

To Die for the People

The Writings of Huey P. Newton

Edited by Toni Morrison



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Foreword

The full measure of the genius of Huey P. Newton cannot be weighed or appreciated at this juncture, the year that marks the 20th anniversary of his death. We who knew and loved Huey are too close, his touch still warm upon our hearts. And there are still enemies, from within and without, who linger in the shadows, attempting to distort or discredit his contribution, destroy him even in death as the State attempted during his life. Glimpses of Huey's genius—his seminal analyses of the social construct and dialectic of the known world, and particularly of the still most powerful country in the world, the United States of America—can be seen today, but the full weight of his original thinking has not been properly acknowledged, to provide light for new generations of revolutionaries. We must still await that day.

The lasting manifestation of Huey's genius resides in the fact that his vision was translated into transformative action in society—in the creation of the Black Panther Party, altering the status quo, urging humanity to a higher place, setting into motion ideas that revolutionized human thought and behavior, creating the possibility for a new and humane social paradigm. The Party's revolutionary ideology and practice are the irrefutable evidence and legacy of the brilliance of Huey P. Newton.

As for the record of Huey's thoughts and theories, there is

much more than the speeches, essays and other writings included in this collection. Here, though, is a critical introduction. At the time of the original publication of this book in 1972, Huey had settled into active leadership of the Party he had founded six years earlier. After spending the previous three years incarcerated, and finally freed by the legendary, worldwide “Free Huey” campaign, Huey had seized command from the usurpers and demagogues who had sought to commandeer the Party and lead it toward an irrelevant death through involvement in headline-grabbing acts of bravado and terrorism, as described here in *On the Defection of Eldridge Cleaver from the Black Panther Party*. Huey believed such actions would only serve a reactionary agenda and lead to the meaningless deaths of Party members. In contrast, as the title of this volume suggests, he insisted that true revolutionaries commit their lives to the *people* and must be willing “to die for the people,” because, as Party leader Fred Hampton so eloquently stated, true revolutionaries *loved* the people.

Huey promoted the ideal that the Party *serve* the people, “body and soul.” In response to provocateurs who advanced the irresponsible idea that the time was ripe for “armed struggle,” he asserted that the gun was not necessarily a revolutionary tool. “The reactionaries have guns,” he emphasized. This was an important statement, not only because the Party’s image had been reduced by State propaganda to that of “Panthers with guns” but also because it was Huey who had first articulated the Party’s tenet of the right of the people to defend themselves, as pointed out here in *Executive Mandate No. 1, May 2, 1967*, and Huey who, by example, had led the Party’s effort to demonstrate to the people that the State’s violence against them could be resisted with arms. Thus, at the time of the publication of this book, Huey was insisting that the Party make the focal point of its activities its Survival Programs, as he named them, which operated under the slogan

“survival pending revolution,” as discussed in *Black Capitalism Re-analyzed I: June 5, 1971*.

Today, in this dawn of the 21st century, we see the absence of solutions like those the Party fostered decades ago through its Survival Programs. For example, while there is finally a broad recognition throughout the United States of the need for health care for everyone, there is powerful resistance to it by the capitalists, whose greed overwhelms the common cry. The sixth point of the Party’s Ten-Point Platform and Program (as revised in 1972) was a demand for *free* health care for all oppressed people. Today’s demand by the people for change has forced the rulers of the United States to make some adjustments, but the government has merely partnered with insurance companies to put forth a plan of universal health *coverage*. A review of the Party program would be instructive.

The Party not only promoted free health care as a human right, it put theory into practice through its Free Health Care Program. Under Huey’s direction, the Party opened free health clinics in every chapter. By 1969, when the FBI declared the Party a terrorist organization, constituting “the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States,” there were over 40 Party chapters throughout the states, all of which operated free health clinics in the most depressed black communities, providing everything from free ambulance service to free Pap smears and, for the first time in America, free sickle cell anemia testing.

At the same time, with its Free Breakfast for Children Program, the Party was feeding free breakfasts to hundreds of thousands of black children throughout the United States every week. Soon the people came to successfully demand the government provide free breakfasts to *all* schoolchildren. This validated Huey’s argument that the Survival Programs should be emphasized in order to heighten the contradictions in society between the capitalists and the people, and to therefore

inspire the people to take action to effect the desired change. It was inevitable that the people's increasing demands for social justice and human rights would lead to a revolutionary transformation of society, he held. And indeed, when FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover infamously designated the Party as "the greatest threat," this was not because of the Panther guns—as the FBI, alone, surely had more. It was because of the "butter," propaganda the Panthers were spreading across the nation through its Survival Programs, arousing anti-government sentiments in the hearts and minds of millions of black and other poor and oppressed people, planting the seeds of revolution.

