and slavery. The evidence for this is clear and incontrovertible.

We find evidence for *majority freedom and minority oppression* in the fact that the expansion of the United States Government and the acquisition of lands was at the unjust expense of the American Indians, who are the original possessors of the land and still its legitimate heirs. The long march of the Cherokees on the "Trail of Tears" and the actual disappearance of many other Indian nations testify to the unwillingness and inability of this government and this government's Constitution to incorporate racial minorities.

We find evidence for majority freedom and minority oppression in the fact that even while the early settlers were proclaiming their freedom, they were deliberately and systematically depriving Africans of their freedom. These basic contradictions were further exacerbated (made angry) by acts which implicitly admitted that the majority was wrong but unwilling to do right. Thus when the Declaration of Independence was drafted, the Founding Fathers considered the slave as equivalent to three-fifths of a man. Thus when the slaves were emancipated the descendants of the Founding Fathers compromised that freedom to gain further territory. These compromises were so basic to the thinking of our forebears that legal attempts to correct the contradictions through Constitutional amendments and civil-rights laws have produced no change in our condition. We are still a people without equal protection and due process of law. We recognize then that the oppressive acts of the United States Government when contrasted with the testaments of freedom, carry forward a basic contradiction found in all the legal documents upon which this government is based.

Generation after generation of the majority group have been born, they have worked, and they have seen the fruits

of their labors in the life, liberty and happiness of their children and grandchildren. Generation after generation of Black people in America have been born, they have worked, and they have seen the fruits of their labors in the life, liberty, and happiness of the children and grandchildren of their oppressors, while their own descendants wallow in the mire of poverty and deprivation, holding only to the hope of change in the future. This hope has sustained us for many years and has led us to suffer the administrations of a corrupt government. At the dawn of the twentieth century this hope led us to formulate a civil-rights movement in the belief that this government would eventually fulfill its promise to Black people. We did not recognize, however, that any attempt to complete the promise of an eighteenth-century revolution in the framework of a twentieth-century government was doomed to failure. The descendants of that small company of original settlers of this land are not among the common people of today, they have become a small ruling class in control of a world-wide economic system. The Constitution set up by their ancestors to serve the people no longer does so, for the people have changed. The people of the eighteenth century have become the ruling class of the twentieth century, and the people of the twentieth century are the descendants of the slaves and dispossessed of the eighteenth century. The Constitution set up to serve the people of the eighteenth century now serves the ruling class of the twentieth century, and the people of today stand waiting for a foundation of their own life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. The Civil-Rights Movement has not produced this foundation, and it cannot produce this foundation because of the nature of the United States society and economy. The vision of the Civil-Rights Movement is to achieve goals which have been altered by 200 years of change. Thus the Civil-Rights Movement and similar movements have produced no foundation for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They have produced

should try to judge, somehow, whether they are operating in a sincere revolutionary fashion and from a really oppressed situation. (And we will grant that if they are women they are probably oppressed.) If they do things that are unrevolutionary or counterrevolutionary, then criticize that action. If we feel that the group in spirit means to be revolutionary in practice, but they make mistakes in interpretation of the revolutionary philosophy, or they do not understand the dialectics of the social forces in operation, we should criticize that and not criticize them because they are women trying to be free. And the same is true for homosexuals. We should never say a whole movement is dishonest when in fact they are trying to be honest. They are just making honest mistakes. Friends are allowed to make mistakes. The enemy is not allowed to make mistakes because his whole existence is a mistake, and we suffer from it. But the women's liberation front and gay liberation front are our friends, they are potential allies, and *we need as many allies as possible.*

We should be willing to discuss the insecurities that many people have about homosexuality. When I say "insecurities," I mean the fear that they are some kind of threat to our manhood. I can understand this fear. Because of the long conditioning process which builds insecurity in the American male, homosexuality might produce certain hang-ups in us. I have hang-ups myself about male homosexuality. But on the other hand, I have no hang-up about female homosexuality. And that is a phenomenon in itself. I think it is probably because male homosexuality is a threat to me and female homosexuality is not.

We should be careful about using those terms that might turn our friends off. The terms "faggot" and "punk" should be deleted from our vocabulary, and especially we should not attach names normally designed for homosexuals to men who are enemies of the people, such as Nixon or Mitchell. Homosexuals are not enemies of the people.

We should try to form a working coalition with the gay liberation and women's liberation groups. We must always handle social forces in the most appropriate manner.

of subversion." What is overlooked is the fact that the super-capitalists know we don't need to rape the country. I think Cuba was the turning point away from the traditional colonized country.

Another argument is that they need the strategic military positions. But we know that the U.S. does not need any strategic military positions because they already have enough equipment to defend this country from any point in the world if attacked. So they could only be there to use this developing country as a depository for expendable goods.

In traditional imperialism, people from the mother country usually go to the colony, set up the government, and the leaders of the military, but this is not so in America. People from the mother country have not gone to the colonized country of Vietnam and jockeyed for position, but the profit has all been turned back into America. The defense contractors now jockey for position in the mother country for the defense contracts. Then they set up a puppet government or a military regime so that they can supply these developing countries with military equipment. They really do not want to be in Vietnam or any of the developing countries because they feel (and they have done this) that they have bought off the militaries in these various developing countries so that they will only be an arm of the Pentagon. The military regime in Greece is a good example. They have full control of the military officers, paying them high salaries so they will not have to send American troops and disturb the mother country.

But what happens when one battalion of military is defeated? Then you send in reinforcements for the defeated puppet army in that developing country. The whole government becomes subject to the army. And the army becomes suspicious of the civil government in these developing countries because they are told by the Pentagon through indoctrination and money that the civil government is a communist threat to the nation. Military coups follow, and

this is what happens over and over in countries supported by the U.S.

We have actually an imperialistic variation of imperialism. The jockeying for positions of power is inside of the mother country now, so, in fact, the American people have become colonized.

At one time I thought that only Blacks were colonized. But I think we have to change our rhetoric to an extent because the whole American people have been colonized, if you view exploitation as a colonized effect. Seventy-six companies have exploited everyone. American people are a colonized people even more so than the people in developing countries where the military operates.

This is why the Peace Movement is so important. If the Peace Movement is successful, then the revolution will be successful. If the Peace Movement fails, then the revolution in the mother country fails. In other words, the people would be pushed so uptight once war were to stop that the whole economy would go down the drain. Only a planned economy could combat the chaos that the absence of incentive would cause. Now war is the incentive for the military contractors.

This is why it is very important that we have communications with the Peace Movement. Not only should we communicate with it, we should actually get out and support it fully in various ways including literature and demonstrations.

We have to realize our position and we have to know ourselves and know our enemies. A thousand wars and a thousand victories. And until we know who the enemy is and what the situation is we will only be marking time. Even the Peace Movement doesn't compromise our defense principles. We still defend ourselves against attack and against aggression. But overall, we are advocating the end to all wars. But, yet, we support the self-defense of the Vietnamese people and all the people who are struggling.

through heightened levels of consciousness. So they unify and Sweetback revolts against the oppressors and makes good his escape. Many do not believe he will make it; their consciousness is not as high as his. He is reaching for the stars—making it to the border—but they will only take him to the edge of town.

Sweetback has his high level of consciousness, that is to say, he is a Sweet Sweetback because he has come to understand that freedom, liberation, and the ability to love requires that first of all you have to recapture the holy grail; you have to restore your dignity and manhood by destroying the one who took it from you. When you do that, even if you do not completely escape, you are a dangerous man because after that the oppressor knows that you will no longer be submissive. Therefore, ripping off your oppressor is the first step toward freedom and love.

This understanding did not come easily to Sweetback. He attempted to look away from Moo-Moo, and then, after rescuing him, he attempted to make it on his own, only to be misled by Beatle. This put him in the situation of a revolutionary in the sense that he knew then that he could not find a place of refuge within the system without a whole transformation of the conditions of oppression.

I say this because many people think that revolutionaries are made out of some kind of abstract predicaments. This is not so. They are transformed by a particular set of situations that are sometimes unique to each individual. What brings one person into his revolutionary consciousness is different from what will bring another, but when we reach that point we realize that we are all unified as victims. That is what happened to Sweetback, Moo-Moo, Beatle, the angels, and the community in the film. That is why the film stars the Black community—all of us. We must understand our unity and also how we must heighten our consciousness.

So like I said, we have the negation of the negation. The

oppressor who wanted to exploit Sweetback and Beatle ends up beaten by them because they will take his stuff no longer. The contradiction between the community as represented by Sweetback, and the oppressor as represented by the dogs, has been resolved.

However, each synthesis leads to new contradictions. Right until the end Melvin Van Peebles is signifying and conveying a message to us. What is the new contradiction? Sweetback has killed two dogs, but one is still there, refreshing himself in the water mingled with the blood of the other dogs. If Sweetback got two dogs, who is going to get the other? That is the dog we must down. So the film ends with the words "Watch Out." This has a dual meaning. It is telling all the many Sweetbacks across the land to watch out for that third dog and be prepared to deal when he shows up. It also says to the oppressor to watch out for the Sweetbacks across the land because they are coming to collect some dues. Righteously signifying.

When Bobby and I started the Black Panther Party, we wanted to build in the Black community the love, the sacredness, and the unity we need so desperately. This is still our goal and we try to help the community survive by administering our many survival programs. Sweet Sweetback helps to put forth the ideas of what we must do to build that community. We need to see it often and learn from it.

If you can't beat 'em join 'em
 That's what they say
 You talking 'bout yesterday
 You can't go on like that Sweetback
 Not long as your face is Black
 Yeah, I'm Black and I'm keepin' on
 Keepin' on the same ole way
 They bopped your mama
 They bopped your papa
 Won't bop me
 They bopped your sister
 They bopped your brother
 They won't bop me
THEY BURNED OUR MAMAS
THEY BEAT OUR PAPAS
THEY TRICKED OUR SISTERS
THEY CHAINED OUR BROTHERS
WON'T BLEED ME
WON'T BLEED ME
WON'T BLEED ME
 They bled your mama
 They bled your papa
 But he won't bleed me
 Use your Black ass from sun to sun
 Niggers scared and pretend they don't see
 Deep down dirty dog scared
 Just like you Sweetback
 Just like I used to be
 Work your Black behind to the gums
 And you supposed to thomas tell he done

You got to thomas Sweetback
 They bled your brother
 They bled your sister
 Yeah, but they won't bleed me
 Progress Sweetback
 That's what he wants you to believe
 No progress Sweetback
 He ain't stopped clubbing us for 400 years
 And he don't intend to for a million
 He sure treat us bad Sweetback
 We can make him do us better
 Chicken ain't nothing but a bird
 White man ain't nothing but a turd
 Nigger ain't shit
 Get my hands on a trigger
 You talkin' revolution Sweetback
 I wanta get off these knees
 You talkin' revolution Sweetback
 You can't make it on wings
 Wheels or steel Sweetback
 We got feet
 You can't get away on wings
 wheels or steel Sweetback
 Niggers got feet
 He bled your brother
 He bled your sister
 Your brother and your sister too
 How come it took me so long to see
 How he get us to use each other
 Niggers scared

of the film, then an analysis of some of the major ideas and concepts. Now I will show how the movie also raises the consciousness of the community by analyzing it in terms of some aspects of the ideology of the Black Panther Party.

We see ideology as a systematic way of thinking about phenomena, not as some set of abstract conclusions. Our approach is one that uses dialectical materialism, which holds that contradictions are the ruling principle of the universe. Everywhere, in all of life—the social forces, the natural forces, and the biological and physical forces—we can find contradictions. What we mean is that in every phenomenon there is a contradiction between opposing forces which struggle to gain domination over each other. We call this the thesis and anti-thesis, or the unity of the opposites. Because these opposites are both unified and constantly in struggle with one another, they give motion to the matter composing the phenomenon. So we say that matter is constantly in motion, or constantly in a state of transformation. The transformation takes place in a dialectical manner, with the thesis struggling against the anti-thesis. These are the contradictions. The struggle is resolved in a synthesis that contains elements of the old contradictions, but at a higher level. Then a new set of contradictions will arise.

The essence of the ideology of the Black Panther Party is that we recognize that matter is constantly in transformation in a dialectical manner. But when we understand this and understand the forces in operation, we can control them and direct them in a manner which is beneficial for the community. Therefore what we want to do is understand the contradictions within every aspect of the Black community and move on them by trying to increase the positive side of each contradiction until it comes to dominate the negative side. This is how we define power: the ability to define phenomena and make it act in a desired manner.

If you understand where the Panther is coming from, you will understand that Sweet Sweetback is a beautiful exemplification of Black Power, for what he does is decide how he wants things to come out and then he makes them act in a desired manner. The movie is also an exemplification of the dialectical analysis and the constant transformation of phenomena. I don't know whether Melvin Van Peebles was aware of this when he made the movie, but it does have these features. It gives us lots of insight and understanding.

For example, we say that all phenomena contain contradictions with positive and negative qualities. To control the situation, then, what you must do is increase the positive qualities of any phenomena until they dominate the negative qualities. Sweetback does this on a number of occasions. Take for example the chains. The handcuffs are definitely negative when they are used to keep him in submission, but when Sweetback realizes that he can ignore the beating of Moo-Moo no longer, what is he to use for a weapon? Thus the same chains which were used to bind become tools of liberation. Their positive qualities are used to overcome their negative qualities. He did this again when he was caught by the police in the poolroom. He offered his hands for the chains. Not because he wanted them, but because he realized that this would put the police off their guard, and also give him another weapon to use against them. We see this again when the police are using helicopters, cars, guns and the radio to track down Sweetback. What does he use? Their technology, but in a positive way. He hitches rides on trucks and trains, and they help to deliver him from the jaws of the monsters, who are using the most advanced technology to try and capture him. If we understand dialectical materialism we will understand more about how to look at both the positive and negative qualities of phenomena so that we can control our destiny.

The film also shows the positive and negative features of community institutions. In other articles I have said that the

that the community will free itself. So they ask Sweetback how many people were in the ambush? How did they work it? The oppressors cannot accept the idea that the oppressed could do this without a lot of planning, without a large number of people. It was only Sweetback and Moo-Moo, but to the victimizer it had to be more than that. A difference in point of view, a point of view which is too often used to control us, but we must make our own point of view prevail.

Another difference in point of view is seen with the chains which are used on Sweetback twice in the film. To the oppressor they are the chains which keep us in a submissive position, but each time for Sweetback, the oppressed, they become tools of liberation. We will be even stronger when we learn how to turn the oppressor's tools against him rather than submitting to them.

