

BOBBY SEALE

The Black Panther Party
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The founding and the creation of the Black Panther Party came out of my heart, mind and soul, mine and Huey's heart, mind and soul. I know exactly. Everybody is trying to define what the Black Panther Party was in terms of their Marxist-Leninist whatever. Fine. I'm not saying you're not sincere about human liberation and an end to exploitation. I'm the same way. I want to get rid of and evolve out of existence avaricious, racist, corporate monopoly capitalists. But don't sit up here and try to tell me. I was there. I know what the FBI did do. I know what COINTELPRO did. It was the counterintelligence program of the FBI. They were sending a lot of provocateur agents. Through the years, by the end of 1969, we had 28 Black Panther Party members dead. But there was also 14 policemen dead in those goddamn shootouts. They wounded 64 of us. We wounded 32 of them. Again, it's not about numbers. It's about standing on our constitutional, democratic, civil human rights to organize our people in the black community whether the racist pig-ass power structure, as we used to say, whether they like it or not.

The real demise of the Black Panther Party had to do with the strategic organizing mistake that the central committee of the Black Panther Party made. Prior to the mayoralty campaign in 1973, in January of 1972, Huey suggested in the central committee meeting, the central committee that I had gotten expanded after I'm out of jail, and it included some two-thirds black females because I expanded it to all the coordinators who had done all the hard work and they happened to be sisters. Huey had a problem of wanting this absolute control. I had a need from Jump Street always wanting a mass political organization and multiple leadership and community committee leadership. That was the difference between me and Huey. Eldridge Cleaver, he said, I made a mistake. I was a hoodlum, even though I could write, but I wanted a shootout every time you turned around. So Eldridge tended to lean towards anarchistic activity. Huey Newton fell into the trap of wanting to control the criminal activity. Me, I'm so naive, but I still was always about organizing a national mass membership political electoral black community machine in the coalition framework with other white radical left black Hispanic, whoever. Because our true slogan of the Black Panther Party was not Black Power. It was All Power to All the People. We've got a whole lot of people in this audience old enough to testify to that fact. All Power to All the People. Even what Fred

Hampton said, We're talking black power to black people, some red power to red people, some brown power to brown people, some white power to poor and low-income progressive white people, some yellow power to yellow people. He said, When you put it all together, it's all the power to all the people. It was power to the people. "I am a revolutionary," says Fred Hampton.

I'm just trying to say that the Black Panther Party did have a class analysis. Let's go back. Huey was in night law school. How we decided to patrol the police had to do with an organization called CAP in Los Angeles that evolved a couple of months after the Watts riots of 1965. Let's get the dates straight here. The Black Panther Party that Huey and I founded, originally called the Black Panther Party of Self-Defense, was founded in October of 1966. The CAP organization in Los Angeles, four hundred miles south of San Francisco-Oakland, was called Community Alert Patrol. This was a group of black citizens and a handful of white and others who did not want to see any more vicious acts of police brutality in the Watts community following the 1965 Watts riots. Because what sparked the riots was a vicious act of racist police brutality in the Watts community. So this group had law books, tape recorders and arm bands. They were riding around in cars. They announced themselves in the press, in public, and said, We are observing the police in the hopes that the police see us as responsible citizens observing them and they will not commit any more acts of police brutality because we don't want the community burned down any more. Remember the Watts riots? August 1965.

That CAP organization evolved right around late September or October. After two or three months out there, the police in effect took their law books and tore them up, took their tape recorders and smashed them up, beat them up and drove them downtown and locked them up. That sparked an interest, it was all in the press, on the part of Huey. Huey was concerned with the fact that as far as he was concerned, their rights had been violated, First Amendment rights, the right of the people to peacefully assemble and/or to redress their grievances. But to control the police. So Huey began to try to research. In and out of night San Francisco Law School, which is a private law school. Huey researched that and found a California Supreme Court ruling that said all citizens had a right to stand and observe a police officer carrying out their duty as long as they stood a reasonable distance away. He

found it. In other words, Huey was always at it. We were not opposed to nonviolent protest. What we were opposed to is the racist power structure and the racist government attacking people in peaceful protest. Our advocacy, even from Huey's standpoint, and mine, is that the people had a right to peacefully redress their grievances by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the U.S.