Today, the model of the Party's Survival Programs is relevant not only in terms of the need for universal health *care* but also in consideration of widespread unemployment and the struggle being waged by the great majority of people to satisfy their basic needs. For black people in specific there is the ongoing oppression of suffering the highest poverty and unemployment rates, incarceration rates, infant mortality and cancer death rates in the country, and having the least educational opportunities. Indeed, the need for the resurrection of such Survival Programs, pending revolution, is self-evident and urgent.

What made the Party's agenda even more powerful at the time was that it came to be replicated in other poor and oppressed communities throughout the United States. This was the result of the coalitions Huey directed the Party to build with other oppressed people of color—red and brown and yellow—and, even, poor white people. These coalitions came to include the American Indian Movement (AIM), the Brown Berets (Chicanos), the Young Lords (Puerto Ricans), the Red Guard (Chinese), and the Young Patriot Party (poor whites). Thus, in their respective communities, these organizations developed similar programs, operating under the same revolutionary ideology, and in cooperation with the Party. This

union of purpose and ideology was perfectly described by Fred Hampton as the “Rainbow Coalition.” The Party also came to recognize the relationship between its core struggle for the liberation of black people and that of women and gays. In his essay herein, *The Women’s Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements: August 15, 1970*, Huey issues an edict to the Party to form “working coalitions” with women’s and gay liberation organizations that espouse a revolutionary doctrine because there is an inextricable relationship between and among their respective struggles and that of black people for liberation.

The Party’s development of these domestic coalitions was unprecedented, and certainly laid the foundation for the various multicultural formations among students and activists in American society today. At the time, however, black organizations and leaders claiming black liberation philosophies, ranging from nationalists to separatists to integrationists, rejected and even denounced these coalitions as being at cross-purposes with the interests of black people. Huey held firm that, on principle and strategically, it was impossible for blacks to be free in America without the participation of other oppressed groups in a common struggle. Thus, under this same theory, the Party came to engage in working relationships with people with disabilities, in partnership with the Center for Independent Living; with seniors, in the creation of the Gray Panthers; and with environmentalists, in collaboration with The Trust for Public Land, creating a program of “gardens in the ghetto.”

Perhaps more importantly, Huey recognized the interrelationship between the liberation struggle of black people in the United States and the national liberation struggles of colonized people around the world. This was clearly expressed in Huey’s letter, published here, *To the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam: August 29, 1970*, offering Party members as troops to fight alongside them, the “Viet Cong.” While progressive and radical anti-war and other organizations called either

for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam or peace, none advocated for the victory of the Vietnamese people over the U.S. imperialists, and certainly none ever offered to fight alongside them, as acknowledged by the Vietnamese themselves, in the *Letter from Nguyen Thi Dinh, October 31, 1970*, published here. The Party's recognition, and early on, of the interconnection between and among the liberation struggles of colonized and oppressed people throughout the world and that of black people inside the United States—which, as Huey stated, was the Party's primary, albeit "subjective," goal—placed it in a vanguard position as revolutionary internationalists.

Now, the Party came to build international coalitions and relations. In Africa, for example, there was the working coalition with ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) and FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique)—Huey having formed personal ties with President Samora Machel—and with the PAC (Pan Africanist Congress) of Azania (South Africa), David Sibeko, head of the PAC's U.N. Observer Mission at the time, publishing numerous feature articles in the Party's official newspaper. In Asia, there was the Party's close relationship not only with the Vietnamese (the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the North and the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, or "Viet Cong") but also with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ("North Korea") and, of course, with the People's Republic of China. The teachings of Chairman Mao Zedong were indeed central to the Party's ideological development and practice, and the Party sent several official delegations to China, including one led by Huey in 1971, pictured herein. There were also the mutually supportive relationships the Party developed with revolutionary groups in Uruguay, the National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros); in Nicaragua, the Sandinista National Liberation Front; and, of course, in Cuba. The Party had official support groups throughout Europe and Scandinavia, and even in Israel. At the same

time, the Party was supportive of the Pan-Arab socialist Ba'ath Party and actively supported the Palestinian struggle under the leadership of the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine)—Huey being a great admirer of Dr. George Habash, one of its founders.

