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**Final Investigative Essay**

**The Two Readings**

Black Panther Party for Self Defense Ten Point Program

The two readings that were chosen for this paper are “Black Panther Party for Self Defense Ten Point Program” and “The United States Constitution.” When we talk about the Ten Point Program, they serve as a set of guidelines designed for the Black Panther Party. These points state the ways of operating and ideals. It can be said that these points are a conjunction of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. The document of these points was created by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in 1966 who were the founders of the Black Panther Party. The political thoughts and views that they carried resided in the realm of Black Nationalism and Marxism (Newton, 2019).

Every single statement that was made in the document was put in place for all the members of the Black Panther Party to live by and vigorously practice on a daily basis. These points were released on 15th May 1967 in the Black Panther Party's second issue of the weekly paper. All the 537 successive issues were inclusive of the program under the title "What We Want Now!" The Ten Point Program was mainly made of two sections; the first section was under the title "What We Want Now!" This section describes what the Black Panther Society wants from the racist and discriminating leaders of the American Society. The second section was under the title "What We Believe," this part framework the ideological viewpoints of the party and the rights they believe the African American Community deserves but are deprived of. The structure of the ten points is similar to the United States Constitution and the United States Bill of Rights (Newton, 2019).

The first section is expanded by "What We Believe." The Black Panther Party in this section is emphasizing and describing what they believe to be sufficient payment for the injustices that have been committed against the Black Community. The example of one of the section can be taken; we believe that this racist government has robbed us and now are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules (Newton, 2019). Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as the restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people." It further continues "we will accept this payment in currency which will be distributed to our many communities."

It was believed by Seale and Newton that the black community has suffered and has been rejected these benefits over the course of time. They also believed in the fact that the only way this injustice can be rectified is by the repayment of assets that they have been stripped off and deprived in the many years of slavery. The ten-point framework carried great importance for the Black Panther Party. It laid the foundation of all the physical requirements and ideological principles that they were expecting and that were easily understandable by everyone. When the ten points were being conveyed and put out there Huey Newton mad the statement that these things that are being demanded by us are not something new at all, but these are the things that the Black community has been voicing for hundreds of years even before the Emancipation Proclamation. These ten points gave the Black community the perfect foundation to get their voices, needs and wants to be heard, and give people the picture of the beliefs that they had, now in a form everyone could read and understand.

The United States Constitution

Now coming to the Constitution of the United States, it aided in developing America’s fundamental laws and national government. Further, there were certain rights that were guaranteed to the citizens of the country. The constitution was signed on 17th of September, 1787 as stated by the constitution “in the year of our Lord” by the delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. The Constitution starts by stating “WE THE PEOPLE of the United States in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.” One thing to be kept under consideration is “We The People,” so this constitution is directed towards the general public of America (Baltzell, 2019).

The Articles of Consideration and the national government was weak under America's first governing document, it was also observed that the states functioned like independent countries having different viewpoints in every state. The delegates planned and worked on a stronger federal government at the convention of 1787. There were three branches too in regards to the plan; executive, legislative and Judicial. Sideways with these branches was a system of balances and checks to make sure that the power is not given to just one single branch. Further, the Bill of Rights was basically ten amendments that ensured that the individuals will be given primary protections, for example; the freedom of speech and religion, which officially became the part of the Constitution in 1791 (Baltzell, 2019). From that time to the present day, there have been 27 amendments in the Constitution.

The member of the recently developed US House of Representatives named Madison introduced 19 amendments to the constitution later in 1789. Congress ended up adopting 12 of those amendments and sent them for ratification to the states on 25th September 1789. Ten of these amendments altogether are known as "Bill of Rights." These ten amendments were ratified and later on, 10th December 1791 became the part of the Constitution. The Bill of Rights granted the citizen of the United States certain primary protection (Baltzell, 2019). These protections were inclusive of the press and religion, freedom of speech, right to bear and keep arms, protection from unjustified seizure and search, right to peaceably assemble, and finally the right to a quick trial by a neutral jury. Madison later was given the reputation of being “The Father of Constitution” for the input that he put in the drafting of the constitution and further the ratification as well.

**The US Constitution and the Ten Point Program**

There are certain clauses of both the ten points and the United States Constitution when put side to side make the discrimination visible. Starting by "We the People," the very start of the Constitution of the United States. When this term is used it is referring to everyone within the premises of America, then how come the Black community is not part of it. In Section 2 of the United States, it is stated that "No person shall be Representative who shall not have attained the Age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a Citizen of the United States.” How can the black people have them represented in the Government if they are not even eligible for the smallest position? Forget that, the qualification required to stand up for a seat required one to have a specific qualification, the Black community are not even treated like humans putting education aside (Baltzell, 2019).