This organization, the Black Panther Party, was one of the most hellified organizations in the country. We were attacked. We were screwed over. We were attacked by COINTELPRO. There's a new book coming out called *FBI Secrets*. South End Press is publishing this book. This is a documentation by Wesley Swearingen, a former FBI agent. In the book he documents and brings up how the FBI, using provocateur agents, actually killed six of those 28 Party members I was telling you about. Had them murdered. All as a means to try to terrorize us out of existence. But by 1972, all attacks, overt gun attacks, on the Black Panther Party stopped, primarily because people like Roy Wilkins of the NAACP and others, Congressman Dellums, Ted Kennedy and some others, moved to get an investigation of the FBI's concerted attempt to smash the Black Panther Party. One of the reasons Roy Wilkins moved was after Fred Hampton was murdered December 4, 1969 in a predawn raid, 5:00 a.m. in Chicago, by state's attorney Hannahan and his special squad, they broke in the back door and the front door and shot, that was all a terroristic campaign to try to terrorize us out of existence.

Two days later they attacked the Black Panther Party office in Los Angeles. It's documented in the regular daily newspapers that J. Edgar Hoover and Ronald Reagan, then governor of California, had had a conversation the day before about the impending attack they was going to make on the Los Angeles chapter of the Black Panther Party, which turned out to be a four-hour shootout and battle. We had organized against that, not so much that we was going to win a battle, but to survive. Even though I was in jail, I used my architectural and design skills. Much earlier I was sending out three-dimensional sketches of how to sandbag all the way up to the windowsills, how to find the main joists in the ceiling and get heavy-duty hinge systems, take a 3/4" piece of plywood, lay it all the way across, put a major hook and hook it up to the bolts that you send straight up to the joist and bolt in there and also bolt that 3/4" piece of plywood to a 1/2" piece of steel complete with shooting portholes. So when the police come by, hit those hooks, run down to the window, get behind the sandbags and shoot it out. Why? Because we were standing on the principle of our concepts of moral, secular, constitutional, democratic, civil human rights to organize our people in our black community whether the racist-ass pig power structure liked it or not.

In other words, talking about, I'd rather be dead in my grave than ever be a slave. Eight brothers and eight sisters were in there. It was a two-story building. When the police first hit that building December 6, two days after Fred

Hampton was murdered, 1969, when they busted the bottom doors and busted through to the big wooden bar section that went across the front of the doors, when they opened up, we always had a handful of ex-Vietnam vets in the Black Panthers Party, like Geronimo Pratt. When they battered and rammed the door, what happened is that all the desks and chairs were stacked up in a long line going straight back. It was a pretty good-sized office. When the first SWAT team came in with their bulletproof vests and their helmets, busted through the door, they like to come in the door and go right and go left, they couldn't go nowhere. Them brothers and sisters at the tail end, four of them, two on one side, they both leaned out, 00 buckshot, and laid the first three of them straight out. The police come up there and drug their wounded out. Their SWAT team wouldn't let nobody come in. Then Daimley, a black state assemblyman at the time of that district, came down, he was two blocks away. The police jumped on him and beat him up.

That L.A. police department has been a hellfire police department before the Black Panther Party, through the Black Panther Party, after the Black Panther Party, right on up through Rodney King, and today the L.A. racist-ass pig police department, I'm telling you, I'm saying, we went through it with them. That was a shootout that only got one person wounded. Then when we got in court we won the case. The police said, The reason we attacked was because so-and-so drove by and he noticed in the upstairs window a Black Panther walking with an AR-16 upon his shoulder, which appeared to be an automatic weapon, which were illegal. The preliminary hearing judge happened to be a white liberal. He said, Why aren't you out there arresting someone from the Ku Klux Klan with some AR-16s? The reason is what we had was semi-automatic AR-16s. They were not automatic. The judge says, You can buy these semi-automatics every day of the week down at the gun shop. He threw the shit out of court. We didn't kill a cop, but they shot their ass up pretty bad.