Reports of these relationships were chronicled in the Party's official news organ, ultimately named *The Black Panther Intergcommunal News Service*. The newspaper was a critical tool in the Party's operations, as it not only set forth the Party's ideals, reported its activities and promoted its agenda, it was also a source of income for the Party, with hundreds of thousands of copies sold every week—on the streets by Party members, through distribution to various outlets and via subscriptions around the world. The newspaper was so instrumental to the Party that it was the subject of constant assaults by the FBI and its cohorts, in the form of “lost” bundles at airports and bus stations, clandestine over-inking of large batches in the print shops, intimidation of printers, the shooting deaths of Party members while selling the paper on the streets, the “accidental” car death of a Party member transporting a Chapter's weekly supply, the murder of the newspaper's national distribution manager. Still, the newspaper was published and distributed every week without fail for 13 years.

Perhaps the most significant contribution Huey P. Newton has made to the human cosmos, however, is the development of his social and political organizational theory of Intercommunalism. The Black Panther Party adhered to the philosophy of dialectical materialism, whereby social forces are recognized as rooted in the material world, versus a metaphysical world, and can be understood in terms of contradictions and solutions. Huey's new analysis was that, given that nothing stood outside of the dialectic, the action of opposing social forces—the capitalists and the masses of people—by the second half of the 20th

century had so transformed the world that the nation-state—the prospective socialist state—had already disappeared. This new understanding was critical in developing and implementing strategies to serve the Party’s primary goal of black liberation or that of national liberation struggles generally. In order to come to a correct conclusion, there had to be a correct analysis of the concrete conditions. Huey concluded that the capitalists of the United States had succeeded in reducing the rest of the world to a collection of communities, no different in terms of territorial sovereignty or control over resources than oppressed communities inside the United States. Indeed, numerous U.S. corporations openly argued at the time that, as they controlled greater wealth than most of the member states of the United Nations, they should be seated accordingly.

The world had become a collection of communities interconnected by the requirements of the capitalists of the United States, now expanded and aided by technological advances in communications and transportation, undergirded by the most powerful military in the world. This was a state Huey identified as Reactionary Intercommunalism. However, he pointed out that with the success of global capitalism, as Lenin had predicted, conditions were ripe for the transformation of the world to a state of Revolutionary Intercommunalism. The technology the U.S. capitalists and their subordinate cohorts employed to consolidate their global interests had become an instrument for their negation. Though he did not live long enough to know of the Internet, Huey argued that as technology was bringing the world ever closer together, the world’s people were poised to recognize their common oppressor and unite around their common oppression, across territorial lines, globally, toward the inevitable overthrow of the empire and the introduction of Revolutionary Intercommunalism. Revolutionary Intercommunalism was the framework for the establishment of the ideal state.

Today, as Huey predicted, technology has provided the U.S. capitalists the ability to shift manufacturing to any sector of the Empire to accommodate their bottom lines, and the mass of American workers, not merely the blacks, are being reduced to unemployability. Technology and economic globalization would, he stated, reduce the *majority* of America's workers to being unemployables, shifting their class status to the lumpen proletariat, those systemically denied a legitimate means of making a living and who survive outside the wage-labor system. This predicted mass drift toward unemployability was evidenced at the end of the last century in the complete elimination of various manufacturing operations in the United States, and manifested recently in the widely reported plight of the people of Elkhart, Indiana, a city with the highest unemployment rate in the country. There, the majority-white workforce, formerly employed at the recreation vehicle manufacturing plants that were the base of the local economy, has become unemployable, given the failure of the RV market.

In the present state of Reactionary Intercommunalism, casually euphemized by the capitalist class as "globalization," local and national economies have been disappeared by a world in which Coca-Cola is the largest private employer on the continent of Africa; and all the world's countries continue to bow to the U.S.-imposed Cuban embargo; and workers in Beijing and Bombay have replaced Americans as an industrial labor force for U.S. companies; and developed countries jockey for position alongside America in various economic formations, like the G-20 (though none is allowed to stand equal to America in the possession of nuclear weapons); and the Europeans have relinquished their respective currencies in favor of the ambiguous euro to compete with the paper dollar, now being printed daily for American "bailouts" of U.S. and European and other banks and corporations. It is clear the question of national sovereignty is nearly a moot point, and inevitable that it shall be,

as Huey foresaw in his theory of Intercommunalism, discussed here in the publication of his *Speech Delivered at Boston College: November 18, 1970*.

