Survival Pending Revolution: Self-determination in the age of proto-neo-liberal globalization.

Abstract: In 1971 the Black Panther Party (BPP) seemingly went through an ideological transformation. Between 1968-1970 the Party had forged strong national and international solidarity and support through a politics of revolutionary armed self-defence and a commitment to anti-imperialism. Yet, in late 1970 as the sands of both national and geo-politics shifted, and as allies, both at home and abroad, became less supportive, the Panther's found themselves on less solid ground. Black Panther leader Huey P. Newton, realising this shift in the political landscape, and the futility of attempting an armed insurgency against the state without widespread support, now steered the BPP towards the idea of 'Survival Pending Revolution'. This saw the Panthers abandon the idea of immediate armed insurrection against the state and re-orient towards a focus on their community engagement 'survival programs'. This paper argues that Newton's orientation of the BPP away from armed insurrection and towards survival pending revolution was not simply a pragmatic choice of strategy, but rather based on a theorization of what he dubbed reactionary intercommunalism. Moreover, the paper suggests that the history of neo-liberal globalization can be complicated and expanded by viewing Newton as one of the first theorists of neo-liberal globalization and BPP survival programs as one of the first responses to the on-coming era of neo-liberalism in the US.

Introduction: the end of the Party?

> Newton: As far as I'm concerned you can go to hell, brother.
> Cleaver: Say, Huey...
> Newton: I am going to write the Koreans, the Chinese, and the Algerians and tell them to kick you out of the embassy.
> Cleaver: Say, Huey...
> Newton: And to put you in jail. You're a maniac, brother. (Hilliard and Cole 1993: 323)

On February 26th 1971 if you had been listening to the The Jim Dunbar 'A.M. Show', which aired live from San-Francisco, you would have witnessed the end of an era. Eldridge Cleaver, head of the International Section and Minister of Information of the Black Panther Party (BPP), had publically aired the party's internal business over the phone from Algeria. This saw Cleaver demand that BPP leader Huey P. Newton reverse his decision to expel members of the New York Panther 21 and Geronimo Pratt from the party and for Newton to fire BPP Chief of Staff, David Hilliard. The BPP, Cleaver exclaimed, had been taken down a reformist road under the leadership of Hilliard and needed to return to its revolutionary politics. Newton, who was also a live studio guest on the Dunbar Show had remained poker-faced and did not directly respond to Cleaver. After the show had finished, Newton left the studio and used a pay phone to vent his true feelings. Newton would expel Cleaver and the entire International Section from the BPP. He would also tell

Cleaver that they could 'battle it out' over control of the Party and that he had the 'guns' for such a battle (Hilliard and Cole: 323; Newton 2009b: 327; Bloom and Joshua 2013: 362).

The clash between two of the Black Power Era's most iconic revolutionaries marked the confirmation of an ideological split in the BPP. Between 1968-1970 the Party had ballooned to over forty chapters across a vast sway of US cities and become the public face of both US Black Power and the New Left. This had seen the BPP forge strong national and international support through a politics of revolutionary armed self-defence and a commitment to anti-imperialism (Joseph 2006, Murch 2010, Slate 2012; Spencer 2016). At the same time, namely through the FBI's counter intelligence program (COINTELPRO) against civil rights and black power groups, the US state had imprisoned and murdered many BPP members and manufactured disunity within the BPP. Cleaver, accompanied by groups such as the New York chapter of the BPP and white ultra-left groups like the Weather Underground, now called for all-out guerrilla warfare against the US state.[1] Yet, in 1971 as the sands of both national and geo-politics shifted, and as allies, both at home and abroad, became less supportive, the Panther's found themselves on less solid ground (Bloom and Joshua 2013: 341-372).

Newton, realising this shift in the political landscape, and the futility of attempting an armed insurgency against the state without widespread support, steered the BPP towards the idea of 'Survival Pending Revolution'. This saw the Panthers abandon the idea of immediate armed insurrection against the state and re-orient towards a focus on their community engagement 'survival programs'. These programmes, which included initiatives such as free breakfasts for school children, free clothing and free shoes, free ambulance service, liberation schools, and health clinics, were designed to address the basic needs of the Black community, which had been racially excluded from the spaces and spoils of US welfare capitalism, and also raise revolutionary consciousness amongst and between oppressed people. Historians of the BPP usually locate Newton's shifting of the BPP's strategy as a pragmatic choice in the midst of a shifting political context in late 1970 (see Bloom and Josuha 2013, Spencer 2016).