Another idea which Melvin Van Peebles puts across is the uselessness of cultist behavior in our struggle for survival and liberation. In earlier issues of the paper I have talked about the revolutionary cultist, the cultural cultist, and the religious cultist. Van Peebles strikes some heavy blows at the religious and cultural cultists. For example, the minister understands that he is not moving the people toward their true liberation. He tells Sweetback that what he is doing is giving the people a hype that gives them a little happiness, but he then goes on to say that Moo-Moo and the younger guys are laying down the real religion. So this is a blow against those religions in the Black community which do not help people deal with the conditions which drive them to their knees, but instead want to keep the people on their knees.

The strongest blow against cultist behavior, however, is saved for the cultural cultists. We see this in the African garb which the minister is wearing. This is signifying that a lot of cultural nationalism and the meaningless religions in the community are deceiving the people in the same ways.

In another way the film makes this point more strongly and also indicates the true way to liberation. When Sweetback arrives at the gambler's den, the men around the table are engaged in a conversation. The manager has complained to Sweetback that he cannot even make any money on this operation because he is paying off so many others. The cultural cultist offers many empty solutions to our oppression and this scene hits at these solutions.

After the manager's speech one gambler says, "And Africa shall stretch forth her arms," and then another replies, "Yeah, and bring back a bloody stump." Now we have to understand the true issue in order to see this as a blow to cultural nationalists, who are cultural cultists (with African clothes, bones and other things, but no ways to liberate the people). Cultural cultists, who try to claim that they have the way, often use this scripture to support their ideas: "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." (Psalms 68:31) You can see that what Van Peebles is signifying is that those who use such meaningless arguments to mislead the people have nothing to offer, because when they stretch forth their arms, they will draw back a bloody stump. Still, however, Van Peebles does show us how a bloody stump may not be a meaningless thing if we get out of that cultist bag. How does he do this? He shows the blood on Sweetback's arms each time he downs the cops. In his first baptism by blood there is blood all the way up to his elbow. And later when he downs the cops in the poolroom, there is blood up to his elbow again. That is the true route to liberation: stern action when the situation demands that you seize the time and turn away from cultist behavior.

There is another key idea which comes through repeatedly. That is the ability of the people to survive even under the hardest conditions. We do this by using the means available to us and never worrying about the fact that we don't have all the technology that the oppressor has. You

the young boy, and also in the concern Sweetback expresses for Moo-Moo after he realizes that he is truly unified with him. You will recall that Sweetback has an actual dialogue at only six points in the movie; three of these points are in relationship to Moo-Moo. So the revolutionary and the righteous street brother see their functional unity. When Sweetback first downs the cops and saves Moo-Moo, Moo-Moo then asks Sweetback, "Where are we going?" What does Sweetback say? "Where did you get that *we* shit?" This indicates that Sweetback does not understand his need for unity with Moo-Moo. Yet after his encounter with Beatle, Sweetback realizes that he cannot depend on his boss, the guy he should have been able to depend on. But Moo-Moo was somewhere out there being hunted and so was Sweetback—and they were united.

Then when the gamblers are giving Sweetback a ride to the edge of town he spots Moo-Moo and he tells his comrades to stop. This is the second time he speaks about the revolutionary. Now when Moo-Moo gets in the car he tells the brothers who he is, but they still don't see their need for unity because to them he is not Moo-Moo, he is the guy who got their partner into trouble. They blame the victim rather than those who victimize him, but this is because of their low level of awareness. Sweetback did the same earlier, but he was revolutionized by his awareness of the true situation. Our unity will come out of consciousness, and this is the point to raise the consciousness of the Black community.

The film also demonstrates the functional unity between the present and the future. Once again we see this in the women giving nourishment and love to the boy who is their future, their liberator. If they did not feed him now and give him the strength to survive until his revolutionary consciousness is aroused, then he would not be able to liberate them. So pending the revolution they must do all they can to help him survive.

We also see the unity between the present and the future

when Sweetback visits the church. He receives no help but gets a little more understanding of the true nature of his contribution to the community. The minister tells him that what he did for Moo-Moo was the correct thing. He says, "You saved the plant that they were planning to nip in the bud. That's why the Man's down on you." Then later when Sweetback has another chance to escape, but without Moo-Moo, he tells the Black motorcyclist to take the young brother instead. The motorcyclist asks Sweetback if he knows what he is doing, and he replies, "He's our future, Brer. Take him."

The film also demonstrates the value of unity among the entire Black community. This is shown at the very beginning when the movie titles appear indicating that the movie is starring **THE BLACK COMMUNITY**. There is no hero, there is no one outstanding individual, there is the community. At the end there are some names of participants, but it does not even tell what roles they played. This is all an attempt to play down the individualistic approach to our survival in favor of an expression of unity among the entire community.

This unity is also demonstrated by the fact that Sweetback has almost no dialogue in the entire movie. He says hardly anything at all. Why? Because the movie is not starring Sweetback, it is starring the Black community. Most of the audiences at the movie are Black and they talk to the screen. They supply the dialogue because all of us are Sweetback; we are all in the same predicament of being victims. This is clearly seen when Sweetback comes back to Beatle for help. Sweetback says nothing, but Beatle lets it come out of both ends. The audience replies to Beatle for Sweetback, and they supply the dialogue. This happens throughout the film. So the thing to do is not just see the film, but also to recognize how you the viewer are also an actor in the film, for you are as much a victim of this oppressive system as Sweetback.

The unity of the community is shown throughout the film

velopments of the oppressor. When he is challenged to a wrestling duel the gang leader picks up a motorcycle to show brute strength; then with a knife the leader shows how effectively they have mastered this weapon. When the gang leader reveals herself to be a woman, Sweetback knows that she is no match for the weapon he chooses. The gang promises to do him and Moo-Moo in after she does him in, but in the end "the Pres" is laid out on the ground in complete submission. The Black women showed him the way to liberation and he used his knowledge effectively.

Van Peebles is also signifying other things in the motorcycle gang scene. First of all there is the symbol of the strength of the White woman over the White man (and they don't even know it). Then there is the symbol of the Aryan, the superior race. The president of the gang is big and robust, the image of White superiority. The only criticism I have here is that her hair should have been blond rather than reddish, but the idea gets across. The idea also comes across that the people have the ability to triumph over all these symbols of oppression. Unity will save us.

I should point out that in his duel with the Aryan someone has stuck a derby hat and a silly little tie on Sweetback. It is like a performance, a minstrel show or a cakewalk thing. But Sweetback takes off the derby hat and in that way he tells the others that this is no performance, this is dealing for survival. He deals and he survives, much to their disappointment, and they roar off on their motorcycles, leaving their conquered leader on the ground.

Some of the gang betray Moo-Moo and Sweetback, telling them that since Sweetback has won the duel they will take care of him and Moo-Moo by giving them shelter in a mountain cabin. Instead they send the police. This cabin contains a pool hall, and when the police arrive Moo-Moo and Sweetback are playing pool. When the police enter, Sweetback offers his hands for the cuffs, but then moves to use them to down one policeman. But he is without a

weapon to deal with the other one and Moo-Moo is shot. Sweetback uses familiar survival techniques, however, because he deals with what he has available to him. The pool cue becomes a spear, staving the policeman through the chest and drilling him all the way to the hilt of the cue. It is not technology that saves him, it is his ability to use the familiar features of the Black community. This is another important message.

The rest of the scenes show the unity of the community and its creativity in dealing with survival situations. Sweetback sends Moo-Moo on a motorcycle because he is the future. Then he makes it on his feet, by himself. He makes his plea to his feet to do their thing and they never fail him. All he has are his feet and one knife, and he gets by.

In the meantime the police are in the conference room and the commissioner tells them he wants the cop-killers and niggers. Then he calls the Black policemen aside to apologize. They never say a word during the movie, but in their faces you see that they are dead. They are dead because they are separated from the community of victims of which they are a part.

The police vamp on the entire community. They raid a motel and rip out the eyes of one brother. When they realize that he is not Sweetback their reply is "So what?" Melvin Van Peebles is making it plain that we are all Sweetbacks and we are all united in this victimization. At one point they bring Beatle to the morgue to identify a body as Sweetback's; they run their games again with some speech about democracy and communism. They use their idea of bourgeois democracy against the community, but Beatle is a deaf man and has been deaf for a long time. In some respects he is also a blind man because even though he operates a cat house and survives, he cannot read. They are the cause of his problems, for he cannot hear, he cannot see, yet they want him to be a "responsible citizen" and help them. We see that Beatle has been subjected to the Biblical

Then the blood spurts across the peasant's face, and it is the only baptism he ever remembered.

The Black audiences really respond to this scene because it is another baptism; but instead of wading in the water as Sweetback did earlier, this is a baptism in blood. As each blow went down, you could hear the tension being released in the audience because right at that moment it was a climax for them.

One of the few criticisms I have of this film is that there is no religious music behind this scene. This is no more a scene of violence than the earlier baptism was one of sex; it is a growing into manhood. Sweetback grew into a man when he was in bed with that woman and he also grew to be a man when he busted the heads of his oppressors. When he was with the woman it was like a holy union, and when he takes the heads of his oppressors it is like taking the sacrament for the first time. In the first baptism he did not become a whole man because he went into that freak show, but when he is baptized in the blood he righteously moves on to a higher level because the next time he is with the police with handcuffs on, he gets away. And the time after that when he is with the police with handcuffs on, in that pool hall, he knows what he must do and he does it.

Like I said before, Van Peebles is righteously signifying because he engages the audience in a climax when Sweetback downs the police. What he does is equate the most ecstatic moments in the film with the actions he is encouraging the people to engage in. So he is advocating a bloody overthrow because the victims want to survive.

The next point that Van Peebles develops in the film is the need of the Black community for greater unity and how the lack of unity will only deliver us into the hands of our oppressors. What happens? Sweetback helps Moo-Moo get up, but then goes his own way and makes it back to the cat house where he encounters Beatle. Beatle starts to give him advice, but everybody recognizes that Beatle is not really

responding to Sweetback's situation. Van Peebles gets this point across beautifully. While he is giving advice Beatle is sitting on the toilet. He wipes himself, gets up, and without washing his hands he takes a towel and wipes his face. This is signifying that what is coming out of Beatle's mouth is the same thing that is coming out the other end—shit and nothing else. Notice that Sweetback never says a word to Beatle, but he does not have to because Beatle is deaf and cannot hear what is being said anyway.

When he leaves Beatle, the camera shows Sweetback with a terrified look on his face. He has realized that those he knows best have such a low level of awareness that he cannot expect aid from them. He realizes that the lack of unity is a very hurting thing, and when he walks out of Beatle's place he walks right into the hands of the police, who pretend to be nice until they realize that he is not playing the part of the meek victim. Then they work him over thoroughly.

Sweetback is saved by that same unity he failed to find with Beatle. The people rescue him by pretending to be in need of money, and offer to wash the car of the police. Instead they are engaging in a very revolutionary act and save the brother from the oppressor while at the same time delivering a deadly blow to the police. What Sweetback has done for Moo-Moo is repeated for him by the community.

Sweetback is on his own now but he is locked into a pair of handcuffs. How does he get them off? Through unity. He goes to a woman, whom he has been with before, and she tells him to beg. This is obviously not the first time this has happened, but Sweetback cannot beg any more because he has been transformed by the baptism in blood. He needs her at this moment, but sexuality cannot be based on war any longer but on love and unity. He makes love to her and after that the handcuffs are off. This signifies that it is the unity between the Black man and the Black woman which is able to liberate them both.

less, the holiness is a part of us, so it serves us. But at the same time the holiness serves us it remains as dirtiness to the outsider because he is the cause of the profane conditions of the victims, and because what he is getting is not love, but the sale of the prostitute.

To the boy she was not a prostitute because there was no money passed. Instead she introduced him to the thing that would give him his fullness as a person and his survival in the end. She introduced it to him as a boy because it is said, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) Of course he won't depart from it if it becomes an integral part of his personality because he would be departing from himself. The women were giving the boy more than simply a survival thing because he was their hope, and this is why they feel happy about the sacrifice they are making. You can see it on their faces when they are feeding him and at the point of orgasm when the woman tells him that he has a sweet back, which is where he gets his name. Not only is he baptized into his fullness as a man, he gets his name and his identity in this sacred rite.

After that, whenever Sweetback engages in sex with a sister it is always an act of survival and a step towards his liberation. That is why it is important not to view the movie as a sex film or the sexual scenes as actual sex acts. Van Peebles is righteously signifying to us all. The first scene was far from being sexual, that is why holy music plays during the scene. It is only dealing with sexual symbols. The real meaning is far away from anything sexual, and so deep that you have to call it religious.

When Sweetback puts on his hat he does not leave the house, he does not leave the victim's ghettos, but graduates to perform there in a freak show. He would simulate sexual intercourse before an audience that paid to observe this scene. He starts out playing the part of a dyke, with false breasts and a beard, but then his "fairy godmother" comes

along and he gets his wish and becomes a man before the audience, taking off his beard and showing his penis—it looks like a missile and shocks the audience.

While this is going on, the cops are harassing Beatle, who is the owner of the cat house. He has been paying them off and doesn't want to be bothered, but they want one of his men as a scapegoat arrest. The cops break off their harassment from time to time and go over to observe the freak show, even though they have seen it many times.

Sweetback is now having sexual intercourse with the sister, but there is no holy music because it is not love; it is a performance given in order to survive. He is selling himself to the audience and the cops, who are the freaks. Dylan's "Ballad of the Thin Man" would apply here, because in the song the freaks go to see the geek who offers them a bone and they don't know why. But you see the audience or the freaks—including the cops—don't have to be there. They cause the conditions which make it necessary for people to go to these lengths to survive and then they pay to see the performance the people put on. They are the real freaks and the people go through the act with real hostility and hatred for the people who cause them to be there in the first place.

There are also Blacks in the audience. This is a stroke of genius by Van Peebles because it symbolizes the total blindness of the audience of freaks. They are laughing at a situation when they are in fact getting their heads cut off. That's like Dylan's sword swallower, who in the end will thank the audience for the loan because they were really there, only they did not know it. The scene shows how far the oppressor will go, for when it is asked if anyone in the audience wants to challenge Sweetback, this White boy couldn't hold his girlfriend down. The announcer would not let her go out there because the police were watching.

The police, as I said, are taking payoffs and letting the house exist. This is an indictment of them. The freak show

youth to see. But it has a real message for them, for just like "Moo-Moo," one of the youthful characters in the movie, they are our future.