In the long struggle of blacks in the United States for freedom, from the resistance of Angolan Queen Nzinga to the slave traders in the 1600s, to the slave ship rebellions of captured Africans headed for what would be the United States, through the myriad acts of resistance during the first 150 years of enslavement by the English and other colonialists, to the heroic rebellions during the nearly 100 years more of slavery, to the bloody efforts of blacks to survive the Black Codes and *Plessy* in the hundred years of struggle that followed, to the bloodshed that paid for the 1964/1965 civil and voting rights legislation, and to the brutal struggle thereafter for human rights for blacks, there cannot be said to have been a more powerful or revolutionary effort by blacks for freedom than that of the Black Panther Party—dramatically evidenced by the fact that the United States government brought down upon it the full weight of its repression. And this is singularly because of the ideological and strategic leadership of the Party's founder, Huey P. Newton.

The long-term significance of Huey P. Newton and the importance of his genius cannot be measured, however, by the murderous thrust of the FBI. Neither is his contribution to humanity validated in relation to his work with other great thinkers, such as with preeminent psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, in collaboration on their book *In Search of Common Ground*, or with evolutionary biologist Robert Trivers; nor by the innumerable intellectuals, writers, ideologues and academics who have come to praise him. Moreover, Huey cannot be denied his proper place in the pantheon of his visionary peers, Marx and Lenin and Mao and Che and Nkrumah and DuBois, because of the failure of any historians or pundits to appreciate him. His

star is aligned with his revolutionary contemporaries, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. and, in the end, it will not matter whether Huey P. Newton's genius is appropriately recognized by other men. What will matter is that, in Che Guevara's poetic words, Huey P. Newton issued "a battle cry against imperialism . . . that . . . reached some receptive ear." What will matter is that Huey's genius and humanity engendered an effort that struck a blow for freedom that resounds still, an effort that has left a legacy such that others who follow can usher in the inevitable end of capitalism and all forms of oppression and exploitation, toward a state of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, a world longed for by all of us in our deepest dreams, where there is indeed peace and harmony between and among human beings and the rest of nature.

Elaine Brown
Savannah, Georgia
February 2009

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 empire capitalism, and the racism of White men, underwent a revolution mightier than that of Russia. Under the leadership of the soldier and intellectual Mao Tse-tung, the Communist Party of China smashed all of China's oppressor classes, freed China from alien empires, and gave the Chinese people the dignity and authority of masters in their own house. Out of a half-century of struggle before and after the seizure of power, Mao Tse-tung rediscovered the fact that revolution is a process and not a conclusion, that contradictions continue to generate struggle even after revolutionaries have seized power. This is so because new forms of oppression keep on arising (like the bureaucratic dictatorship which the Chinese people overthrew in their recent Cultural Revolution), for the existence of any empire is by itself a contradiction, because so long as there are colonized peoples anywhere in the world they will make war to achieve their freedom.

By the middle of the twentieth century, it has become clear that the honor of being fighters in the revolutionary process belongs not just to the big nations. Everywhere in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, colonies have achieved independence, and independent nations are struggling to cast off empires. And in independent nations the poor are rising to cast off newer forms of imperialist, neo-colonialist, and native bourgeois domination. The greatest of these Third World revolutions is the struggle of the Vietnamese people against the greatest empire in human history, the United States of America. First, the city people of Vietnam achieved independence

from French rule. Then the peasants of Vietnam threw off the shackles of landlord oppression. Now, all Vietnamese fight to throw out of their country an alien American occupier bloated with dollars, festooned with weapons, who regards their country as a testing ground of his ability to maintain his clutches on the rest of the world.

While the revolutionary process spread outward from America, Britain, and France, it also flowed back into those countries. In Britain, class struggle continued through the nineteenth century and independence movements battered its empire in the twentieth century. But most important for its own people, Britain was reduced to its natural state as an offshore island by alien capitalist empires who greedily sought what Britain already had—first Germany who wanted to take it by force and then America who inherited it by default. In France, class struggle raged in the nineteenth century, but competing with the poor for power was a still revolutionary capitalism which did not finally win until the twentieth century. In contrast to Britain and France, America in the nineteenth century appeared as a place of hope for the revolutionary process. America encouraged and supported colonial independence movements. Its capitalism was the most dynamic, aggressive, and creative in the world, attracting millions of immigrants. And class struggle achieved a sublime form in the Civil War which appeared as a struggle for the emancipation of Black people: the poorest, most oppressed, most exploited people in the world.