So I'm just saying, standing and fighting in battles back in the sixties, when the power structure on all fronts was about smashing all organizational frameworks, whether you were communist, socialist, anti-war, anti-institutionalized racism, or whatever, they jumped on people, beat them up, brutalized them, terrorized them. It's nothing new to America. The powers that be, the corporate-money rich that goes back all the way to the beginning of this very country have jumped on the people and anybody who's protesting or redressing their grievances on any significant level. In the 1960s the Black Panther Party evolved. We were a social, evolutionary accident, in the positive sense, in an ongoing civil rights protest movement that already existed. We came about in 1966, with a ten-point platform and program. In my early days, to walk across the street, in 1962, and see these brothers in some group called the Afro-American

Association, that's the first day I heard their name and saw them, Brother Donald Warden, Richard Thorn, Jim Thomas, Kenny Freeman, quite a few other people. Richard Thorn's real name was William Brumfield, who I knew. He was older than me. Standing there talking about our history, mentioning names like Richard Wright and W.E.B. Du Bois. Here I am, twenty-six years old, I had never even heard of these people. The Ghana kingdom, the Mali kingdom, the Zimbabwe kingdom, I never knew such things existed. This is 1962, spring. I'm an engineering design major working a full-time job at night at Kaiser Aerospace and Electronics. I'm running around with my sharp Ivy League look, winking at the sisters, letting them know I'm into something, that kind of crap. These brothers start talking about black history. They said, We ain't Negroes. We ain't colored. We are Afro-American. African American. Our descendency is from Africa. We got Chinese schools in Chinese town where Chinese people can learn about Chinese people. You can go to Jewish schools where Jewish people learn about Jewish people. All other kind of ethnic schools where people can go to. But here we are in a white-controlled school, white people go there and black people go there but all we learn about is white people. We don't learn about no black folks. Even when you was in grammar school, you had Dick, Jane and Spot to try to reach you how to read. The only goddamn thing that was black in the book was the spot on the back of Spot's back.

But it was 1963 when Dick Gregory came to our campus. I've been reading a year now. I've digested *Black Reconstruction*. I've digested Basil Davidson's *Black Mother: The African Slave Trade*. I've digested and went over three or four times Melville J. Herskovitz's work called *The Myth of the Negro Past*. If you want to read some real dissertated stuff, read and digest that. *The Soul of Black Folks* by W.E.B. Du Bois. Dick Gregory came to our class to explain to us how him and a lot of other young people, students, blacks and some white, had went down to try to integrate the restaurants and Woolworth's down in the South. Dick Gregory explained that they all ran in, went down and sat down on every stool at the lunch counter inside of Woolworth's. The white proprietor walks over, looks at Dick Gregory and says, We don't serve niggers here. Dick Gregory said, You know, I don't eat them things no way. Could you please give me a hamburger?

When Dick told us that at Merritt College auditorium at Oakland, California, I used to be a standup comedian, too. They called me a hoodlum. I'm a hunter and a fisherman from a very young age. I owned my own 30-30 Winchester at age twelve. My father taught me to be a carpenter. I'm an architect. I did stage acting, jazz drummer, structural repair, high-performance aircraft, nondestruct testing, etc. And also, I wrote a cookbook, called *Barbecuing with Bobby*. It was the only down-home, hickory-smoked, Southern-style cookbook guide in

America. The problem is, everybody says, Why did you write a cookbook? I said, Goddamn, revolutionaries eat, too! But more important, the real reason I wrote the cookbook and got it published in 1988 is because me and some former Black Panther Party members were trying to put together a fundraising scheme methodology to raise some \$50,000. We have 28,000 abandoned properties in Philadelphia. We were going to try to go after some of these properties, some of them you can get for \$500 or \$1,000. We were going to try to accumulate some of those properties, go after some more funds, to create an environmental renovation youth jobs project, using professionals to train youth how to renovate housing and pay them not the minimum wage, start them off at \$7 an hour and also renovate old cars. That's what the cookbook was written for.