Melvin Van Peebles had great difficulty obtaining the funds to make this movie, therefore it has a low budget. In some parts the sound and the lighting are not as good as they might have been if he could have had more money to make the film. I have found that its messages and significance are clearer when I combine viewing the film with listening to the record of the sound track and reading the book. I would urge all of you who want to understand the deep meanings of the movie to also buy the record and the book.

Sweet Sweetback blows my mind every time I talk about it because it is so simple and yet so profound. It shows the robbery which takes place in the Black community and how we are the real victims. Then it shows how the victims must deal with their situation, using many institutions and many approaches. It demonstrates that one of the key routes to our survival and the success of our resistance is unity.

Sweet Sweetback does all of this by using many aspects of the community, but in symbolic terms. That is, Van Peebles is showing one thing on the screen but saying something more to the audience. In other words he is signifying, and he is signifying some very heavy things.

When the movie opens we see the faces of women; there are young faces and old faces, but in all of them there is a sign of weariness, sadness, but also joy. You soon recognize that the women are in a house of love, a house of prostitution, a house of ill-repute. Of course it can be any of these things, depending on what position you are viewing it from. This is the essence of the whole film, the victim and the oppressor looking at things in a much different way, from a different point of view.

The women are tired yet they are happy. This is because they are feeding a small boy. As you look at the women you see that they are strong and beautiful Black women, def-

nately African in ancestry and symbolic of Mother Africa. The size of some of their breasts signifies how Africa is potentially the breadbasket of the world. The women are feeding stew to a small boy who is apparently very hungry, and as he downs it they keep offering him more. These women with their large breasts potentially could feed and nourish the world, and if this is so, certainly they have the potential to raise their liberator, for that is what the small boy is, the future of the women, of Black people, liberation.

They are in a house of prostitution not of their own will, but because of the conditions the oppressor makes for us. They are there to survive and they sell their love to do so, therefore our love is distorted and corrupted with the sale. When you have nothing else left you give up your body, just as when you are starving you might eat your fingers; but it is the conditions which cause this, not the desire to taste your own blood; you have to survive.

The women standing around the small boy are not saying anything but by continuing to nourish him they are telling him that they can give him more than enough; not only food, but much love. This love is not for sale and is therefore uncorrupted. It is pure love, sacred and holy. Even though the boy is weak and has many sores on his face, with the love and nourishment of the women he can become a very strong man. The sores on his face come from malnutrition and poor health and Van Peebles is signifying the fine line between survival and death. Even though the women can feed him and clear up his malnutrition, they cannot do it freely and totally because they have to sell, also they have to sell in order to provide.

I have seen small children in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, in West Oakland, in Chicago, and in Harlem with sores on their bodies like those on the boy's face. That is why we have health and food programs, because we are determined to make them healthy again. The women in the film are doing the same thing. They know he is their future and so they give him love and nourishment that he might

nesses so that while making a living themselves they may also serve the Black community that gives them their small profits. We want them united. We want them to act in unison. We want them to use a common bank in order to give themselves more economic muscle. If they are strong they can better serve the Black community. Why then, you may ask, is Cal-Pak now a boycott target? We feel that we must organize the family first so that we may go out and seek that which is due the family. In order to do this we must build a solid foundation through a community-focused Black united front. We cannot afford the luxury of "individualism." The idea of Black individualism is sheer madness, impotence personified. The Black Panther Party has community survival programs that must have the support of those who are able to help. Support of these survival programs will build a strong Black community.

In order to unite the Black community and in order to establish a positive, complementary economic linkage between the completely destitute and those who have a few pennies, we will first persuade through petition then through the boycott when necessary. We see very little difference between Blacks who make profits from the Black community and refuse to contribute to Black survival programs, and the White profiteers such as Mayfair. We only ask a nominal continuing contribution from Cal-Pak as a group. They may set the amount, but we feel they must contribute something on a continuing predictable basis as long as the need exists. We do not want Black businessmen to go out of business, which is why they and no one else must decide what they are able to contribute to survival programs. If they go out of business they cannot help the Black community. But if they refuse to help the Black community they are parasites that must be forced out of business through economic boycott. Why should the Black community nourish a Black profiteer who has no concern for his brother?

During the latter part of June, 1971, the Black Panther Party held a series of meetings with Cal-Pak Package Store and Tavern Owners Association and asked their continuing, voluntary, self-determined (in terms of amount) support of survival programs. After a series of meetings Cal-Pak was steadfast in a single offer of bread, milk, meat and eggs for the free breakfast program. They said they would not contribute on a continuing basis. They wanted to make a pay-off, which we rejected. We are not extortionists.

We explained that a continuing trickle of support is more important to the community than a large, once-only hush-mouth gift. We will not be paid off; we will not be quiet; we will not go away as long as there is one hungry child, one barefoot person, one medically neglected individual, or one brother or sister without a winter coat.

Mr. Bill Boyette is the President of California-State Package Store and Tavern Owners Association. He has two liquor stores, one at 25th and Grove Street, the other at 54th and Grove Street. We ask you not to shop at these stores. Mr. Boyette has given no positive leadership to Cal-Pak; he has been negativistic and has suppressed those members of Cal-Pak who are now and have been supporting survival programs as individual businessmen. They have not been able to contribute through Cal-Pak because Mr. Boyette and other parasites in Cal-Pak have refused to allow participation through a united front.

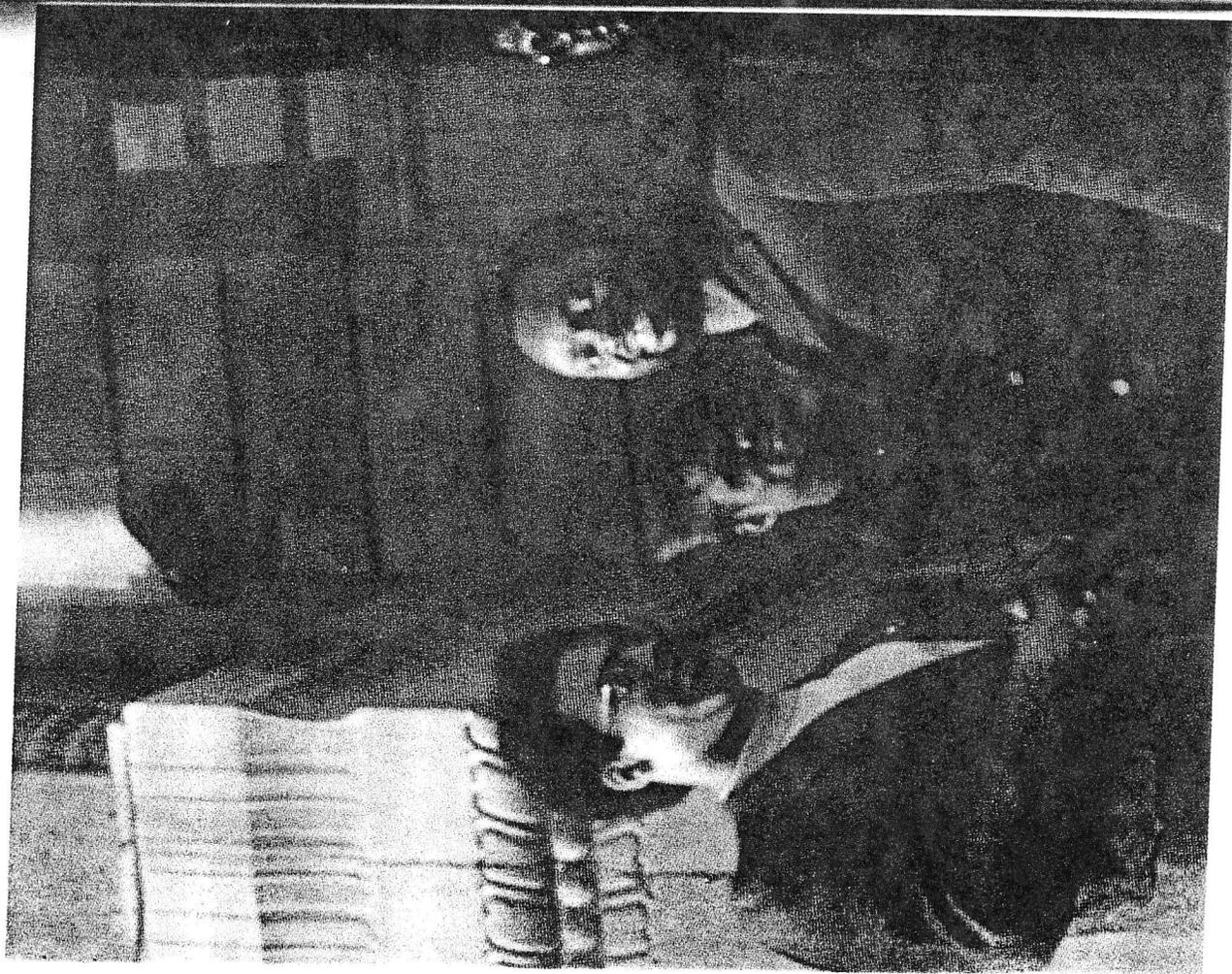
Please do not shop at Bill's Liquor Stores on Grove at 25th Street, and Grove at 54th Street! We invite all community people to come out and join the picket line at 54th and Grove Street between 6 A.M. and 2 A.M. daily. Come and stay a few minutes or as long as you wish. It is our united duty to build a strong community. We will continue the boycott until Mr. Boyette changes his mind.

Our re-analysis of Black capitalism and its relationship to the community from the perspective of dialectical materialism, and our practical understanding of the needs of the community and the attitudes of the people toward Black capitalism, leads us to a new position. Black businesses which have the interests of the community at heart will be able to contribute to the people through the community programs of the Black Panther Party. These free programs will help the community to survive and thus deter the genocide which is always a threat to our existence here.

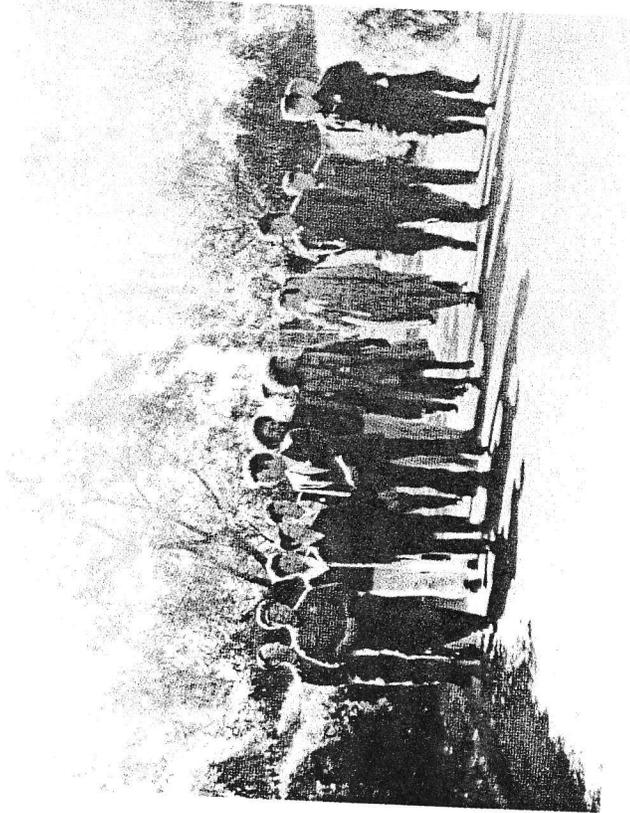
In return for these contributions the Black Panther Party will carry advertisements of these businesses in our paper and urge the community to support them. We will never sell advertising space in the paper, but we will give space in return for contributions to the survival programs which are given free to the community. In this way we will achieve a greater unity of the community of victims—the people who are victimized by the society in general, and the Black capitalists who are victimized by the corporate capitalist monopolies. In this way we will increase the positive qualities of Black capitalism until they dominate the negative qualities, and exploitation will no longer be the reality which the community reluctantly accepts.

The community will see those who support their survival and patronize their places of business. At the same time the community will also criticize those who refuse to participate in their survival programs, and turn their backs on them. If the establishment tries to come down hard on those businessmen who support the survival programs, then the community will recognize this as another form of oppression and will move to strongly defend their supporters. In that way the consciousness of the people and the level of the struggle will be advanced.

There is no salvation in capitalism, but through this new approach the Black capitalist will contribute to his own negation by helping to build a strong political vehicle which is guided by revolutionary concepts and serves as a van-



Huey P. Newton and President of FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) Samora Moises Machel