By the end of the nineteenth century, reactionary forces who were determined to end once and for all the revolutionary process—that struggle of the poor for power, equality, and justice—gained sway. America began toying with the idea of empire when it seized Spain's remnant colonies in the Caribbean and the Far East. Its hard-driving capitalists turned into a new ruling class interested primarily in power and wealth for themselves and their "middle-class" allies. And they decided

that the poor had to be kept in their place forever, so signifying by reintroducing slavery for Black people in the form of “segregation.” The empire became a global reality in 1945 when America, rich and unscathed, picked up the wreckage of World War II. Join the empire, America’s rulers said, and you will have a share in the wealth. By World War I hatred of communists, 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 predominantly 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 by Black people, but now a growing party with a vision reaching out to the entire world and a practice aiming deep into the communities of Black people. The context of the revolutionary movement within which the Black Panther Party grows is similar to that of other movements, notably the Chinese. As in China during the 1920s and 1930s, there are now the nationalist revolutionaries who want power, identity, and respect for their own race. There are also the “endorsed spokesmen,” who while often vehement in language believe they can make personal gains by extorting concessions from the national and class oppressors. There are the “implacables” who desire to break the slave-master’s oppressive power by any means necessary.

In China during the latter 1930s, the nationalists soon exhausted their energies, the endorsed spokesmen went over to the Japanese enemy, and the implacables were killed off leaving only the memory of their fortitude. Huey P. Newton speaks of “the three points of a triangle of death” which the oppressor, the “endorsed spokesmen,” and the “implacables” form. The lesson of the Chinese Revolution shows that it was the Communist Party which evolved a revolutionary vision for all mankind, which developed a practice which went deep into the villages, and which kept on fighting external and internal oppressors while always committed to survival. This was the party led by Mao Tse-tung that carried on the revolution for the liberation of China. The Black Panther Party being led by Huey P. Newton is now developing along similar lines with vision, practice, and

struggle. Representative of this development is the change in Newton's title: he is no longer the Minister of Defense, but the Servant of the People.

The vision of the Black Panther Party is expressed in the first part of this book, and the core of the vision is Revolutionary Intercommunalism. Revolutionary Intercommunalism is an idea which emerges out of a fundamental contradiction: that America is not a nation but an empire which directly or indirectly spans the globe, that its real units are communities which are ever more visible as one goes down into the poor Third World strata of America, and that that empire and community stand in dialectical contradiction and confrontation with each other. While peoples legitimately fight for nationhood throughout the world, in a fundamental sense, nations cannot really exist for long because all nations fall somewhere on a scale from liberated to non-liberated territories. As Newton says of Cuba, The People's Republic of China, North Korea, North Vietnam, The Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, "they represent the people's liberated territory."

The American empire is everywhere, even in China, a fact dramatically demonstrated by Nixon's visit. But the struggle against that empire takes form in the growth of communities able to produce, educate, and defend themselves. And the struggle expresses the revolutionary process when these communities forge linkages among themselves within nations and reach across national boundaries to different national communities. The Third World in America can never become a part of the American nation because there is no nation. To become a part means joining the empire which for most Third World people means to do so in a menial capacity. Third World people live in communities not by choice but because they are forced to remain in demarcated ghettos. Millions of White Americans live not in communities but as atomized individuals and in households. Nothing is more natural to man than

to live in a community, but nothing is so abhorrent to the doctrines of “freedom” of the empire than that man should live in a community which escapes the manipulation of the rulers. The “villages” of the world have much to teach its “cities.” “We cannot make our stand as nationalists,” for the closer one is to the center of the empire, the more illusory the idea of nationhood is for any people. “We cannot even 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 1930s. 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 make 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 assort 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 produces that most wonderful of human bonds—comradeship. No one has understood the struggle of the Vietnamese people unless he or she realizes that its basis is the extraordinary comradeship that has arisen in a quarter century of struggle. Americans seem not to understand comradeship because they no longer know what friendship means. A friend is anyone you happen to meet. Those who died like Jonathan Jackson and William Christmas may appear to many sympathetic Americans as tragic victims of prison oppression. These same Americans also think of the Vietnamese as “victims,” but anyone who has been to North Vietnam soon loses that notion. Nor were those who died in this country for Black liberation “victims”; they were comrades. As the struggle deepens and spreads in America, so will the bonds of comradeship.

The Black Panther Party may now have come through its own Long March, and a period of building, survival, and protracted struggle begun. If there be similarities to China’s Long March, they are not due to conscious imitation, but manifestations of a larger and longer revolutionary process which does not spring out of the alert minds of some individuals, but from the people.

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