It is a contradiction, and I am nobody's capitalist, but it is still a contradiction to rather live, survive or organize in a capitalist social order against the avariciousness and racism of a capitalistic social order, it's a contradiction to try to do it in the capitalist social order with no capital. How you are going to pay the people to print this and the phone bills? To me, money is only a medium of exchange for services and goods. One hundred and fifty years ago, there was approximately one billion living human beings on the face of this earth. Now, by 2010 we're talking about six billion living human beings on the face of this earth. How do we reorganize them? The medium of exchange, money is going to be here. How do we creatively organize some new economic practices?

I had a lot of arguments with a lot of people, but I'm going to try to keep doing what I'm doing, because I think it's a political and a revolutionary humanist way. This is my true ideology. I'm a revolutionary humanist. I'm not even a black nationalist. I do believe in black unity, African American people's unity. I also believe in Native American people's unity. I believe in a whole lot of human beings and people's unity. But I believe in African American people's unity only as a catalyst to help humanize the world. This is very important. And to be a revolutionary about it.

To organize and raise the consciousness of people, to put them on a level, even in an environmental renovation youth jobs program, where we teach human resources skills, we also teach revolutionary principles, revolutionary humanist principles. This is the kind of program. The power structure may say, We're going to have to go down there and attack that nigger Seale. Come on with it, brother. I stand on the same principle. If you start shooting at me because I'm exercising my constitutional, democratic, civil human rights by organizing, teaching, educating and raising the consciousness of my people, I'm shooting back to defend that principle. It's no different from the Black Panther Party. When me and Huey wrote the ten-point platform and program of the Black Panther Party, we wrote it in the

War on Poverty office. We used the ABDick machine, the stencil burning machine of the government. We used government paper, government ink and government paychecks to rent our first office. I wrote and painted the sign the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. It was a very neat office because I didn't want to disrespect my black folks in my community. I wanted them to see an organization that represented organization.

We want power to determine our own destiny in our own black community. Number two, we want full employment for our people. Period. We had ten more collateral points. But the first ten points had come on the basis of where a real grassroots community was coming from. Number three, we want decent housing fit to shelter human beings. Period. We want decent education that teaches us about our true history. Period. We want an end to the robbery of the black community by the white racist capitalists. Period. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people. Period. We want all black people to be exempt from any kind of military service. Period. We want all black brothers and sisters brought to trial to be tried by a jury of their peers as defined by the Constitution of the U.S. Period. All black brothers and sisters who have already been tried by all-white juries have a right to another trial because they have not been represented by their peers. Those are the first ten points. We wrote ten more points collateralizing that of what we believe. We get the brothers and sisters in the community to read the basic, simple first points. We have no religion in this organization. Nothing based on religion. I have a problem. I like the sincerity of the Nation of Islam. But to me, they were behind in the struggle.

We wrote the ten-point platform and program. We had witnessed this in some so-called motivational programs that some other brothers and sisters had tried where they paid you \$1.65 minimum wage to sit in a class and to be motivated. The brothers would come from college. And here were these poor, low-income brothers and sisters. The basic socio-economic structure and the adverse conditions that you're subjected to in considering particular sociological and psychological factors against the backdrop and the history of slavery. The brother says, What they talking about, man? We said, We want full employment for our people. Yeah, right on, brother, I know what you're talking about. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people. If you-all could do something about that, boy. We were clicking.

After Melvin Newton helped us with some grammar, me and Huey went up a second night. Huey went upstairs to the law library in the legal aid service to try to research and find some last piece his law professor told him. Just as he found what he found, I found something. What he found was the California Supreme Court ruling that gave citizens the right to observe police officers. We had decided that we were going to move on point number seven. He was going to do the same thing the CAP

organization had done in L.A. a year earlier, with law books and tape recorders. The difference was that they beat up the CAP organization, but since they beat up civil rights protestors, they even jumped on young white protestors who also protested against institutionalized racism in America, since they beat up on them, we were going to take some guns with us. We had researched all the laws on the guns. As long as the gun was not concealed at that time in California law, it was not illegal. For instance, if we were riding in the car, he would say, I notice here you can't have a live round in the chamber of a rifle or a shotgun riding in the car. In other words, that means when we get out of the car, only then can we jack the round off into the chamber. We can have it in the magazine but not in the chamber. What about handguns, I said, I'm carrying a 45. He said, It doesn't apply to handguns. You can have a live round in the chamber.