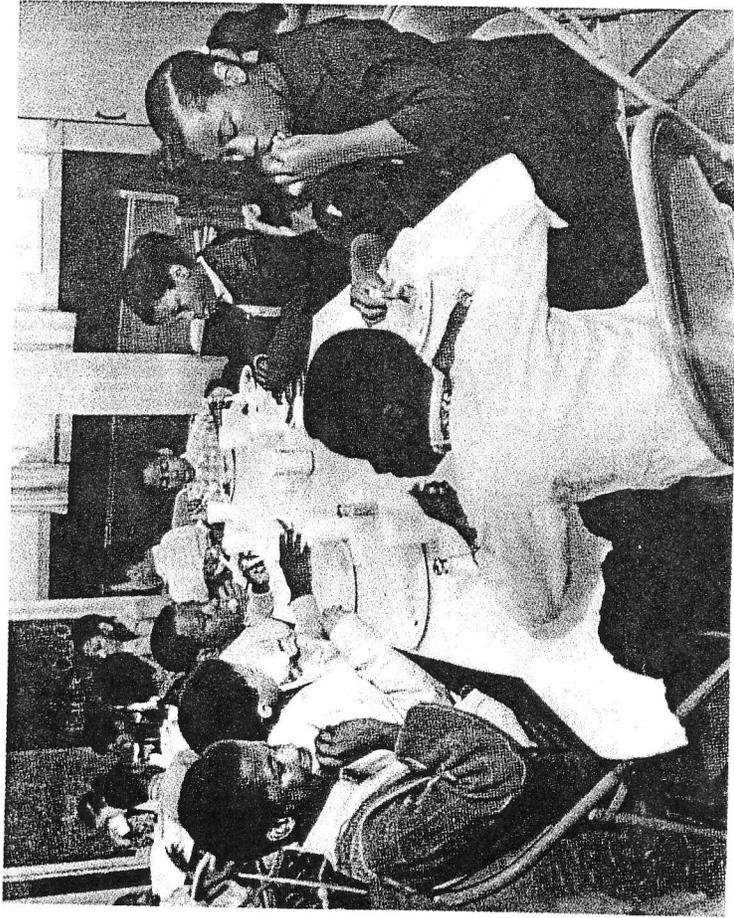
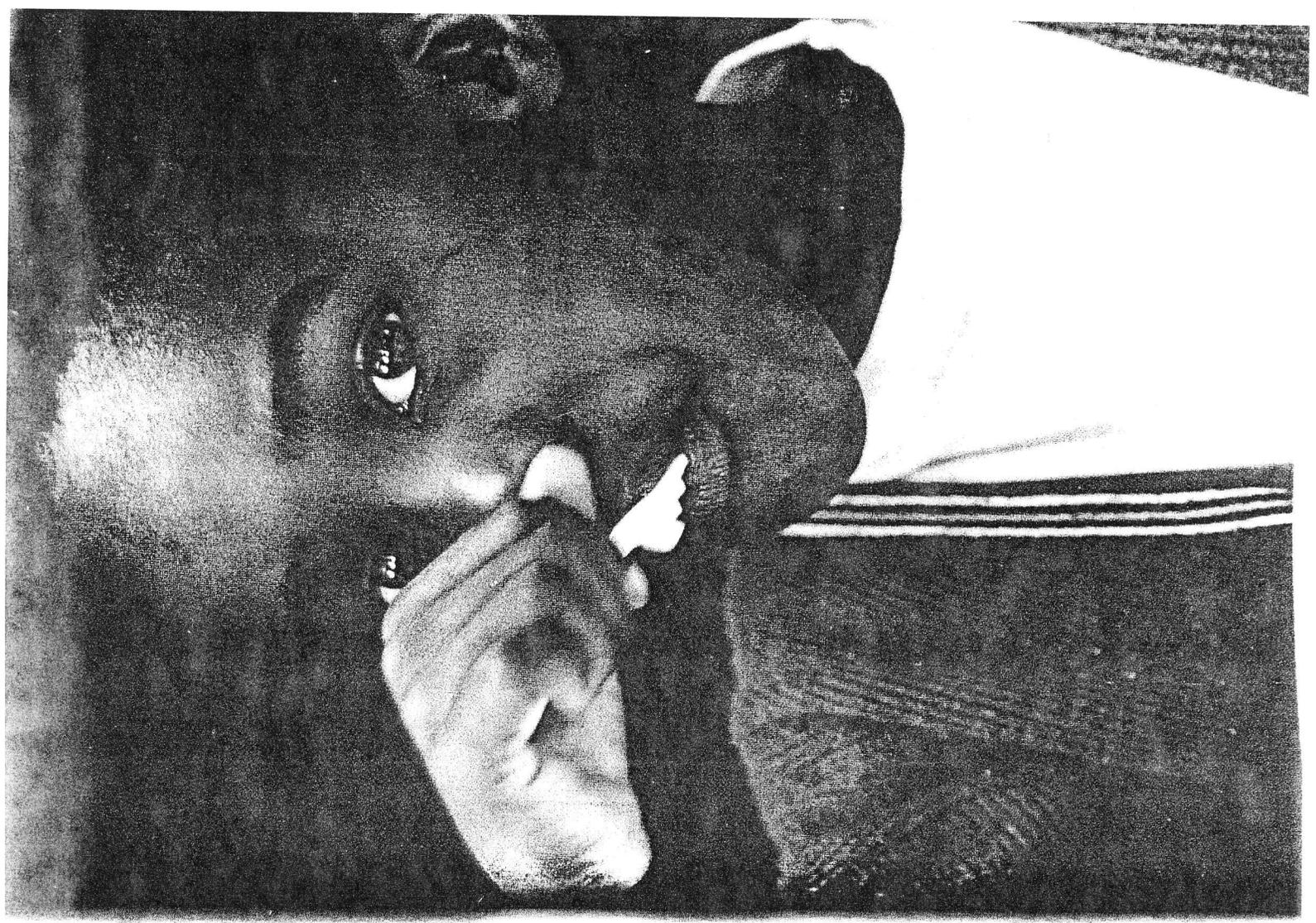
On grounds of National Minorities Institute, Peking

At nursery of locomotive parts factory near Peking

Huey P. Newton and Premier Chou En-lai



Press conference held at end of Cal-Pak Boycott. From left to right, Bill Boyette, Huey P. Newton, Congressman Ron Dellums. (Photo by Tim Sowell, Jr.)



Free Breakfast Program,
West Oakland, California

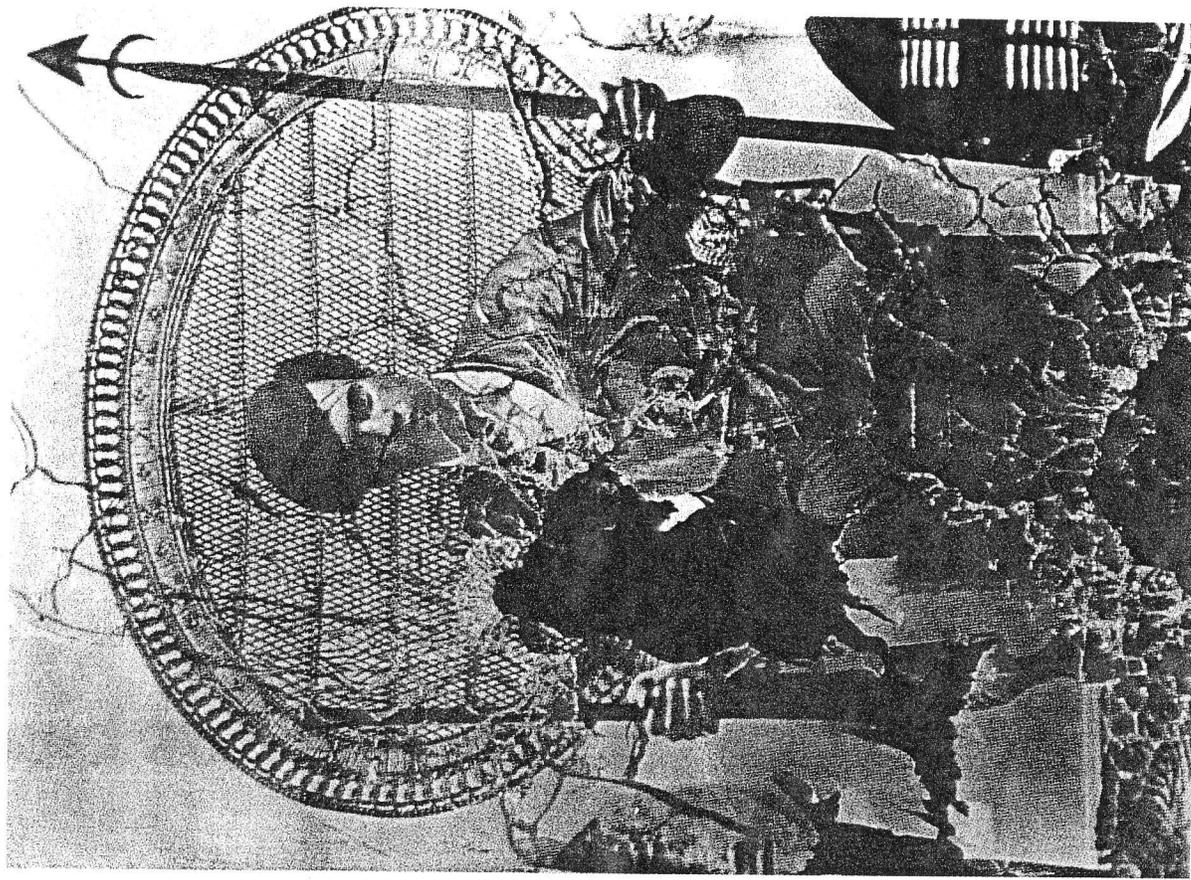
Free Breakfast Program,
Berkeley, California

decolonization. In wars of decolonization the national bourgeoisie supports the freedom struggle of the people because they recognize that it is in their own selfish interest. Then when the foreign exploiter has been kicked out, the national bourgeoisie takes his place and continues the exploitation. However, the national bourgeoisie is a weaker group even though they are exploiters.*

Since the people see Black capitalism in the community as Black control of local institutions, this is a positive characteristic because the people can bring more direction and focus to the activities of the capitalist. At the same time the Black capitalist who has the interest of the community at heart will respond to the needs of the people because this is where his true strength lies. So far as capitalism in general is concerned, the Black capitalist merely has the status of a victim because the big White capitalists have the skills, make the loans, and in fact control the Black capitalist. If he wants to succeed in his enterprise the Black capitalist must turn to the community because he depends on them to make his profits. He needs this strong community support because he cannot become independent of the control of the corporate capitalists who control the large monopolies.

The Black capitalist will be able to support the people by contributing to the survival programs of the Black Panther Party. In contributing to such programs he will be able to help build the vehicle which will eventually liberate the Black community. He will not be able to deliver the people from their problems, but he will be able to help build the strong political machine which will serve as a revolutionary vanguard and guide the people in their move toward freedom.

* Presently the bourgeoisie is in a weaker position now than it was when it was freed from colonialism. Under Reactionary Intercommunalism (such as in Europe) the bourgeoisie is in control of a smaller unit (community) than it was before. Not only does this make it weaker, it also makes a non-antagonistic transformation of their contradiction more likely since the objective interests of the bourgeoisie are in many ways similar to the interests of poor people. (H. P. N.)



Poster of Huey P. Newton in window of former Black Panther Headquarters in Oakland, after being shot up by police

Panther Party has always merged theory and practice in such a way as to serve the true interests of the community.

In merging theory with practice we recognized that it was necessary to develop a theory which was valid for more than *one* time and place. We wanted to develop a system of thinking which was good anywhere, thus it had to be rather abstract. Yet our theory would relate to a concrete analysis of concrete conditions so that our actions would always be relevant and profitable to the people. Yet, at the same time, it had to advance their thinking so that they would move toward a transformation of their situation of exploitation and oppression. We have always insisted on good theory and good practice, but we have not always been successful in carrying this through.

When the Black Panther Party defected from the Black community, we became, for a while, revolutionary cultists. One of the primary characteristics of a revolutionary cultist is that he despises everyone who has not reached his level of consciousness, or the level of consciousness that he thinks he has reached, instead of acting to bring the people to that level. In that way the revolutionary cultist becomes divided from the people; he defects from the community. Instead of serving the people as a vanguard, he becomes a hero. Heroes engage in very courageous actions sometimes and they often make great sacrifices, including the supreme sacrifice, but they are still isolated from the people. Their courageous actions and sacrifices do not lead the people to a higher level of consciousness, nor do they produce fundamental changes in the exploitation and oppression of the people. A vanguard, however, will guide the people onto higher levels of consciousness and in that way bring them to the point where they will take sterner actions in their own interests and against those who continue to oppress them. As I've said previously, revolution is a process, not a conclusion. A true revolutionist will not only take courageous actions, he will also try to advance the people in such

a manner that they will transform their situation. That is, by delivering power to the people the true revolutionist will help them define the social phenomena in their community and lead them to the point where they will seize the time and make these phenomena act in a desired manner.

Therefore, as revolutionaries we must recognize the difference between what the people can do and what they will do. They can do anything they desire to do, but they will only take those actions which are consistent with their level of consciousness and their understanding of the situation. When we raise their consciousness, they will understand even more fully what they in fact can do, and they will move on the situation in a courageous manner. This is merging your theory with your practices.

Point 3 of the original Ten-Point Program of the Black Panther Party is "We want an end to the robbery by the CAPITALISTS of our Black Community." *That was our position in October 1966 and it is still our position.* We recognize that capitalism is no solution to the problems we face in our communities. Capitalist exploitation is one of the basic causes of our problem. It is the goal of the Black Panther Party to negate capitalism in our communities and in the oppressed communities throughout the world.

However, many people have offered the community Black capitalism as a solution to our problems. We recognize that people in the Black community have no general dislike for the concept of Black capitalism, but this is not because they are in love with capitalism. Not at all. The idea of Black capitalism has come to mean to many people Black control of another one of the institutions in the community. We see within this characteristic the seeds of the negation of Black capitalism and all capitalism in general. What we must do then is increase the positive qualities until they dominate the negative and therefore transform the situation.

In the past the Black Panther Party took a counterrevo-

imperialism, because of Western domination. And there is no indication that it would be any different if we were to have a separate country here in North America. As a matter of fact, by all logics, we would suffer imperialism and colonialism even more so than the Third World is suffering it now. They are geographically better located, thousands of miles away, but yet they are not able to be free simply because of high technological development of the West that makes the world so much smaller, in fact, one small neighborhood.

So taking all these things into consideration, we conclude that the only way that we are going to be free is to wipe out once and for all the oppressive structure of America. We realize we cannot do this without a popular struggle, without many alliances and coalitions, and this is the reason that we are moving in the direction that we are, to get as many alliances as possible of people that are equally dissatisfied with the system. Also we are carrying on, or attempting to carry on, a political education campaign so that the people will be aware of the conditions and learn ways to control these conditions. We think that the most important thing at this time is to be able to organize in some fashion so that we will have a formidable force to challenge the structure of the American empire. So we invite the Republic of New Africa to struggle with us, because we know from people with whom I have talked (May Mallory, and other people who are familiar with the philosophy of the Republic of New Africa) that they seem to be very aware that the whole structure of America will have to be changed in order for the people of America to be free. (And this again is with the full knowledge and the full view of the end goal of the Republic of New Africa to secede.) In other words, we are not really handling the question at this time because we feel that it is somewhat premature, though I realize the psychological value of fighting for a territory. But at this time the Black Panther Party feels that

we do not want to be in an enclave-type situation where we would be more isolated than we already are now. We are isolated in the ghetto area, concentrated in the North, in the metropolitan areas, in the industrial areas, and we think this is a very good location as far as strategy is concerned in waging a strong battle against the established order. And again I think that it would be perfectly justified if Blacks decided that they wanted to secede from the union, but I think the question should be left up to the popular masses, the popular majority. So this is it in a nutshell.

As I said before, I don't have the facilities here to carry on long discussions. I look forward to talking with Milton Henry in the near future if it is possible (I know that he has his hands full now) or representatives of the Republic of New Africa. There are many things I heard, things I read, that I'm in total agreement with. I would like for the Republic of New Africa to know that we support Robert Williams and his plight at this time; that we support him one hundred percent, and we're willing to give all services asked of us. Also we would like to find out exactly what we can do to be most helpful in the court proceedings coming up, what moral support we could give. Perhaps we could send some representatives; and we will publish in our paper, *The Black Panther*, the criminal activities that he has been victim of for some eight or nine years. I would also like to request of the Republic of New Africa to give us some support for Bobby Seale, our Chairman of the Black Panther Party. Bobby Seale is now in prison, as you know, in San Francisco. He has a case coming up in Chicago, and one in Connecticut, and we invite the Republic of New Africa to come in support. We would like this very much, and whatever moral support they could possibly give, we would welcome.