In this paper I want to suggest that Newton's orientation of the BPP away from armed insurrection and towards survival pending revolution was not simply a pragmatic choice of strategy, but rather based on a theorization of what he dubbed reactionary intercommunalism. Moreover, I want to suggest that the history of neo-liberal globalization can be complicated and expanded by viewing Newton as one of the first theorists of neo-liberal globalization and BPP survival programs as one of the first responses to the on-coming era of neo-liberalism in the US. To accomplish this, this paper consists of three constituent parts. The first section highlights how Newton's idea of reactionary intercommunalism provides a proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization. The second section focuses on how Newton's theorization of reactionary intercommunalism led him to articulate the idea of revolutionary intercommunalism. This saw Newton re-conceptualize the BPP survival programs within the strategy of survival pending revolution and the demand to create 'liberated territory' through the creation of anti-capitalist,

intercommunal ways of life. In conclusion, I put forward the argument that Newton's theory of reactionary intercommunalism and his evocation of survival pending revolution forces us to reconsider elements of neo-liberalism and our evocation of alternatives to our own age of neo-liberal globalization.

Intercommunalism: Newton's proto theorisation of Neo-Liberal Globalization

> In prison, Huey has developed an analysis of the present political movement. Nation-states, he argues are things of the past. Nationalist struggles, even revolutionary ones, are besides the point. Capital dominates the world; ignoring borders, international finance has transformed the world into communities rather than nations. Some of the communities are under siege—like Vietnam—and others conduct the siege, like the United States Government. The people of the world are united in their desire to run their own communities: the black people in Oakland and the Vietnamese. We need to band together as communities, create a revolutionary intercommunalism that will resist capital's reactionary intercommunalism. (Hilliard and Cole 1993: 319)

Over the last two decades there has emerged a growing literature on the evolution of neo-liberalism as a body of thought and political practice. This literature highlights that neo-liberalism, and the form of globalization it has engendered, traverses a complex history. This history includes the decline of classical liberalism (Gane 2014); the formation 'neo' liberalism in meetings of the Mont Pelerin Society as a counterweight to post-war embedded liberalism (Duménil, G. & Lévy 2004; Jones 2012); the Chicago School's, and in particular Milton Friedman's, linking of free markets with freedom (Klein 2007), the initial operationalization of neo-liberal polices in places such as Chile (1973), New York (1975), UK (1979), US (1976/1980); and the subsequent exporting and enforcing of such a doctrine across the planet by the World Bank and IMF (see Harvey 2005, Prashad 2008).

You will not find 1970s Oakland, California in any of these narrations of the evolution of neo-liberal globalization. However, as Narayan (2017a & 2017b) has recently shown, Huey P. Newton's theorization of what he dubbed reactionary intercommunalism offers a proto-theorization of what we have come to call neo-liberal globalization.[2] Reflecting on the unprecedented military, corporate, and cultural power of post-war US hegemony Newton argued that that there had been a quantitative change in the nature of imperialism. Now geo-politically and geo-economically unrivalled, Newton put forward the idea that the US had now turned from a nation state power into an unprecedented form of imperial empire:

> The point is that only one country stands as the sovereign stronghold, dominating and threatening the sovereignty of all other people and lands - it is the United States Empire. No people, no land, no culture, no national economy is safe from the long arm of the last remaining empire. (Newton 2002: 235)

Newton believed that US empire heralded a new phase of imperialism, which

he called 'reactionary intercommunalism', because the rationale of such imperialism sought to integrate the world 'into one community' of capitalist production and consumption (Newton 2002: 188). Newton detailed how this had changed the imperial problematic from the 'land question', which centred on territorial acquisition, occupation and resource extraction, to the 'technology question', which centred on the expansion of markets, labour and consumption. Reactionary intercommunalism therefore meant that the 'ruling circle' of the US government and Western corporate and financial capital nominally pursued a path of 'peaceful co-optation' rather than formal imperial occupation to achieve imperial rule (Newton 2002: 256-258).