Furthermore, he had found another law one day, he says, You know, when we go out and start patrolling the police, I think what we're going to have to do is Bobby you're going to have to show us how to do weapons because you've been in the military. I says, You can't really point the weapon at the police officer unless he attempts to shoot at us first. It's a fine particular thing of law that Huey was dealing with. He says, If you have a live round in the chamber, which constitutes a loaded weapon, and you point that weapon at somebody, unless you're in a situation where you have to defend yourself, pointing a loaded weapon at somebody constitutes assault with a deadly weapon in California law. I said, Wait a minute, what if you're just playing around? He said, There's another ruling here that says if a person is just playing around, if he or she has no intention of shooting the person and there's a live round in the chamber of a rifle or handgun, it constitutes assault with a deadly weapon. This is where the Black Panther Party came from, brothers and sisters. It was a scrutiny that I and Huey had been putting to that whole civil rights protest movement since 1962.

In October 1966, around the 15th or 16th we finished writing the ten-point platform and program. But we didn't have a name for the organization. We wrote the ten-point program before we had a name. A few days later I got a letter from the Mississippi Lowndes County Freedom Organization. They had a silhouetted logo of a panther. I said, Damn, Huey, look at this logo thing they got here. He said, You know, there's a white racist organization that has the logo of a fighting cock, a rooster. I said, Why they got this panther? The next day he says, I think the nature of a panther is that if you push it in a corner, if it can't go left and it can't go right to get out of the way of the aggressor who's pushing it in the corner, it's going to tend to come out of the corner to wipe that aggressor out to try to get out of the corner it's been pushed in. I said, That's like black people. You're always talking about how the racist power structure is always violating the civil and

constitutional rights, the First Amendment of the Constitution for people to redress their grievances. Then you've got this signature sign down there calling for a community police review board and saying the city council told the advisory board at the War on Poverty office, The hell with them. The CAP organization down there, they took away their rights and they filed a Supreme Court ruling that said they have a right to observe it.

So you say black folks is pushed in a corner like a black panther. He said, Yeah, the Black Panther Party because we don't have a political party. I said, What about the self-defense factor? Malcolm X says that self-defense is an act of intelligence. We're talking about self-defense. He says, OK, Black Panther Party of Self-Defense. We were young and fervent. Little Bobby Hutton walked upon us in my driveway. He said, What you guys talking about? I said, We're talking about the new organization. We've got the ten-point program. We'll call it the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. He said, Yeah, when the panther roars, the world trembles. We were young and fervent, but we were well-read and insightful, getting ready to take a chance, because Malcolm X had been killed. We had to start a new organization. One week after Malcolm X was killed, it took a year and a half to get this organization off the ground. First I organized the black history fact group at Merritt College campus. Then I organized an advisory council at Merritt College campus. Then we got in a fight with some police in the spring of 1966. Then we had to go to court. Then we got probation. Then I said, Huey, we almost went to jail. We've got to organize the organization. That's when we finally came up with the ten-point platform and program. That night, another night prior to that, we stuck the first two paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence to the end of the ten-point platform and program.

Then we etched it out on a stencil, Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. And we ran off a thousand copies with government paper. Huey said, You think they're going to miss the paper? I said, I don't care. Finally we put together some money, a couple of months or so later, and got an office where Little Bobby Hutton and a couple of other brothers joined. We had a nice little office and we started teaching brothers and sisters the ten-point platform and program. *Emerge* magazine printed something two years ago in which they quote, and I think they misquoted, Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael). They said he said, You can't just point a gun at somebody. That is not the way we did that. First you had to know the ten-point platform and program. Then we found out three of the brothers were semi-illiterate. They had to be taught how to read. We used Malcolm X's recently published autobiography to teach them how to read. The rest of the brothers were avid readers. John Sloan, this old military boy, was an avid reader. Big Albert Howard was in college, like Huey and I had been. We would read in our office every week. Our sign said Black Panther Party for