We should be working closer together than we are and perhaps this would be an issue that we could work together on. This issue is the political prisoners of America. And

the house nigger. The house nigger had a few more privileges. He got the worn-out clothes of the master and he didn't have to work as hard as the field Black. He came to respect the master to the extent of identifying with him because he got a few of the leftovers that the field Blacks did not get. And through this identity with him he saw the slavemaster's interest as being his interest. Sometimes he would even protect the slavemaster more than the slavemaster would protect himself. Malcolm made the point that if the master's house happened to catch on fire the house Negro would work harder than the master to put the fire out and save the house. While the field Negro, the field Blacks, were praying that the house burned down. The house Black identified with the master so much that when the master would get sick the house Negro would say, "Master we's sick!"

The Black Panther Party are the field Blacks. We're hoping the master dies if he gets sick. The Black bourgeoisie seem to be acting out the role of the house Negro. They are pro-administration. They would like a few concessions made, but as far as the overall setup they have a little more material goods, a little more advantage, a few more privileges than the Black have-nots or the lower class. And so they identify with the power structure and they see their interests as the power structure's interest.

The Black Panther Party was forced to draw a line of demarcation. We are for all those who are for the promotion of the interests of the Black have-nots, who represent about 98 percent of Blacks here in America. We're not controlled by the White mother-country radical, nor are we controlled by the Black bourgeoisie. We have a mind of our own and if the Black bourgeoisie cannot align itself with our complete program, then the Black bourgeoisie sets itself up as our enemy. And they will be attacked and treated as such.

QUESTION: The Black Panther Party has had considerable

contact with White radicals since its earliest days. What do you see as the role of these White radicals?

NEWTON: The White mother-country radical is the offspring of the children of the beast that has plundered the world and exploited all people of color. These are children of the beast that seek now to be redeemed because they realize that their former heroes, who were slavemasters and murderers, put forth ideas that were only façades to hide the treachery they inflicted upon the world. They are turning their backs on their fathers.

The White mother-country radical, in resisting the system, becomes somewhat of an abstract thing because he is not oppressed as much as Black people are. As a matter of fact, his oppression is somewhat abstract simply because he doesn't have to live in a reality of oppression.

Black people in America and colored people throughout the world suffer not only from exploitation, but they suffer from racism. Black people here in America, in the Black colony, are oppressed because we're Black and we're exploited. The Whites are rebels, many of them are from the middle class and as far as any overt oppression, they have not experienced it. So therefore I call their rejection of the system somewhat of an abstract thing. They're looking for new heroes. They're looking to wash away the hypocrisy that their fathers have presented to the world. In doing this they see the people who are really fighting for freedom. They see the people who are really standing for justice and equality and peace throughout the world. These are the people of Vietnam, the people of Latin America, the people of Asia, the people of Africa, and the Black people in the Black colony here in America.

near White people in a restaurant (while in fact the Black masses have not been able to pay the rent of a \$40.00 rat-infested hovel).

The Black leaders have led the community to believe that brutality and force could be ended by subjecting the people to this very force of self-sacrificing demonstrations. The Black people realize brutality and force can only be inflicted if there is submission. The community has not responded in the past or in the present to the absurd, erroneous and deceitful tactics of so-called legitimate Black leaders. The community realizes that force and brutality can only be eliminated by counterforce through self-defense. Leaders who have recommended these tactics have never had the support and following of the downtrodden Black masses who comprise the bulk of the community. The grass roots, the downtrodden of the Black community, though rejecting the hand-picked "handkerchief heads" endorsed by the power structure, have not had the academic or administrative knowledge to form a long resistance to the brutality.

Marcus Garvey and Malcolm X were the two Black men of the twentieth century who posed an implacable challenge to both the oppressor and the endorsed spokesmen.

In our time, Malcolm stood on the threshold with the oppressor and the endorsed spokesmen in a bag that they could not get out of. Malcolm, implacable to the ultimate degree, held out to the Black masses the historical, stupendous victory of Black collective salvation and liberation from the chains of the oppressor and the treacherous embrace of the endorsed spokesmen. Only with the gun were the Black masses denied this victory. But they learned from Malcolm that with the gun they can recapture their dreams and make them a reality.

The heirs of Malcolm now stand millions strong on their corner of the triangle, facing the racist dog oppressor and the soulless endorsed spokesmen. The heirs of Malcolm

have picked up the gun and taking first things first are moving to expose the endorsed spokesmen so the Black masses can see them for what they are and have always been. The choice offered by the heirs of Malcolm to the endorsed spokesmen is to repudiate the oppressor and to crawl back to their own people and earn a speedy reprieve or face a merciless, speedy and most timely execution for treason and being "too wrong for too long."

the Black masses halt the terror and brutality directed against them by the armed racist power structure; and in one sense only by the power of the gun can the whole world be transformed into the earthly paradise dreamed of by the people from time immemorial. One successful practitioner of the art and science of national liberation and self-defense, Brother Mao Tse-tung, put it this way: "We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war; but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun."

The blood, sweat, tears and suffering of Black people are the foundations of the wealth and power of the United States of America. We were forced to build America, and if forced to, we will tear it down. The immediate result of this destruction will be suffering and bloodshed. But the end result will be the perpetual peace for all mankind.

*From "In Defense of Self-Defense" II:
July 3, 1967*

Historically the power structure has demanded that Black leaders cater to their desires and to the ends of the imperialistic racism of the oppressor. The power structure has endorsed those Black leaders who have reduced themselves to nothing more than apologizing parrots. They have divided the so-called Black leaders within the political arena. The oppressors sponsor radio programs, give space in their racist newspapers, and show them the luxury enjoyed only by the oppressor. The Black leaders serve the oppressor by purposely keeping the people submissive, passive and non-violent, turning a deaf ear to the cries of the suffering and downtrodden, the unemployed and welfare recipients who hunger for liberation by any means necessary.

Historically there have been a few Black men who have rejected the handouts of the oppressor and who have refused to spread the oppressor's treacherous principles of deceit, gradual indoctrination and brainwashing, and who have refused to indulge in the criminal activity of teaching submission, fear, and love for an enemy who hates the very color Black and is determined to commit genocide on an international scale.

There has always existed in the Black colony of Africa a fundamental difference over which tactics, from the broad spectrum of alternatives, Black people should employ in their struggle for national liberation.

One side contends that Black people are in the peculiar position where, in order to gain acceptance into the "main-

*From "In Defense of Self-Defense" I:
June 20, 1967*

Men were not created in order to obey laws. Laws are created to obey men. They are established by men and should serve men. The laws and rules which officials inflict upon poor people prevent them from functioning harmoniously in society. There is no disagreement about this function of law in any circle—the disagreement arises from the question of which men laws are to serve. Such lawmakers ignore the fact that it is the duty of the poor and unrepresented to construct rules and laws that serve their interests better. Rewriting unjust laws is a basic human right and fundamental obligation.

Before 1776 America was a British colony. The British Government had certain laws and rules that the colonized Americans rejected as not being in their best interests. In spite of the British conviction that Americans had no right to establish their own laws to promote the general welfare of the people living here in America, the colonized immigrant felt he had no choice but to raise the gun to defend his welfare. Simultaneously he made certain laws to ensure his protection from external and internal aggressions, from other governments, and his own agencies. One such form of protection was the Declaration of Independence, which states: ". . . whenever any government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such forms as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Now these same colonized White people, these bondsmen, paupers, and thieves deny the colonized Black man not only the right to abolish this oppressive system, but to even *seek* of abolishing it. Having carried this madness and cruelty to the four corners of the earth, there is now universal rebellion against their continued rule and power. But as long as the wheels of the imperialistic war machine are turning, there is no country that can defeat this monster of the West. It is our belief that the Black people in America are the only people who can free the world, loosen the yoke of colonialism, and destroy the war machine. Black people who are within the machine can cause it to malfunction. They can, because of their intimacy with the mechanism, destroy the engine that is enslaving the world. America will not be able to fight every Black country in the world and fight a civil war at the same time. It is militarily impossible to do both of these things at once.

The slavery of Blacks in this country provides the oil for the machinery of war that America uses to enslave the peoples of the world. Without this oil the machinery cannot function. We are the driving shaft; we are in such a strategic position in this machinery that, once we become dislocated, the functioning of the remainder of the machinery breaks down.

Penned up in the ghettos of America, surrounded by his factories and all the physical components of his economic system, we have been made into "the wretched of the earth," relegated to the position of spectators while the White racists run their international con game on the suffering peoples. We have been brainwashed to believe that we are powerless and that there is nothing we can do for ourselves to bring about a speedy liberation for our people. We have been taught that we must please our oppressors, that we are only ten percent of the population, and therefore must confine our tactics to categories calculated not to disturb the sleep of our tormentors.

The power structure inflicts pain and brutality upon the

Fear and Doubt:
May 15, 1967

The lower socio-economic Black male is a man of confusion. He faces a hostile environment and is not sure that it is not his own sins that have attracted the hostilities of society. All his life he has been taught (explicitly and implicitly) that he is an inferior approximation of humanity. As a man, he finds himself void of those things that bring respect and a feeling of worthiness. He looks around for something to blame for his situation, but because he is not sophisticated regarding the socio-economic milieu and because of negativistic parental and institutional teachings, he ultimately blames himself.

When he was a child his parents told him that they were not affluent because "we didn't have the opportunity to become educated," or "we did not take advantage of the educational opportunities that were offered to us." They tell their children that things will be different for them if they are educated and skilled but there is absolutely nothing other than this occasional warning (and often not even this) to stimulate education. Black people are great worshippers of education, even the lower socio-economic Black

Committee of Black Churchmen that met in Berkeley, he called the preachers who were gathered there a bunch of bootlicking pimps and motherfuckers, a comment that never should have been made public anyway. And he threatened that if the preachers did not come around that the Panthers would "off" some of the preachers. If you're not able to influence the Black church as much as you think, will the Panther Party return to this particular stance?

NEWTON: The Black Panther Party will not take the separate individual stand. We'll only take the stand of the community because we're interested in what the community will do to liberate themselves. We will not be arrogant and we would not have the most rudimentary knowledge if we did not know that we alone cannot bring about change. It was very wrong and almost criminal for some people in the Party to make the mistake to think that the Black Panther Party could overthrow even the police force. It ended up with the war between the police and the Panthers, and if there is a war it needs to be between the community and the reactionary establishment, or else we are isolating ourselves.

As for what David Hilliard said, what he did was alienate you. That kind of alienation put us in a void where blood was spilled from one end of this country to the other, our blood, while the community watched. Our help watched on, you see? But it was more our fault than theirs because we were out there saying that we were going to lead them into a change. But we cannot lead them into a change if they will not go. As a matter of fact, we cannot exist individually if we don't band together to resist the genocide against all of us. So just as I criticize David Hilliard, I criticize myself, because I knew that stuff was going on and I argued against it, but I didn't leave the Party. Finally the change came about.

And so what I am saying is that I understand, and the

reason that I didn't leave was that it wasn't an outrage to my humanity even though I cringed every time. Because I understood that he did it not out of hatred, but love. He did it because he was outraged by the church's inactivity, as you are outraged (not you personally, but you in the plural) at this situation, and he was outraged, of course, because of your isolation. So we are all in the same boat; and when we end up in the same boat that means we are unified.

that we can plan for the new reality. In order to do this we have to take some control over the present. So the people who withdraw, like the religious cultist group, do the same thing as the cultural cultist group.

These are words that we have coined. The Panthers are always coining words because we have to keep defining the new reality, the new phenomena. The old words confuse us sometimes because things have changed so much. So we try to stay abreast by developing or stipulating definitions. The old lexical definitions become so outdated after the qualitative leap (the transformation) that it does not match at all what we are talking about now.

One new word related to what we have been talking about describes something I was guilty of. I was guilty of this when I offered the Black troops to Vietnam. I won't talk about whether it was morally right or wrong, but I will say that anything said or done by a revolutionist that does not spur or give the forward thrust to the process (of revolution) is wrong. Remember that the people are the makers of history, the people make everything in their society. They are the architects of the society and if you don't spur them on, then I don't care what phrases you use or whether they are political or religious, you cannot be classified as being relevant to that process. If you know you're wrong and do certain things anyway, then you're reactionary because you are very very guilty. You deserve many stripes. Some of us didn't know. I keep searching myself to see whether I knew we were going wrong. I couldn't influence the Central Committee and maybe I should have risked being charged with an individual violation and said that they didn't know. I think most of them didn't know, so they're not as guilty as I am. I'm probably more guilty than anyone. But anyway, the new word that describes what we went into for a short length of time—a couple of years—is revolutionary cultism.

The revolutionary cultist uses the words of social change;

he uses words about being interested in the development of society. He uses that terminology, you see; but his actions are so far divorced from the process of revolution and organizing the community that he is living in a fantasy world. So we talk to each other on the campuses, or we talk to each other in the secrecy of the night, concentrating upon weapons, thinking these things will produce change without the people themselves. Of course people do courageous things and call themselves the vanguard, but the people who do things like that are either heroes or criminals. They are not the vanguard because the vanguard means spearhead, and the spearhead has to spearhead something. If nothing is behind it, then it is divorced from the masses and is not the vanguard.

I am going to be heavily criticized now by the revolutionary cultists and probably criticized even more in the future because I view the process as going in stages. I feel that we can't jump from A to Z, we have to go through all of the development. So even though I see a thing is not the answer, I don't think it's dishonest to involve myself in it for the simple reason that the people tend to take not one step higher; they take a half step higher. Then they hang on to what they view as the reality because they can't see that reality is constantly changing. When they finally see the changes (qualitatively) they don't know why or how it happened. Part of the reason reality changes around them is because they are there; they participate whether they like it or not.