This new phase of imperialism, Newton contended, would fundamentally change the nature of the geography and nature of capitalist production and consumption. The Second and Third World would increasingly become a site of capitalist production, technology and forms of consumption, but with an increased rate of super-exploitation. This centered on western based multi-national corporations penetrating these regions in order to create a global commodity and consumption chain. This disarticulated form of Fordism[3] would see 'advanced technologies transplanted into these areas' but still under the control of Western interests. The result would be a new global geography of industrial production and the spreading of capitalist ideology that would eradicate socialist alternatives to capitalist market societies:

> The difference, however, is everybody in America has a television, a car, and a relatively decent place to live. Even the lowest of the low do not live anywhere near the level of the poor of the world. Even the average person, the average "nigger," in the United States does not live as low as the average Chinese. Those who support the so-called socialist states will begin to be swayed by the introduction of a U.S. consumer market into their socialist countries.[4]

According to Newton, this process would see 'growth without development' within the Second and Third World and increased capital flows from the Second and Third World back into the First. A regime supported by self-enriching 'comprador agents' in nation states outside of the West would bow to the power and ideology of empire and readily oppress and exploit their own people in order to secure their own position and wealth (Newton 2002: 302-303).

Such changes in the global capitalist production would, Newton believed, have massive implications for First World populations and especially US society. Newton argued that the nature of post-war capitalism would be disrupted due to the effects of reactionary inter-communalism's disarticulated Fordism and increased technological advancement. Moreover, Newton outlined how technological innovation (automation, robotics, cybernetics) combined with an increasing global labour arbitrage, would eradicate the need for expensive wageworkers in the First World. This would see the 'increase of the lumpen-proletariat and the decrease of the proletariat' and the likely dismantling of the welfare state as ruling circles sought to maximise profits and their share of income (Newton 2002: 193). This 'increase of the lumpen proletariat and the decrease of the proletariat' would in turn disrupt the racial settlement of US

society. Whereas Black Americans had literally been segregated from the fruits of US welfare capitalism (New Deal), in order for white society to flourish, reactionary intercommunalism would transgress such racial privilege in order to maintain and expand exploitative and profitable capitalist relations. This would not end racial capitalism[5] within the US, but rather see the boomeranging of conditions and practices found in the darker nations of the Third World (and ghettos of the US), such as deindustrialisation, structural unemployment, state retrenchment and super-exploitation, back into the general (white) population of the US. Newton believed that this would heighten the racial divisions and tensions in US society rather than lead to greater racial unity between white and non-white communities (Newton 2002: 193).

Newton concluded that this new phase of imperialism and the onset of a truly global form of capitalism would result in all of the world's nation states becoming interconnected and under siege by the ruling circle of global capital and capitalist ideology (Newton 2002:170). This would in turn, reduce humanity to a collection of communities who, whilst sharing different material and cultural experiences, were united by the reality of the full spectrum dominance of capital:

> There is an undeniable interconnection to everything among all the territories in the world. That is why we say that there are no longer nations; there are only communities under siege by the reactionaries. This is where we get the term reactionary intercommunalism. (Newton 2002:259).

As Narayan (2017a) has argued, Newton's theorization of reactionary intercommunalism is best read as a proto-theorization of what we have come to call neo-liberal globalization. Newton's narration of how the interests of corporate capital, technological advancement and a new geography of industrial production would lead to deindustrialization, precarious employment, welfare state retrenchment, and an orgy of profit in the First World has essentially come to pass (see Harvey 2005). Whilst Newton's narrative of how socialism would be defeated through western neo-imperialism, elite enrichment and the expansion of capitalist forms of production, consumption and exploitation in the Third World is also eerily prescient (see Prashad 2013; Smith 2016). What I want to highlight in the next section is how Newton's pivoting of the BPP away from armed confrontation with the US state and towards the idea of Survival Pending Revolution was rooted in his theorization of reactionary intercommunalism's possible negation through revolutionary intercommunalism and the concept of creating 'liberated territory'.