Self-Defense. One night some guy busts in, When does karate classes start? I said, Brother, it's not about a karate class. He looked and said, What you guys doing with all these guns? I said, We're a political organization, the Black Panther Party. We're talking about organizing the black community. It's not the whole liberation, it's a stepping-stone. It's a consciousness-raising effort. We have meetings, political education sessions, 7 p.m. Wednesday nights and 2 p.m. Saturday afternoons. He said, Oh, I thought it was karate, man.

For several weeks we took these brothers through various kinds of reading material. There was reading book lists. They had to go through the whole process. After the political education sessions everybody had to learn how to break down weapons and put them back together. There were 9mm. There were M-1 carbines. We were ragtag. All our weapons were not exactly alike. We did not have all shotguns. A couple of side guns, a long shotgun, a short shotgun, a carbine, an old M-1 and a new M-1 carbine, the smaller one, a 45, a 9mm, one of them had a 44.

Sister Maralaba, the first sister to join, I'll never forget it after about a month of meetings. She had passed by a couple of times on Saturdays, gave us the finger and walked away. Little Bobby ran out and said, Hey, sister, what you do that for? She was going down the street. Two Saturdays later she came by. We had these big bay windows. You could see right in from the street. She walked by and somebody said, There she is again. We looked around, she was gone. Sister Maralaba. Blew my mind. So the next Saturday I was waiting for that sister. Sure enough, she came by. I ran to the door and said, Sister, why are you doing that to us? Why? She says, I don't like you. I said, Sister, we are a black community organization. We just started up. We're trying to organize our black community. She said, I know that. I said, Why you give us the finger? I don't like you because you don't allow women in the Black Panther Party. I said, That's not true. She said, Yes it is, because every time I come by here all I see is you brothers there, sometimes you'll be giving classes and other times you'll be cleaning your guns. I said, Sister, it is not true that we don't allow women. Here's an application. He or she who assumes without investigation nine times out of ten is dead wrong. You assumed, and all you had to do was walk in the office and say, Can I join? Come on in. You can join. She walked in. I said, Bobby, be cool. I said, Sister you can join the Black Panther Party. She says, I don't trust you-all. If I can join the Black Panther Party, can I have a gun just like the brothers? I said, You can have a gun, just like the brothers. She said, OK, I'll join. That was the first sister in the Black Panther Party.

Finally, after we got everybody trained in how to take an arrest, Huey went through it over and over. We had not started patrolling police yet. We had a lot of training to do those first eight weeks or so. How to take an arrest. How not to say anything. Remember, Huey was off at law

school a year at this time. He had defended himself in a couple of cases, and he won one of them, too. The judge says, Why didn't you get out of the car when the police asked? He says, Your honor, the reason I didn't get out of the car is because these policemen brutalize you. Therefore I was afraid to get out of the car given the growling manner in which he asked me. He won that case. I'll never forget that. Those were the early days. He loved the law. He loved to test the law.

Here we are, getting ready to go on patrol. Finally we tell everybody. Everybody has to have a black beret, black leather jacket or a black bush jacket, black pants that must be clean, shine your shoes, black gloves, blue shirts starched and ironed with a turtleneck, black scarf and a black beret. We had about twelve of us, half of us had long guns, half of us had sidearms. No weapons, not even the side arms, were concealed. We were doing the same thing the CAP organization was doing, only we had a political organization with a document behind it. We took hundreds of copies of the ten-point platform and program. We got the rules of the Black Panther Party, the first ten rules and the twenty-eight extended rules that I made in 1968 as the organization grew. In early 1967 we were doing this early patrolling.

We get into Huey's father's car one night and my old Chevrolet. We loaded down, six in one car and six in the other. The idea was we would ride until we see a police officer having stopped someone because our intent was not necessarily to get in a shootout, but our guns were loaded. We knew better. We never went to the street without our guns being loaded, without having ammunition. When we would ride in a car we would not have a live round in the chamber, but in the magazine. Law books and tape recorders and uniform. I put the tape recorder around Little Bobby Hutton's shoulder, when we got ready to get out of the car we would turn it on.