What we will do now is involve ourselves in any thing or any stage of development in the community, support that development, and try to introduce some insight into it. Then we will work very hard with the people in the community and with this institution so that it can negate itself. We will be honest about this and we hope they are honest too and realize that everything is negated eventually; this is how we go on to higher levels.

an institution, but it is not a community. The sociological definition of a community is a comprehensive *collection* of institutions that delivers our whole life, and within which we can reach most of our goals. We create it in order to carry out our desires and it serves us. In the Black community the church is an institution that we created (that we were allowed to create). The White church warred against us, but finally we won the compromise to worship as a unit, as a people, concerned with satisfying our own needs. The White church was not satisfying our needs in human terms because it felt that we were not human beings. So we formed our own. Through that negative thing a positive thing evolved. We started to organize fraternities, anti-lynching groups and so forth, but they still would not let our community exist. We came here in chains and I guess they thought we were meant to stay in chains. But we have begun to organize a political machine, to develop a community so that we can have an apparatus to fight back. You cannot fight back individually against an organized machine. We will work with the church to establish a community which will satisfy most of our needs so that we can live and operate as a group.

The Black Panther Party, with its survival programs, plans to develop the institutions in the community. We have a clothing factory we are just erecting on Third Street, where we will soon give away about three hundred to four hundred new articles of clothing each month. And we can do this by robbing Peter to pay Paul. What we will do is start to make golfing bags under contract to a company, and with the surplus we will buy material to make free clothes. Our members will do this. We will have no overhead because of our collective (we'll "exploit" our collective by making them work free). We will do this not just to satisfy ourselves, like the philanthropist, or to serve, or to save someone from going without shoes, even though this is a part of the cause of our problem, but to help the people

make the revolution. We will give the process a forward thrust. If we suffer genocide we won't be around to change things. So in this way our survival program is very practical.

What we are concerned with is the larger problem. Therefore we will be honest and say that we will do like the churches—we will negate our necessity for existing. After we accomplish our goals the Black Panther Party will not need to exist because we will have already created our heaven right here on earth. What we are going to do is administer to the community the things they need in order to get their attention, in order to organize them into a political machine. The community will then look to the Party and look to those people who are serving their needs in order to give them guidance and direction, whether it is political, whether it is judicial, or whether it is economic.

Our real thing is to organize across the country. We have thirty-eight chapters and branches and I would like to inform you that the so-called split is only a myth, that it does not exist. We lost two chapters in that so-called split and I will tell you that the burden is off my shoulders. I was glad to lose them because it was a yoke for me; I was frozen. Even though I couldn't make a move I wouldn't get out of the whole thing then because certain people had such an influence over the Party. For me to have taken that stand would have been individualism. Now we're about three years behind in our five-year plan, but we will *now* move to organize the community around the *survival* programs.

We have a shoe factory that we're opening up on 14th and Jefferson. The machines and everything else were donated. We'll use it to get inmates out of prison because most of us learned how to make shoes in prison. So it will serve two purposes: we can make positions in the shoe factory available and thereby get somebody out on parole; and since the parolees must agree to give a certain amount of shoes away each week, we will have a "right to wear

the Party should still be held together. I knew if I left we would have to form a new Party, a new institution in order to be that spur or that guiding light in the community. Also I would have to contend with new contradictions.

We always say that contradictions are the ruling principle of the universe. I use that word time and time again because I think that it is responsible for much suffering. When things collide they hurt, but collision is also responsible for development. Without contradictions everything would be stagnant. Everything has an internal contradiction including the church.

Contradiction, or the strain of the lesser to subdue that which controls it, gives motion to matter. We see this throughout the universe in the physical as well as the biological world. We also see this in cultures. Development comes with the phenomenon we call acculturation. That is, two societies meet and when their cultures collide because they have a contradiction, both are modified. The stronger shows less change and the weaker more change. All the time the weaker is attempting to gain dominance over the stronger. But something happens, they both will never be the same again because they have reached a degree of synthesis. In other words, it is all working toward the truth of the trinity: thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis. This principle of contradiction, this striving for harmony, operates in all of our disciplines.

The Black Panther Party was formed because we wanted to oppose the evils in our community. Some of the members in the Party were not refined—we were grasping for organization. It wasn't a college campus organization; it was basically an organization of the grass roots, and any time we organize the most victimized of the victims we run into a problem. To have a Party or a church or any kind of institution, whether we like it or not, we have to have administrators. How an institution, organization, or the Party in this case, functions, as well as how effective it is depends

upon how knowledgeable and advanced in thinking the administrators are. We attempt to apply the administrative skills of our grass-roots organization to the problems that are most frequently heard in the community.

History shows that most of the parties that have led people out of their difficulties have had administrators with what we sometimes call the traits of the bourgeoisie or de-classed intellectuals. They are the people who have gone through the established institutions, rejected them, and then applied their skills to the community. In applying them to the community, their skills are no longer bourgeois skills but people's skills, which are transformed through the contradiction of applying what is usually bourgeoisie to the oppressed. That itself is a kind of transformation.

In our Party we are not so blessed. History does not repeat itself; it goes on also transforming itself through its dialectical process. We see that the administrators of our Party are victims who have not received that bourgeois training. So I will not apologize for our mistakes, our lack of a scientific approach to use and put into practice. It was a matter of not knowing, of learning, but also of starting out with a loss—a disadvantage that history has seldom seen. That is, a group attempting to influence and change the society so much while its own administrators were as much in the dark much of the time as the people that they were trying to change. In our Party we have now what we call the Ideological Institute, where we are teaching these skills, and we also invite those people who have received a bourgeois education to come and help us. However we let them know that they will, by their contribution, make their need to exist, as they exist now, null and void. In other words, after we learn the skills their bourgeois status will evaporate once the skills have been applied.

As far as the church was concerned, the Black Panther Party and other community groups emphasized the political and criticized the spiritual. We said the church is only a

politicians and educators try to deceive the community with statements such as "It's rule by the majority, but the rights of the minority are protected." If, in fact, participating in the democratic process in America were in the interest of the Black community there would be no need for a Free Breakfast Program, there would be no need for Free Health Clinics or any of the other programs we have developed to meet the people's needs. The rights of the minority are "protected" by the standards of a bourgeois government, and anything which is not in their interest is not permitted. This may be democratic for the majority, but for the minority it has the same effect as fascism. When the majority decreed that we should be slaves, we were slaves—where was the democracy in slavery for us? When the majority decreed that we should pay taxes, fight and die in wars, and be given inferior and racist education against our interests, we got all of these things. Where is democracy for us in any of that? Our children still die, our youth still suffer from malnutrition, our middle-aged people still suffer from sickle-cell anemia, and our elderly still face unbearable poverty and hardship because they reach the twilight period of their lives with nothing to sustain them through these difficult times. Where is the democracy in any of this for Black people? Democracy means only that the majority will use us when they need us and cast us aside when they do not need us. A true understanding of the working and effect of American democracy for Black people will reveal most clearly that it is just the same as fascism for us. Our true interests and needs are not being served.

The political vehicle of the people must be guided by a consistent ideology which represents nothing more than a systematic and organized set of principles for analyzing and interpreting objective phenomena. An ideology can only be accepted as valid if it delivers a true understanding of the phenomena which affect the lives of the people. The development of a wide variety of truths about the community, its

internal development and the external forces surrounding it will lead then to a philosophy which will help orient us toward goals which are in the true interests of the people.

The Black Panther Party was born in a period of stress when Black people were moving away from the philosophy and strategy of non-violent action toward sterner actions. We dared to believe that we could offer the community a permanent political vehicle which would serve their needs and advocate their interests. We have met many foes; we have seen many enemies. We have been slandered, kidnapped, gagged, jailed and murdered. We know now, more than ever before, that the will of the people is greater than the technology and repression of those who are against the interests of the people. Therefore we know that we can and will continue to serve and educate the people.

Statement:

May 1, 1971

pressors' media use to interpret them. Above all, we knew that through it all the Party would survive.

The Party would survive because it had the love and support of the people who saw their true interests expressed in the actions of the Party. The Party would also survive because it would be a political vehicle which continued to voice the interests of the people and serve as their advocates.

The importance of a structured political vehicle has always been apparent to us. When we went to Sacramento, we went for the purpose of educating the people and building of a permanent political vehicle to serve their true interests. In our most recent communication with both the North and South Vietnamese Revolutionary governments, they pointed out that they understood what we were doing and saw it as the correct strategy. They said that a "structured organization is related to politics as a shadow to a man." We recognize that the political machine in America has consistently required Black people to support it through paying taxes and fighting in wars, but that same machine consistently refuses to serve the interests of the Black community. One of the problems is that the community does not have a structured organization or vehicle which serves its needs and represents the people's interest. You can no more have effective politics without a structured organization than you can have a man without his shadow. Oppressed Black people—*the lumpenproletariat*—did not have a structured organization to represent their true interests until the Black Panther Party arose from within the community, motivated by the needs and conditions of the people.

Across the country there have been coalitions of Black people and Black caucuses, but these have not served the people as political vehicles. They have merely served as bourgeois structures to get Black candidates into political office. Once elected, the machinery used to thrust these

The original vision of the Black Panther Party was to serve the needs of the oppressed people in our communities and defend them against their oppressors. When the Party was initiated we knew that these goals would raise the consciousness of the people and motivate them to move more firmly for their total liberation. We also recognized that we live in a country which has become one of the most repressive governments in the world; repressive in communities all over the world. We did not expect such a repressive government to stand idly by while the Black Panther Party went forward to the goal of serving the people. We expected repression.

We knew, as a revolutionary vanguard, repression would be the reaction of our oppressors, but we recognized that the task of the revolutionist is difficult and his life is short. We were prepared then, as we are now, to give our all in the interest of oppressed people. We expected the repression to come from outside forces which have long held our communities in subjection. However, the ideology of dialectical materialism helped us to understand that the contradictions surrounding the Party would create a force that would move us toward our goals. We also expected contradictions within the Party, for the oppressors use infiltrators and provocateurs to help them reach their evil ends. Even when the contradictions come from formerly loyal members of the Party, we see them as part of the process of development rather than in the negative terms the op-

that when he joined the Party; he was doing so only because of that act in front of *Ramparts*. We weren't trying to prove anything to ourselves. All we were trying to do, at that particular point, was to defend Betty Shabazz. But we were praised by the people.

Under the influence of Eldridge Cleaver the Party gave the community no alternative for dealing with us except by picking up the gun. This move was reactionary simply because the community was not prepared to do that at that point. Instead of being a cultural cult group we became, by that act, a revolutionary cult group. But this is a basic contradiction because revolution is a process and if the acts you commit do not fall within the scope of the process then they are non-revolutionary.

What the revolutionary movement and the Black community need is a very strong structure. This structure can only exist with the support of the people and it can only get its support through serving them. This is why we have the service to the people program—the most important thing in the Party. We will serve their needs so that they can survive through this oppression. Then when they are ready to pick up the gun, serious business will happen. Eldridge Cleaver influenced us to isolate ourselves from the Black community so that it was war between the oppressor and the Black Panther Party, not war between the oppressor and the oppressed community.

The Black Panther Party defected from the community long before Eldridge defected from the Party. Our hook-up with White radicals did not give us access to the White community because they do not guide the White community. The Black community does not relate to them so we were left in a twilight zone where we could not enter the Black community with any real political education programs; yet we were not doing anything to mobilize Whites. We had no influence in raising the consciousness of the Black community and that is the point where we defected.

50: a political vehicle which would keep their support and endorsement through its survival programs of service. They would look to it for answers and guidance. It would not be an organization which runs candidates for political office, but it would serve as a watchman over the administrators whom the people have placed in office.

Because the Black Panther Party grows out of the conditions and needs of oppressed people *we are interested in everything the people are interested in*, even though we may not see these particular concerns as the final answers to our problems. We will never run for political office, but we will endorse and support those candidates who are acting in the true interest of the people. We may even provide campaign workers for them and do voter-registration and basic precinct work. This would not be out of a commitment to electoral politics; however, it would be our way of bringing the will of the people to bear on situations in which they are interested. We will also hold such candidates responsible to the community no matter how far removed their offices may be from the community. So we lead the people by following their interests, with a view toward raising their consciousness to see beyond limited goals.

When Eldridge joined the Party it was after the police confrontation, which left him fixated with the "either-or" attitude. This was that either the community picked up the gun with the Party or else they were cowards and there was no place for them. He did not realize that if the people did not relate to the Party then there was no way that the Black Panther Party could make any revolution, for the record shows that the people are the makers of the revolution and of world history.

Sometimes there are those who express personal problems in political terms, and if they are eloquent then these personal problems can sound very political. We charge Eldridge Cleaver with this. Much of it is probably beyond his control because it is so personal. But we did not know

community and oppressed people are found in North America, the Black Panther Party will last. The Party will survive as a structured vehicle because it serves the true interests of oppressed people and administers to their needs. This was the original vision of the Party. The original vision was not structured by rhetoric nor by ideology but by the practical needs of the people. And its dreamers were armed with an ideology which provided a systematic method of analysis of how best to meet those needs.

When Bobby Seale and I came together to launch the Black Panther Party, we had observed many groups. Most of them were so dedicated to rhetoric and artistic rituals that they had withdrawn from living in the twentieth century. Sometimes their analyses were beautiful but they had no practical programs which would translate these understandings to the people. When they did try to develop practical programs, they often failed because they lacked a systematic ideology which would help them make concrete analyses of concrete conditions and gain a full understanding of the community and its needs. When I was in Donald Warden's Afro-American Association, I watched him try to make a reality of community-control through Black capitalism. But Warden did not have a systematic ideology, and his attempts to initiate his program continually frustrated him and the community. They did not know why capitalism would not work for them since it had worked for other ethnic groups.

When we formed the Party, we did so because we wanted to put theory and practice together in a systematic manner. We did this through our basic Ten-Point Program. In actuality it was a Twenty-Point Program, with the practice expressed in "What We Want" and the theory expressed in "What We Believe." This program was designed to serve as a basis for a structured political vehicle.

The actions we engaged in at that time were strictly strategic actions for political purposes. They were designed

to mobilize the community. Any action which does not mobilize the community toward the goal is not a revolutionary action. The action might be a marvelous statement of courage, but if it does not mobilize the people toward the goal of a higher manifestation of freedom it is not making a political statement and could even be counterrevolutionary.

We realized at a very early point in our development that *revolution is a process*. It is not a particular action, nor is it a conclusion. It is a process. This is why when feudalistic slavery wiped out chattel slavery, feudalism was revolutionary. This is why when capitalism wiped out feudalism, capitalism was revolutionary. The concrete analysis of concrete conditions will reveal the true nature of the situation and increase our understanding. This process moves in a dialectical manner and we understand the struggle of the opposites based upon their unity.

