

# The BLACK C o m m e n t a t o r

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social justice and peace - Providing commentary,  
analysis and investigations on issues affecting  
African Americans and the African world.

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[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

## **Black History Month** **Remembering Huey P. Newton: A People's Warrior For REAL Change** **Keeping it Real** **By Larry Pinkney** **BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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"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."

- Huey P. Newton

In these perilous times of corporate media and government manipulated false "hope" and fake "change" gimmickry - combined with the dangerous messianic illusions on the part of some pertaining to Barack Obama, who is the U.S. Empire's latest cynical attempt at mass political hallucination and control; it is important, necessary, and sobering to reflect upon the accomplishments of a genuine people's warrior for *real* change, the late (Dr.) Huey P. Newton.

Huey P. Newton was born on February 17, 1942, and ultimately cofounded the Black Panther Party, in which among other things, he served as Minister of Defense and its chief theoretician. Today it remains accurate that, "Perhaps no single political organization in modern U.S. history still evokes more joy, pride, hope and debate in the hearts and minds of people than the Black Panther Party, a revolutionary, community based, national Black political organization founded in October of 1966, which by the end of the 20th century had been physically decimated nationwide."

Under the leadership of Huey P. Newton, the Black Panther Party consistently and nationally demonstrated the unmitigated audacity to demand full human rights in the U.S., including the right to "full employment," "an immediate end to police brutality,"

the right to "land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace" [from the Ten-Point Program of the Black Panther Party]. Huey P. Newton succinctly authored the aforementioned Ten-Point Program of the Black Panther Party, which Program was effectively designated into the simple and crystal clear format of "What We Want" and "What We Believe." The issues of the Ten-Point Program including "housing, employment, police brutality, education, justice and peace" are **just as relevant**, if not even more so *today* in the 21st century, for Black, Brown, White, Red, and Yellow peoples in this nation, *as when they were first penned* over four decades ago under the auspices of Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party.

Huey P. Newton's message was one of action, of self actualization, not false hope, fake change, and the cynical opportunism of continued U.S. Empire. Rather, Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party went about the work of creating nationally in Black communities "free breakfast programs, free health clinics, free child care programs, free food programs, free seniors escort programs, free shoe and clothing programs," etc.

Also, with the guidance and encouragement of Huey P. Newton, the Black Panther Party established the Oakland Community School for children in the community of Oakland, California. Huey P. Newton "immediately went about finding a way to develop a *nonprofit* corporation and to secure funding to buy the building that the Oakland Community School sat in for almost ten years." [Reference paragraph 2 in part 2 of the [August 28, 2008 Black Commentator](#) article titled, *The Oakland Community School, Oakland, CA, The Hope Is Our Young People*.

Following the leadership of Huey P. Newton, and the Central Committee of the Black Panther Party, the Black Panther Party stood in stalwart and open opposition to the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam, and strongly supported the rights of peoples around the world in Africa, Asia, Cuba, Palestine, South America and elsewhere to self determination, free of U.S. hegemony. The internal and external political stance of Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party incurred the vicious wrath of the ruling elite of 'America,' which wrath continues to the present day in the form of constant efforts to obfuscate, distort, and destroy the true legacy of the Black Panther Party.

Moreover, it is irrefutable and well documented that the local, state, and federal authorities of the U.S. Government used every fiendish and despicable means to discredit, "neutralize," and destroy the Black Panther Party and its leaders, including Huey P. Newton. These means included drugs being pumped into Black communities nationwide with the objective of hooking and destroying its leaders and *potential* revolutionary community leaders, and of course the *infamous and bloody* government program of destruction and horror known as COINTELPRO, the Counter Intelligence Program. Of course, there were also other well known individual targets of COINTELPRO, including Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., not to mention *entire* political organizations such as the Black Panther Party (BPP), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the American Indian Movement (AIM), and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), etc., in this nation.

The individual and personal consequences of serious political organizing in opposition to the systemic status quo have been, and continue to be, severe. Make no mistake about it: **Real** political organizers who are in opposition to the status quo and systemic oppression do *not* end up in the *White House* in service to the U.S. Empire. More often than not they find themselves in the proverbial "big house" (i.e. jail / prison). Thus, to discerning persons, Huey P. Newton's role in history and the ongoing struggle is one of

honor and respect, *as well it should be*. Huey P. Newton, like Harriet Tubman, Malcolm X, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., were serious and *real* political organizers. While none of these aforementioned men and women (including Huey P. Newton) were messiahs, nor did they "walk on water;" they *did* seek to serve the everyday Black, Brown, White, Red, and Yellow peoples of this nation and world. It must be remembered that the U.S. government, the corporate news media, and the corporate / military apparatus were definitely *not* their friends or allies; nor are these institutions friends or allies of the ongoing freedom struggle today.

The political struggle that was taken up by Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party over four decades ago is far from over. Indeed, the *insidious* nature of the oppression of everyday Black, White, Brown, Red, and Yellow peoples today has been *intensified*. Nevertheless, the example of Huey P. Newton is a reminder of not only what has been accomplished thus far in this struggle but also of how so *very much further* we must go and some of the *pitfalls* that we must seek to avoid along the way.

With heads held high, let us salute and honor Brother Huey P. Newton this February 17th, 2009; for like Brother Malcolm X, he stood tall in the struggle. Huey did not struggle for sainthood. He struggled for the real social, economic, and political freedom of Black and other oppressed peoples nationally and internationally; and as brother Malcolm X so appropriately put it: "I for one believe that if you give people a thorough understanding of what confronts them and the basic causes that produce it, they'll create their own program, and when *the people* create a program, you get action."

Additional information on Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party as a whole can be obtained from 1) the University of California at Berkeley's Bancroft Library; 2) the Dr. Huey P. Newton Collection / Archives at Stanford University, Stanford University Libraries [Collection Number M864], Stanford, California; and 3) online at the [It's About Time](#) detailed web site of the Black Panther Party Legacy & Alumni.

We can best celebrate the birthday of Huey P. Newton by recommitting ourselves to the ongoing struggle for single payer health care, decent jobs, housing and education and an immediate end to police brutality at home and U.S. military adventurism and wars abroad.

Let us not seek to make meaningless and destructive bourgeois history. Let us seek to change the course it has taken.

Happy Birthday Huey!

Black, White, Red, Brown, and Yellow Sisters and Brothers: All Power To The People!

Onward *now*. Onward....

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**The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog**

**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board Member, Larry Pinkney, is a veteran of the Black Panther Party, the former Minister of Interior of the Republic of New Africa, a former political prisoner and the only American to have successfully self-authored his civil/political rights case to the United Nations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In connection with his political organizing activities in opposition to voter suppression, etc., Pinkney was interviewed in 1988 on the nationally televised PBS NewsHour, formerly known as The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour. For more about Larry Pinkney see the book, [Saying No to Power: Autobiography of a](#)


[20th Century Activist and Thinker](#), by William Mandel [Introduction by Howard Zinn].  
(Click [here](#) to read excerpts from the book). Click [here](#) to contact Mr. Pinkney.

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

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