

Primary Source

Black Panther Party, “Ten Point Program,” 1966



What progress has been made in the twentieth century in the fight to realize Founding principles of liberty, equality, and justice for African Americans? What work must still be done?

- ☐ I can interpret primary sources related to Founding principles of liberty, equality, and justice in the 1960s to the present day.
- ☐ I can explain how laws and policy, courts, and individuals and groups contributed to or pushed back against the quest for liberty, equality, and justice for African Americans.
- ☐ I can explain why the civil rights movement fractured in the 1960s.
- ☐ I can compare movements for liberty, equality, and justice for African Americans over time.
- ☐ I can create an argument using evidence from primary sources.
- ☐ I can analyze issues in history to help find solutions to present-day challenges.

Essential Vocabulary

Marxism	the political, economic, and social theories of Karl Marx including the belief that the struggle between social classes is a major force in history and that there should eventually be a society in which there are no classes
Black nationalism	a Black advocacy movement in the U.S. especially during the 1960's and 1970's that sought to empower Black people financially, promote a sense of Black community and identity, and form a separate self-governing Black nation
forty acres and two mules	land and livestock promised to formerly enslaved African Americans after the Civil War

Building Context

The Black Panther Party (BPP) was formed in 1966 by students Bobby Seale and Huey Newton. It was originally created to monitor the activities of the Oakland Police Department, but it quickly grew into a national organization focused on armed Black self-defense against police brutality and community social programs to provide food, education, and medical care to Blacks. The Black Panthers adopted a militant ideology that fused **Marxism** with **Black nationalism**. Seale and Newton drafted the following mission statement in 1966.

Black Panther Party, “Ten Point Program,” 1966

Source:

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/primary-documents-african-american-history/black-panther-party-ten-point-program-1966/>

<p>1. We Want Freedom. We Want Power to Determine the Destiny of Our Black Community . . .</p> <p>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 . . .</p> <p>3. We Want An End to the Robbery By the Capitalists 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 . . .</p> <p>4. We Want Decent Housing Fit For The Shelter of Human Beings . . .</p> <p>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 . . .</p> <p>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</p>	<p><i>Notes</i></p>
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<p>does not protect us . . .</p> <p>7. We Want An Immediate End to Police Brutality and the Murder of Black People . . .</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 . . . We have been, and we are being, tried by all-White juries that have no understanding of the “average reasoning man” of the Black community.</p> <p>10. We Want Land, Bread, Housing, Education, Clothing, Justice And Peace . . .</p>	
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Comprehension and Analysis Questions

1. How did this program define freedom?

2. Marxism played a large role in shaping Newton and Seale’s world views. List two examples from this text that show the influence of this ideology.

3. How do Newton and Seale criticize the actions of the U.S. government in this excerpt? How does their criticism reveal the anger and frustration felt by some Black Americans?