Many times people say that our Ten-Point Program is reformist, but they ignore the fact that revolution is a process. We left the program open-ended so that it could develop and people could identify with it. We did not offer it to them as a conclusion, we offered it as a vehicle to move them to a higher level. In their quest for freedom and in their attempts to prevent the oppressor from stripping them of all the things they need to exist, the people see things as moving from A to B to C; they do not see things as moving from A to Z. In other words, they have to see first some basic accomplishments in order to realize that major successes are possible. Much of the time the revolutionary will have to guide them into this understanding, but he can never take them from A to Z in one jump because it is too far ahead. Therefore, when the revolutionary begins to indulge in Z, or final conclusions, the people do not relate to him. Therefore he is no longer a revolutionary if revolution is a process. This makes any action or function which does not promote the process non-revolutionary.

the ruler of the people. Then and only then will unity and harmony truly prevail. So we resolve to liberate our communities in order that we might serve the true interests of the community.

We who are gathered here by our presence do indicate that we believe that every community has the right to define, determine and control institutions so that they reflect the integrity of the community.

Therefore we declare that all communities of the world have the freedom to determine their own destinies. We declare that all communities, by their very existence, have the power to specify what institutions will be set up within them and what cultural values will be propagated through them. We declare that all communities have the right to determine what laws will govern their territories and what officials will be placed in leadership.

We who are gathered here do declare by our presence that the physical and social characteristics of the people of our communities shall never be used as a basis for exclusion from any aspect of life in our communities.

We declare that our goal is to destroy all elements of the oppression. We pledge ourselves to end imperialism and distribute the wealth of the world to all the people of the world. We foresee a system of true communism where all people produce according to their abilities and all receive according to their needs.

Recognizing the possibility of a cultural lag between the destruction of the oppression and the erection of a new world based on that which makes us human, we call for all people in the communities throughout the world to participate and be represented in decision making in direct proportion to their presence in the population under consideration. Whether on an intercommunal level, a regional level, or on a local level, we hold that all people have the right to proportional representation within the framework of revolutionary intercommunalism and communism.

We are here gathered for the solemn purpose of formulating a new *constitution for a new world*. We must become even more conscious of who we are and why we are in these circumstances. Then we must change these circumstances and construct a new world which makes use of all the technology and knowledge we have accumulated. When we have developed a system that functions in the true interests of the people and established it in full, then the word "work" will be re-defined as meaningful play. We will have eliminated the cause of all our problems and can live according to a Constitution of Revolutionary People.

attached to the soil, until such time as that people can gain their sanity and develop a culture that is "essentially human," that will serve the people instead of some god. Because we cannot avoid contact with each other we will have to develop a value system that will help us function together in harmony.

I think I've covered tonight most of what I had to say. I will allow you to talk. We will have a question and answer period. But before I do that I would like to deliver a message to you. Our Minister of Information, Eldridge Cleaver, asked me to petition you, to ask you to prepare a place for him because he would like to return home. And also I would like to thank the peoples of the world for allowing our Minister of Information to reside in their liberated communities, in their liberated territory. So, they've actually set the example for us. We know what we have to do in order to bring Eldridge Cleaver home. We have to liberate our communities.

*Resolutions and Declarations: December 5, 1970**

This Convention of Revolutionary Peoples from oppressed communities throughout the world is convened in recognition of the fact that changing social conditions throughout the world require new analyses and approaches in order that our consciousness might be raised to the point at which we can effectively end the oppression of people by people. We gather here from our communities because we realize that we have a common enemy, a common goal, and that the geographical barriers which separated us from one another in the past are no longer obstacles to our revolutionary unity.

Not only do we recognize our common interests, we further recognize that the concepts and ideas which were previously used to define us as peoples can no longer apply, for they dim our view and impede our progress. The same phenomena which have freed us from the separation of geographical barriers are also the same phenomena which have transformed us into a revolutionary unity.

We once defined ourselves as nations because we had distinct geographical boundaries. We controlled the economy, the political structure and the institutions in our territories. In this sense the United States was also a nation at one time.

We see, however, that the growth of bureaucratic capitalism in the United States transformed the nation. When

* An address to the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention held in Washington, D.C., November 28, 29, 1970.

the help of the power of the people, because without the people nothing can be achieved.

I stated that in the United States socialism would never exist. In order for a revolution to occur in the United States you would have to have a redistribution of wealth not on a national or an international level, but on an intercommunal level. Because how can we say that we have accomplished revolution if we redistribute the wealth just to the people here in North America when the ruling circle itself is guilty of *trespass de bonis asportatis*.* That is, they have taken away the goods of the people of the world, transported them to America and used them as their very own.

In 1917, when the revolution occurred, there could be a redistribution of wealth on a national level because nations existed. Now, if you talk in terms of planning an economy on a *world-wide* level, on an intercommunal level, you are saying something important: that the people have been ripped off very much like one country being ripped off. Simple reparation is not enough because the people have not only been robbed of their raw materials, but of the wealth accrued from the investment of those materials—an investment which has created the technological machine. The people of the world will have to have control—not a limited share of control for “X” amount of time, but total control forever.

In order to plan a real intercommunal economy we will have to acknowledge how the world is hooked up. We will also have to acknowledge that nations have not existed for some time. Some people will argue that nations still exist because of the cultural differences. By way of definition, just for practical argument, culture is a collection of learned patterns of behavior. Here in the United States Black people, Africans, were raped from the mother country, and consequently we have literally lost most of our

* Taking away the property of others and using it as one's own.

African values. Perhaps we still hold on to some surviving Africanisms, but by and large you can see the transformation which was achieved by time and the highly technological society whose tremendous mass media functions as an indoctrination center. The ruling circle has launched satellites in order to project a beam across the earth and indoctrinate the world, and while there might be some cultural differences, these differences are not qualitative but quantitative. In other words, if technology and the ruling circle go on as they are now the people of the world will be conditioned to adapt Western values. (I think Japan is a good example.) The differences between people are getting very small, but again that is in the interest of the ruling circle. I do not believe that history can be backtracked. If the world is really that interconnected then we have to acknowledge that and say that in order for the people to be free, they will have to control the institutions of their community, and have some form of representation in the technological center that they have produced. The United States, in order to correct its robbery of the world, will have to first return much of which it has stolen. I don't see how we can talk about socialism when the problem is world distribution. I think this is what Marx meant when he talked about the non-state.

I was at Alex Haley's house some time ago and he talked to me about his search for his past. He found it in Africa but when he returned there shortly afterward, he was in a state of panic. His village hadn't changed very much, but when he went there he saw an old man walking down the road, holding something that he cherished to his ear. It was a small transistor radio that was zeroed in on the British broadcasting network. What I'm trying to say is that mass media plus the development of transportation make it impossible for us to think of ourselves in terms of separate entities, as nations. Do you realize that it only took me approximately five hours to get from San Francisco to here?

But we must not confine our discussion to theory; we must have practical application of our theory to come up with anything worthwhile. In spite of the criticism that we have received from certain people, the Party has a practical application of its theories. Many of our activities provide the working class and the unemployed with a reason and a means for existing in the future. The people will not disappear—not with our survival programs they will not. They will still be around. The Black Panther Party says it is perfectly correct to organize the proletarians because after they are kicked out of the factory and are called unemployable or lumpen, they still want to live, and in order to live they have to eat. It is in the proletarian's own best interest to seize the machinery that he has made in order to produce in abundance, so he and his brethren can live. We will not wait until the proletarian becomes the lumpenproletarian to educate him. Today we must lift the consciousness of the people. The wind is rising and the rivers flowing, times are getting hard and we can't go home again. We can't go back to our mother's womb, nor can we go back to 1917.

The United States, or what I like to call North America, was transformed at the hands of the ruling circle from a nation to an empire. This caused a total change in the world, because no part of an interrelated thing can change and leave everything else the same. So when the United States, or North America, became an empire it changed the whole composition of the world. There were other nations in the world. But "empire" means that the ruling circle who lives in the empire (the imperialists) control other nations. Now some time ago there existed a phenomenon we called—well, I call—primitive empire. An example of that would be the Roman Empire because the Romans controlled all of what was thought to be the known world. In fact they did not know all of the world therefore some nations still existed independent of it. Now, probably all of the world is known. The United States as an empire necessarily controls the whole world either directly or indirectly.

If we understand dialectics we know that every determination brings about a limitation and every limitation brings about a determination. In other words, while one force may give rise to one thing it might crush other things, including itself. We might call this concept "the negation of the negation." So, while in 1917 the ruling circle created an industrial base and used the system of capitalism they were also creating the necessary conditions for socialism. They were doing this because in a socialist society it is necessary to have some centralization of the wealth, some equal distribution of the wealth, and some harmony among the people.

Now, I will give you roughly some characteristics that any people who call themselves a nation should have. These are economic independence, cultural determination, control of the political institutions, territorial integrity, and safety.

In 1966 we called our Party a Black Nationalist Party. We called ourselves Black Nationalists because we thought that nationhood was the answer. Shortly after that we decided that what was really needed was revolutionary nationalism, that is, nationalism plus socialism. After analyzing conditions a little more, we found that it was impractical and even contradictory. Therefore, we went to a higher level of consciousness. We saw that in order to be free we had to crush the ruling circle and therefore we had to unite with the peoples of the world. So we called ourselves Internationalists. We sought solidarity with the peoples of the world. We sought solidarity with what we thought were the nations of the world. But then what happened? We found that because everything is in a constant state of transformation, because of the development of technology, because of the development of the mass media, because of the fire power of the imperialist, and because of the fact that the United States is no longer a nation but an empire, nations could not exist, for they did not have the criteria for nationhood. Their self-determination, economic determination, and cultural determination has been trans-

reason. For example, in this sentence "If the sky is above my head when I turn my head upwards, I will see the sky" there is nothing wrong with the conclusion. As a matter of fact, it is accurate. But I haven't said anything about the existence of the sky. I said "if." With rationale we are not dependent upon the external world. With empiricism we can tell very little about the future. So what will we do? What Marx did. In order to understand what was happening in the world Marx found it necessary to integrate rationale with empiricism. He called his concept dialectical materialism. If, like Marx, we integrate these two concepts or these two ways of thinking, not only are we in touch with the world outside us but we can also explain the constant state of transformation. Therefore, we can also make some predictions about the outcome of certain social phenomena that is not only in constant change but also in conflict.

Marx, as a social scientist, criticized other social scientists for attempting to explain phenomena, or one phenomenon, by taking it out of its environment, isolating it, putting it into a category, and not acknowledging the fact that once it was taken out of its environment the phenomenon was transformed. For example, if in a discipline such as sociology we study the activity of groups—how they hold together and why they fall apart—without understanding everything else related to that group, we may arrive at a false conclusion about the nature of the group. What Marx attempted to do was to develop a way of thinking that would explain phenomena realistically.

In the physical world, when forces collide they are transformed. When atoms collide, in physics, they divide into electrons, protons, and neutrons, if I remember correctly. What happened to the atom? It was transformed. In the social world a similar thing happens. We can apply the same principle. When two cultures collide a process or condition occurs which the sociologists call acculturation: the modification of cultures as a result of their contact with

each other. Marx called the collision of social forces or classes a contradiction. In the physical world, when forces collide we sometimes call it just that—a collision. For example, when two cars meet head on, trying to occupy the same space at the same time, both are transformed. Sometimes other things happen. Had those two cars been turned back to back and sped off in opposite directions they would not be a contradiction; they would be contrary, covering different spaces at different times. Sometimes when people meet they argue and misunderstand each other because they think they are having a contradiction when they are only being contrary. For example, I can say the wall is ten feet tall and you can say the wall is red, and we can argue all day thinking we are having a contradiction when actually we are only being contrary. When people argue, when one offers a thesis and the other offers an anti-thesis, we say there is a contradiction and hope that if we argue long enough, provided that we agree on one premise, we can have some kind of synthesis. Tonight I hope I can have some form of agreement or synthesis with those who have criticized the Black Panther Party.

I think that the mistake is either that some people have taken the apparent as the actual fact in spite of their claims of scholarly research and following the discipline of dialectical materialism. They fail to search deeper, as the scientist is required to do, to get beyond the apparent and come up with the more significant. Let me explain how this relates to the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther Party is a Marxist-Leninist party because we follow the dialectical method and we also integrate theory with practice. We are not mechanical Marxists and we are not historical materialists. Some people think they are Marxists when actually they are following the thoughts of Hegel. Some people think they are Marxist-Leninists but they refuse to be creative, and are, therefore, tied to the past. They are tied to a rhetoric that does not apply to the present set of conditions.

we apply knowledge in order to *will* a certain outcome our objectivity ends and our subjectivity begins. We call this integrating theory with practice, and this is what the Black Panther Party is all about.

In order to understand a group of forces operating at the same time, science developed what is called the scientific method. One of the characteristics or properties of this method is disinterest. Not *un*interest, but disinterest: no special interest in the outcome. In other words, the scientist does not promote an outcome, he just collects the facts. Nevertheless, in acquiring his facts he must begin with a basic premise. Most basic premises stem from a set of assumptions because it is very difficult to test a first premise without these assumptions. After an agreement is reached on certain assumptions, an intelligent argument can follow, for then logic and consistency are all that is required to reach a valid conclusion.

Tonight I ask you to assume that an external world exists. An external world that exists independently of us. The second assumption I would like for you to make is that things are in a constant state of change, transformation, or flux. With agreement on these two assumptions we can go on with our discussion.

The scientific method relies heavily on empiricism. But the problem with empiricism is that it tells you very little about the future; it tells you only about the past, about information which you have already discovered through observation and experience. It always refers to past experience.

Long after the rules of empirical knowledge had been ascertained, a man by the name of Karl Marx integrated these rules with a theory developed by Immanuel Kant called rationale. Kant called his process of reasoning pure reason because it did not depend on the external world. Instead it only depended on consistency in manipulating symbols in order to come up with a conclusion based upon

does not preserve himself then I accuse him of suicide: reactionary suicide because reactionary conditions will have caused his death. If we do nothing we are accepting the situation and allowing ourselves to die. We will not accept that. If the alternatives are very narrow we still will not sit around, we will not die the death of the Jews in Germany. We would rather die the death of the Jews in Warsaw!

Where there is courage, where there is self-respect and dignity, there is a possibility that we can change the conditions and win. This is called *revolutionary enthusiasm* and it is the kind of struggle that is needed in order to guarantee a victory. If we must die, then we will die the death of a revolutionary suicide that says, "If I am put down, if I am driven out, I refuse to be swept out with a broom. I would much rather be driven out with a stick because if I am swept out with the broom it will humiliate me and I will lose my self-respect. But if I am driven out with the stick, then, at least, I can claim the dignity of a man and die the death of a man rather than the death of a dog." Of course, our real desire is to live, but we will not be cowed, we will not be intimidated.