The constitution states that the people of the country have the right to fair trial, are the Black Community, not the people and part of the country? They are and they always were. The Bill of Rights talks about certain protections that are to be given to the individuals of the country, but the Black Community are given none (Newton, 2019). They fight the war for a country who does not even give them equal representation against the whites. Further, they faced brutality ever now and then without it even being justified. The Bill of Rights has clearly stated that the individual is to be protected from unjustified search and seizure. The 14th Amendment of the Constitution also states that a man is given the right to be tried by his peer. Peer is someone who belongs to the same religious, social, economic, geographical, environmental, racial and historical background as the person being tried (Baltzell, 2019). This would mean that a Black jury should be set for anyone being put to trial from the Black Community, but the contrary would happen. Every time someone from the Black community would be tried, they would be presented in front of a white jury.

There is distinctive discrimination that was faced by the Black Community and these few points are just small example. All they wanted was to have a voice, be heard and given the rights that they have deserved for hundreds of years. They have talked about wanting freedom, employment, reasonable and respectable housing, exempted from military service, an end to police brutality and murder of the black, the right to education, food and housing. These might seem like common and simple things that everyone has is entitled to, but they have been asking for this for a very long time but have always been rejected (Newton, 2019).

On the other hand, the American Constitution has indeed stated a few things but they are still not being followed due to discrimination. How long do they have to live the life of slavery? How long will they be denied the basic rights that they have the right to ask even as per the American Constitution? Both the ten points and the American Constitution show what it's like living in America being a person of color. The whites are given all the rights and privileges while blacks do not even get treated like human beings (Baltzell, 2019).

**Ethical Framework**

There are two ethical frameworks that fit the ten points and the US Constitution. One being the "Utilitarian Approach" and the other being "Rights and Duties." First, let us shed light on both the readings from a utilitarian perspective. The main thing that is considered in this framework is the end consequences of a certain action. Here the Black community is suffering the dire consequences of the actions that are being chosen and done by the Americans. The fact that they were treated so badly and suffered so much that they ended up feeling like they were not even human beings (Baltzell, 2019). They finally started to speak for themselves and gave the ten points stating what consequences the actions taken by the White Government brought on them.

Further, one can put under perspective the ethical approach that puts under perspective the idea of “Rights and duties.” The main point that should be put under consideration here is the fact that every person out there has certain rights and, those rights have been specified by the American Constitution. One of the most important aspects of this framework that should be kept in mind in the fact that; if an individual has a right, then other people have a duty that the right of those individuals is respected. Here, the Black community have the right to be tried by a peer as per the American Constitution, but it is flat out ignored. Regardless of their right, they are judged by a white jury. In accordance with the framework the action of denying a right is wrong, and an ethical right is one that ensures that the people's rights are being maintained (Newton, 2019).

**Conclusion**

Time has passed and it is the 21st century now, but the history should never be forgotten as even today the Black Community faces discrimination. An example from the recent time would be the "Black Lives Matter Movement." This movement initiated in the African-American Community. The main goal of this movement is to raise voice against systematic racism and violence towards the black community. Even today people are speaking against police violence, racial profiling and racial inequality that is present in the United States Criminal Justice System. The movement was initiated in 2013 on social media with a hashtag after the shooting death of African American teen Trayvon Martin. The way this movement is treated by the general public is also based on ethnicity. So it is clear, times have changed but the issues stay the same. The history should never be put aside as it gives an individual the platform to talk about how they are suffering just like their ancestors. It is essential that these matters are attended to and are heard. The black community are part of the country and have the right to be treated equally as per the law. It is the time that it should be made sure that history does not repeat itself. It is not just about this incident, the stereotyping of the black community has been happening for hundreds of years. There needs to be an initiative taken that puts a stop on this inequality and give everyone equal rights regardless of what race and community they belong to. Every single US citizen is a citizen by every right and is entitled to be treated with equality.

**Work Cited**

#### Baltzell, George. "Constitution Of The United States - We The People." Constitutionus.com. N. p., 2019. Web. 6 Apr. 2019.

"A Huey P. Newton Story - Actions - BPP Platform | PBS." *Pbs.org*. N. p., 2019. Web. 6 Apr. 2019