

membership in the Panther Party has increased geometrically. Numerous white groups such as SDS, the Medical Committee for Human Rights, the John Brown Society, Whites Against Racism, Whites for Huey, ministers, ministerial students, lawyers and other members of the white community have publically stated that they support the program of the Black Panther Party and want Huey Newton released from jail.

PROGRAM OF THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY (WHAT WE WANT AND WHAT WE BELIEVE)

The program is usually divided into one section of ten points entitled "What We Want" and then ten paragraphs explaining these points in a section entitled "What We Believe." For the sake of clarity, we have put each one of the ten points in "What We Want" immediately above its corresponding paragraph in "What we Believe."

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 own 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 white man 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.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society.
We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.
6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.
We believe that black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.
We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self defense.
8. We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
We believe that all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black Communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.

We believe that the courts should follow the United States Constitution so that black people will receive fair trials. The 14th Amendment of the U. S. Constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental, historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the black community from which the black defendant came. We have been, and are being tried by all-white juries that have no understanding of the "average reasoning man" of the black community.

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of Nature and Nature's God entitled them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable 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 people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute 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 shewn, 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 usurpation, 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 a government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

POLITICS AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The Black Panther Party program and platform is a result of the analysis that the Party, and especially its leader, Huey Newton, has made of the nature of politics in America.

The way to political change is through power. This is the nature of the black power movement exemplified by Stokeley Carmichael in that term. What does this mean? Huey Newton has said that politics is war without bloodshed and that war is an extension of politics with bloodshed. The reason that the Reconstruction attempt to put blacks into office from the South failed was because the black legislators, intelligent, well-educated men, had no powerful constituency behind them. If you represent a powerless group in the legislature, then you wield no power. What is a powerful group? According to Minister of Defense, Newton, a powerful group is one which, if it doesn't get what it wants, can deliver a consequence. There are several ways in which this kind of power is obtained. One way is to own the land. This is feudal power. It is exercised by farmers who, when they do not get what they want, can let the crops rot in the field. This is the kind of consequence that rates attention and action. Ownership of a business is a second way of gaining economic power. In America the slaves were freed with the promise, by the Freedmen's Bureau, of forty acres and two mules. Had this promise been fulfilled, the black man would have had land power and the ability to inflict a consequence. The promise, of course, was never fulfilled.

To ask the blacks to redress their grievances by running for office does not pose a realistic solution. It is true that members of the Black Panther Party -- Huey Newton for Congress in the 7th Congressional District, Bobby Seale for Assembly in the 17th Assembly District in Alameda County, and Kathleen Cleaver for Assembly in the 18th Assembly District in San Francisco -- did run for office on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket, but this was only to have a forum to articulate the grievances of the black community. Why? Because as stated above the black politician without a powerful constituency just wams a chair in the legislature.

If the black community cannot gain economic or land-power, how can they hope to have changes of their conditions?