I would like to explain to you the method that the Black Panther Party used to arrive at our ideological position, and more than that, I would like to give to you a framework or a process of thinking that might help us solve the problems and the contradictions that exist today. Before we approach the problem we must get a clear picture of what is really going on; a clear image divorced from the attitudes and emotions that we usually project into a situation. We must be as objective as possible without accepting dogma, letting the facts speak for themselves. But we will not remain totally objective; we will become subjective in the application of the knowledge received from the external world. We will use the scientific method to acquire this knowledge, but we will openly acknowledge our ultimate subjectivity. Once

power structure; it is of prime importance that the vanguard party develop its own communications organ, such as a newspaper, and at the same time provide strategic revolutionary art, and destruction of the oppressor's machinery. For example in Watts the economy and property of the oppressor was destroyed to such an extent that no matter how the oppressor tried in his press to whitewash the activities of the Black brothers, the real nature and cause of the activity was communicated to every Black community. And no matter how the oppressor tried in his own media to distort and confuse the message of Brother Stokely Carmichael, Black people all over the country understood it perfectly and welcomed it.

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense teaches that, in the final analysis the guns, hand grenades, bazookas, and other equipment necessary for defense must be supplied by the power structure. As exemplified by the Vietcong, these weapons must be taken from the oppressor. Therefore, the greater the military preparation on the part of the oppressor, the greater the availability of weapons for the Black community. It is believed by some hypocrites that when the people are taught by the vanguard group to prepare for resistance, this only brings "the man" down on them with increasing violence and brutality; but the fact is that when the man becomes more oppressive he only heightens revolutionary fervor. So if things get worse for oppressed people they will feel the need for revolution and resistance. The people make revolution; the oppressors, by their brutal actions, cause resistance by the people. The vanguard party only teaches the correct methods of resistance.

The complaint of the hypocrites that the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense is exposing the people to deeper suffering is an incorrect observation. By their rebellions in the Black communities across the country the people have proved that they will not tolerate any more oppression by

the racist dog police. They are looking now for guidance to extend and strengthen their resistance struggle. The vanguard party must exemplify the characteristics that make them worthy of leadership.

*The Correct Handling of a Revolution: July 20, 1967**

The Black masses are handling the resistance incorrectly. When the brothers in East Oakland, having learned their resistance fighting from Watts, amassed the people in the streets, threw bricks and Molotov cocktails to destroy property and create disruption, they were herded into a small area by the gestapo police and immediately contained by the brutal violence of the oppressor's storm troops. Although this manner of resistance is sporadic, short-lived, and costly, it has been transmitted across the country to all the ghettos of the Black nation.

The identity of the first man who threw a Molotov cocktail is not known by the masses, yet they respect and imitate his action. In the same way, the actions of the party will be imitated by the people—if the people respect these activities.

The primary job of the party is to provide leadership for the people. It must teach by words and action the correct strategic methods of prolonged resistance. When the people learn that it is no longer advantageous for them to resist by going into the streets in large numbers, and when they see the advantage in the activities of the guerrilla warfare method, they will quickly follow this example.

But first, they must respect the party which is transmitting this message. When the vanguard group destroys the machinery of the oppressor by dealing with him in small

* From "In Defense of Self-Defense," Huey Newton's column in the Black Panther newspaper.

groups of three and four, and then escapes the might of the oppressor, the masses will be impressed and more likely to adhere to this correct strategy. When the masses hear that a gestapo policeman has been executed while sipping coffee at a counter, and the revolutionary executioners fled without being traced, the masses will see the validity of this kind of resistance. It is not necessary to organize thirty million Black people in primary groups of two's and three's, but it is important for the party to show the people how to stage a revolution.

There are three ways one can learn: through study, observation, and experience. Since the Black community is composed basically of activists, observation of or participation in activity are the principle ways the community learns. To learn by studying is good, but to learn by experience is better. Because the Black community is not a reading community it is very important that the vanguard group be essentially activists. Without this knowledge of the Black community a Black revolution in racist America is impossible.

The main function of the party is to awaken the people and teach them the strategic method of resisting a power structure which is prepared not only to combat with massive brutality the people's resistance but to annihilate totally the Black population. If it is learned by the power structure that Black people have "X" number of guns in their possession, that information will not stimulate the power structure to prepare itself with guns; it is already prepared.

The end result of this revolutionary education will be positive for Black people in their resistance, and negative for the power structure in its oppression because the party always exemplifies revolutionary defiance. If the party does not make the people aware of the tools and methods of liberation, there will be no means by which the people can mobilize.

that the racist U.S. Armed Forces occupy South Vietnam; You are hereby drafted into the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, invested with the rank of Field Marshal, delegated the following authority, power, and responsibility:

To establish revolutionary law, order and justice in the territory lying between the Continental Divide East to the Atlantic Ocean; North of the Mason-Dixon Line to the Canadian Border; South of the Mason-Dixon Line to the Gulf of Mexico.

. . . So Let It Be Done.

*Executive Mandate No. 3:
March 1, 1968*

So Let This Be Heard:

Because of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre of February 14, 1929, in which outlaws donned the uniforms of policemen, posed as such, and thereby gained entrance to locked doors controlled by rival outlaws with whom they were contending for control of the bootlegging industry in Chicago; and because these gangsters, gaining entry through their disguise as policemen, proceeded to exterminate their rivals with machine-gun fire, we believe that prudence would dictate that one should be alert when opening one's door to strangers, late at night, in the wee hours of the morning—even when these strangers wear the uniform of policemen. History teaches us that a man in the uniform may or may not be a policeman authorized to enter the homes of the people.

AND

Taking notice of the fact that on January 16, 1968, at 3:30 A.M., members of the San Francisco Police Department kicked down the door, made an illegal entry and search of the home of Eldridge Cleaver, Minister of Information. These Pigs were not invited in, had no search warrant, no arrest warrant, and were therefore not authorized to enter. Permission for them to enter was explicitly denied by the Minister of Information. Present were Sister Kathleen Cleaver, our Communications Secretary and wife

created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. **That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.** Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. **But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.**

*Executive Mandate No. 1:
May 2, 1967**

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense calls upon the American people in general, and Black people in particular, to take careful note of the racist California Legislature now considering legislation aimed at keeping Black people disarmed and powerless while racist police agencies throughout the country intensify the terror, brutality, murder, and repression of Black people.

At the same time that the American Government is waging a racist war of genocide in Vietnam the concentration camps in which Japanese-Americans were interned during World War II are being renovated and expanded. Since America has historically reserved its most barbaric treatment for non-White people, we are forced to conclude that these concentration camps are being prepared for Black people who are determined to gain their freedom by any means necessary. The enslavement of Black people at the very founding of this country, the genocide practiced on the American Indians and the confinement of the survivors on reservations, the savage lynching of thousands of Black men and women, the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and now the cowardly massacre in Vietnam all testify to the fact that toward people of color the racist power structure of America has but one policy: repression, genocide, terror, and the big stick.

* Delivered at Sacramento, California, State Capitol Building. This and the two "Mandates" that follow were public statements made by Huey P. Newton as Minister of Defense of the Black Panther Party.

The Ten-Point Program

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.

We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2. We want full employment for our people.

We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the White American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. We want an end to the robbery by the CAPITALIST of our Black Community.

We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules was promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make.

make our stand as internationalists," for an aggregate of citizens of the world is little more than an aggregate of bourgeois individualists. "We must place our hopes on the philosophy of intercommunalism"—only those who are by, through, and from a community can serve the great family of humankind. To go out, one must go deep. But to go deep, one must also go out.

"It is our belief," says Newton, "that the Black people in America are the only people who can free the world, loosen the yoke of colonialism, and destroy the war machine." The revolutionary process shows that people will be liberated, that the liberation of the outer and inner Third World is the key element in that process, and the Black people of the empire's heartland are at the center of revolutionary action.

The practice of the Black Panther Party is expressed in the second part of this book. The Party is a revolutionary vehicle made up of three elements: a small but dedicated cadre of workers who are willing to devote their full time to the goals of the organization; an organized structure through which the cadre can function; and revolutionary concepts which define and interpret phenomena, and establish the goals toward which the political vehicle will work. This is one side of practice. Its other indispensable side is "the building of a community structure," the development of basic survival programs for the people amongst whom the Party lives and serves and derives nourishment. The practice of the Black Panther Party is much like the building of base areas which the Chinese Communists engaged in during the 1930's. Building base areas sounds romantic with dashing guerrillas going out on forays against Japanese and Kuomintang oppressors. In reality it involved hard work day after day: planting crops, educating adults and children, organizing disaster relief, tending the sick, talking with the people. But when the oppressor came into the village, all united in defense of their achievements. And

when the time came to unite with distant villages and party units for the attainment of larger goals, the cadres and many of the people went forth. They now understood that the large goals and the small goals were inextricably bound together. But the cadres also understood that the large goals were meaningless unless the smaller goals could be attained. As Newton says, ". . . they have to see first some basic accomplishments in order to realize that major successes are possible."

The writings of Huey Newton also makes clear that above all, the cadres and the people must know things as they are, and not just find pleasure in celestial or revolutionary rhetoric. "We always emphasized a concrete analysis of conditions." Even when the Black Panther Party was first founded, "its dreamers were armed with an ideology which provided a systematic method of analysis of how best to meet those needs." But concrete analysis must never be of the type done by the sociological snooper who coldly collects and assorts his data. "We are interested in everything the people are interested in." All great revolutions, despite what bourgeois theorists with their elitist notions have written, have always succeeded where the leaders and cadres were the "vehicles" of the people, where they were able to translate into organized and effective action the things the people wanted.

The struggle of the Black Panther Party is expressed in the third and last part of the book. The Servant of the People writes of comrades who have died and who were or are in prison. That struggle against oppression means suffering and imprisonment, and death is a lesson that one has to learn again and again. That empire means suffering, imprisonment, and death for other peoples is something many Americans have learned. That this empire will eventually bring its horrors home to America is something we have yet to learn. But struggle also has a dialectic of its own, for it

anarchists, and agitators gripped a large part of the people, a hatred duly fanned by the media. The message was clear—strike out against the system and you will be smashed; come begging as a penitent, and you'll get a handout. Even more loudly trumpeted were doctrines of White supremacy, expressed in the popular writings of the geographer Ellsworth Huntington, who ranked the races from Northwest Europeans at the top to Africans at the bottom. The crudities of America's racist empire capitalism were to give way to more subtle methods in the ensuing decades of the twentieth century—the empire became the “free world”; radicals, like the militant labor unions, were welcomed into the system if they decided to play the game laid out for them; White supremacy gave way to Civil Rights which allowed our American *assimilados* to hold positions here and there in the system. Only ten years ago the rulers of America were in a state of euphoria believing that the empire at home and abroad was assured forever more.

Americans used to think of America as God's country. But if God gave it the power, wealth, and glory of empire, God has also not denied it the honor of Revolution. The American Revolution began in 1776 and has not yet ended.

When, a decade ago or so, America's rulers felt confident that they could incorporate the Third World into their empire, they found themselves facing an upsurge from the Third World within the national boundaries of the United States. That upsurge was led by the Black people. Black people had been forcibly brought to America as slaves for a feudal agriculture. The great majority of them remained as slaves to that same agriculture well into the twentieth century despite their legal emancipation. As that Southern agriculture crumbled before the onslaught of a more efficient and modern Western agriculture, Black people spread to all parts of America. If American capitalism had remained as dynamic as it was in the nineteenth century, the Black people would have been absorbed into the ever expanding industrial labor force. But as the empire grew,

America's capitalism showed growing signs of obesity and stagnation. It began to prefer importing consumer goods from abroad rather than producing them at home and so creating new forms of productive employment. Industry required ever greater skills, thus closing their doors to the poor. Unions, fearing automation, warded off the poor; their predominately White members often developed a paranoiac racism. Black people and other Third World poor poured into ghettos with no exit, subsisting in poverty and degradation like the peasants of inland China amongst whom the Chinese Revolution arose. The response of America's rulers, epitomized by Lyndon Baines Johnson's Great Society, was to offer them “bread and circuses”—welfare, menial employment, Black faces on TV and in the movies, and at the same time to skim off the cream of their *assimilado* elites. If it worked in the outer Third World, why should it not work in the inner Third World? And if there was resistance, just as in Vietnam, a bit of force could be applied to rid the peaceful peasants of the “scavengers of the modernization process.”

Just as a great revolutionary process has begun in the outer Third World, so one has begun in the inner Third World of America. That process unites within itself all the elements that flowed out of the original eighteenth-century revolutions and those added by subsequent revolutions. The people of our inner Third World revolution want power—“not power over people, but the power to control our own destiny,” in the words of Huey P. Newton. The people of our inner Third World Revolution want work, education, and the basis of a good life which capitalism gives its rulers and class allies. The people of the inner Third World Revolution want the liberty, equality, and fraternity which can only come about by finally doing away with the class divisions that hold fast in this country.

In this revolutionary process there has emerged the Black Panther Party, originally a political weapon of self-defense

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Introduction

In the latter decades of the eighteenth century, three great revolutions took place. In America, a colony achieved independence. In Britain, the industrial revolution turned an empire into a world market system based on the capitalist mode of production. In France, oppressed classes rose and destroyed an oppressor class. The currents generated by these revolutions formed a revolutionary process which now has reached the entire world. All colonies demand independence to become nations. All nations seek a mode of production to give themselves wealth and power. All peoples who suffer oppression, exploitation, and inequality through class struggle seek liberty, equality, and fraternity.

As these three currents spread outward from America, Britain, and France, they intermingled but also, thereby, generated contradictions. Colonies fought for and secured independence, but then lost it again to empires armed with the weapons of capitalism. Capitalism produced immense wealth but created new class inequalities based on exploitation and oppression. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels developed a theory of socialism to resolve the contradiction of capitalism and class struggle: the oppressed classes led by the vanguard of the industrial proletariat will seize power, form the workers' state through the abolition of private property, and so do away with the basis of class distinctions to create a mode of production for, through, and by the people. Out of this theory came the vision of Vladimir Lenin, the revolutionary practice of the Bolshevik Party, and the Russian Revolution.

In the twentieth century, China, an immense country subject to the oppression of feudalism, the exploitation of

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*To the fallen comrades
of the Black Panther Party*

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