We saw this policeman on 7th Street, down in the red light district, with some young brother standing up against the car being searched. Off the curb here, wide sidewalk there, fifty or sixty black folks, some walking through, some looking. We stopped here, got out of the car, got the guns, took the tape recorder, turned it on, told Party members to remember the policeman's badge number. Huey says, Now, remember, the police has to say something to us first. But I don't want everybody talking. We'd been over this in political education classes many weeks before that. We will take the arrest if they officially arrest us without trying to shoot us, but if they try to shoot at us we will defend ourselves also. When we take the arrest and if we have to go to court, one person talks, either I talk or Bobby talks. Everybody listen. If we all get arrested and have to go to court, it's better to have ten or twelve brothers testifying to the exact same story than having ten or twelve people all trying to say something at one time. He said, You don't have a good chance with a jury. It goes back to the degree of Huey's understanding

of the grassroots relationship of where we were coming from, and we were putting civil rights on the cutting edge at this point. We were going to patrol these streets with guns and tape recorders and law books.

We come out, walk down a hundred feet until we get in front of the crowd, step off the curb in front of the people, spread it across forty feet. As Huey gets over to the forward area where the police is, he's got a shotgun and a law book. It's dark. As we get there, taking a little time to really see what's going on, somebody said, Hey, man, them dudes got guns. I said, All these motherfuckers got guns, man. Another brother says, I'm getting the hell out of here. Huey said, No, no, it's not necessary for you to leave. Come back. All of you are citizens here. We've read the law. You have a right to stand and observe these police officers carrying out their duty. We're a new organization, the Black Panther Party. We're here to observe these police who brutalize our people and our community.

By this time the police are standing there listening to Huey say what he's got to say. The young brother and the rest of them are watching. The police are looking at Huey. You have no right to observe me. Huey says, Supreme Court ruling, he rattled the numbers off, every citizen has the right to stand and observe a police officer carrying out their duty as long as they stand a reasonable distance away. In that particular ruling a reasonable distance constituted eight to ten feet. I'm standing approximately twenty feet from you and I'll observe you whether you like it or not. When he said, Whether you like it or not, you have to imagine all these blacks folks pinned on that shit, and when he says, Whether you like it or not, some sister said, Well, go ahead on and tell it! [laughter] Another brother says, What kind of niggers is these, man? The police says, Is that gun loaded? Huey says, No, and went off into some legal point about how it is not only due process of law but you cannot remove a person's property from them without due process of law. He cited some rulings and citings, therefore you cannot touch my private property. If you want it you're going to have to take it because you cannot remove my property from me without due process of law. The police says, Is that gun loaded? Huey said, If I know it's loaded, it's good enough.

We had gotten out of the car with the guns. All the people with the long guns had never jacked the round up into the chamber. I guess it dawned on Huey that he never jacked the round in when he got out of the car. He says, It's loaded. When Huey did that, the other brothers with the long guns says, That's right, I ain't got ... The cop really hadn't looked at nobody but me. When the cop looked around, all these guys jacking their guns, this brother says, Hey, brothers, don't you-all shoot this way, man! [laughter] The police looked away to see all these people and that's when he realized that this thirty, forty-foot line of disciplined Panthers jacking rounds into their chambers. You know what the black folks is doing: Uh-

oh, the shit's going down. The police got his arrestee and opened the door, shoved him in, opened the front door, went around the side, got in and drove off. That's exactly what we wanted. We had stacks of the ten-point platform and program. It was not just to be bad and tough. We had to organize the brothers and sisters. There was a methodology by which we would capture the imagination of the people in the community by addressing the viciousness of overt police brutality, observing the police with guns, following the law to the letter. So there we was, talking to the people there. We are a political education center at 5600 Grove Street, the Black Panther Party's office. We're about coming out and organizing a new political electoral community power and hopefully one day when we do get organized we'll try to take over the city government of Oakland and set examples for the numerous black communities around the country so we can begin to make some stepping-stones to our future liberation. Please be at our political education center because you don't necessarily have to carry guns. You can work on some of the other programs and help create some more committees. This is what we were doing.

The brothers were trying to read Frantz Fanon. That's where the Black Panther Party came from. It grew out of researching and study of the history of African and African American people's struggles. I bring all of that home to say this, brothers and sisters. When I say that I consider myself to be a revolutionary humanist, I'm trying to have a broader concept. I'm trying to take into account all of humanity on earth. I'm trying to take into account the avaricious racist corporate monopoly capitalistic frameworks in the world who are perpetually exploiting us. Trying to take into account some of the arguments that I've had with some of my old state-control socialist buddies and friends of the past. They were concerned, but I refused to accept state control command economy socialism. I accepted democratic socialism. I accepted cooperative socialism. But another thing I rejected was the linear mechanistic way in which dialectics is presented by Hegel, Engels, Marx and Lenin. It is not that they were not sincere. But a lot of people in the old doctrinaire sense refuse to move on and refuse to understand that even Marx and Lenin and Hegel had enough sense to know that knowledge is a forward movement. It is not about stagnation.

So when I argued against some of my old contemporaries in 1968, quite a few, I said, I am about evolving more community control of economic frameworks for retail and produce services and goods. Oh, no, that's patchwork socialism. I says, Bullshit. What do you talk about? You talk about the workers controlling the means of production, right? OK. I'm saying that every damn worker you talking about lives in a community so it's about community control of the economic framework to retail and produce services and goods under constitutional democratic civil human rights that people

should exercise and not about some state-controlled shit that's going to take away the basic democratic human rights of the people. The people began to understand that they are the true synthesis between the thesis and the antithesis. It's not just one thesis or antithesis. It's a polylectic range of theses and antitheses that's interconnected and interrelated.

In their heads, their ideas do not correspond directly to reality about the diversity of humanity or how much we are alike. People got to understand we are not living anymore in the 1960s or the 1980s. We are kicking fast and hard. When I say this is the overdeveloped fast-paced computerized scientific technological social order that's largely controlled by a bunch of avaricious racist corporate monopoly capitalists, when they talk about the goddamn world order, I'm saying we are in our communities, community organizing, I'm talking about neighborhood level.

One of the best dialectal principles I remember reading in all that old material we used to read was quantitative increase quantitative decrease causes a qualitative leap or change. It had possibilities for me when I read it. It was at the basics of mathematics. I remember Huey never could talk to a big audience. He never got them motivated, although he was a sincere brother. Brothers and sisters, if we could first agree upon the dialectical principle that quantitative increase or a quantitative decrease causes a qualitative leap or change, I think we can move forward to understand that flux and motion and everything. He lost half the brothers and sisters. These were Party members. I said, Huey, let me do it, man. Today, we goin' to get down to the nitty-gritty and we ain't goin' miss no nits or no grits. I'd write "dialectics" on the board. Put the syllables up. I said, Brothers and sisters, you-all want to know what that means? It ain't nothin' but an argument. Thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Quantitative increase and quantitative decrease. I underlined "increase" and I underlined "decrease." I said, Remember addition and subtraction. The basic function of all mathematics. Addition and subtraction. Somebody from the audience said, No, no, chairman, you forgot about multiplication. Multiplication is nothing but a fast way of adding, brother. Division, subtraction, when you take the whole and divide a piece, it's a form of subtraction. Greater than, less than, whatever, the functions are all there. The application of that.

So when you break it down for brothers and sisters and make them understand the basics. Our differences, not in antagonistic way, was that we had to talk on the level of where a people are in order to organize them in a more concrete way. We had to incorporate what it was and the class analysis. That's all to tell you that still the struggle continues for economic liberation this time. In the 1960s, if you want to talk about African American people's history, African and African American people's liberation is interconnected and interrelated with all human

liberation on the face of this earth. It is not disconnected. It's interconnected. You have to understand that. All power to the people. Thank you very much.

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