Survival Pending Revolution: Saving and Organizing the People

> We stood at a crossroads. Would we follow our original survival program and live – if necessary die – for the people, or would we join our potential for nihilism with the State's terrific violence and kill ourselves before the government could exterminate us at their leisure? Rebuilding the organisation would be the Black Panther Party's greatest challenge (Newton, 1972c)

Historians of the BPP have often downplayed the significance of Newton's theory of intercommunalism on BPP praxis. In their erudite history of the BPP, Bloom and Joshua (2013: 354, 467-468n11) argue that Newton's evocation of intercommunalism did not mark a sharp categorical shift in the Party's ideological history and its anti-imperialist stance. They go on to suggest that the BPP's move towards the idea of 'survival pending revolution' was driven by pragmatic decisions in reaction to increased government repression, falling support from white allies and middle class members of the Black community, concessions given by the US state such as affirmative action programs, the tapering down of the Vietnam War, and the soothing of US diplomatic relations with the Third World. Murch (2010: 194) and Spencer (2016:222n73) also question the significance of intercommunalism through highlighting a perceived disconnect between Newton's theory and the BPP's rank and file members. The argument here being that BPP members were driven more by concrete ideas of community control than by lofty and abstract ideas such as intercommunalism.

On face value, these assertions hold true. The BPP did have to react to an ever-changing domestic and geo-political context and intercommunalism can be seen as an evolution in BPP ideology. The praxis of the BPP rank and file was also certainly not always consciously conducted in the name of Newton's theory. Yet, these narratives seem to underplay how Newton's theory of reactionary intercommunalism was actually formed in reaction to these changing political contexts and readily accounts for developments such as the cooling of diplomatic hostility between Third World and the US. Above all else, these positions neglect the fact, as Elaine Brown (1992: 277) makes clear, that there was the '"mass line", and there was the "party line" and then there was the "bottom line", which was the vision of Huey P. Newton.' Indeed, as Brown goes on to outline, the BPP's turn towards the idea of 'survival pending revolution', and the expanding of the BPP's survival programs, was inherently linked to Newton's theorisation of reactionary intercommunalism and its possible negation through what he called 'revolutionary intercommunalism'.[6]

Newton's idea of revolutionary intercommunalism was founded on the belief that attempts to fight reactionary intercommunalism through forms of nationalism or even internationalism were pointless. Newton asserted that economic, technological and political reality of reactionary intercommunalism meant that nations could not reassert their former forms of sovereignty in order to practice nationalism or internationalism (Newton 2002: 187) The only solution to a situation to such a 'distorted form of collectively', Newton

contended, where the 'superstructure of Wall Street' appropriated the wealth that all global communities of 'labour' produced, was to liberate all of the communities of the world. (Newton 2002: 174, 236).

Newton identified that the main barriers to such revolutionary intercommunalism were the material and ideological effects of reactionary intercommunalism. As we have seen, reactionary intercommunalism now meant that all nation states and their populations were becoming a 'collection of communities', with no 'superstructure of their own' other than global capitalism. Moreover, the processes of reactionary intercommunalism, such as the spreading of capitalist production and proletarianization in the Third World and the lumpen-proletarianization and state retrenchment in the First World, now led to the co-opting or destruction of the very socio-economic, cultural and political institutions (education, workplace, unions, democracy, nation state) that could facilitate revolutionary intercommunal subjectivity amongst the world's peoples. However, Newton highlighted that there existed liberated territories in the global system of reactionary intercommunalism, such as China, Cuba and North Vietnam, which offered alternative ways of life to reactionary intercommunalism and offered examples of a path towards revolutionary intercommunalism:

> ...we say they represent the people's liberated territory. They represent a community liberated. But that community is not sufficient, it is not satisfied, just as the National Liberation Front is not satisfied with the liberated territory in the South. It is only the ground-work and preparation for the liberation of the world...seizing the wealth from the ruling circle, equal distribution and proportional representation in an intercommunal framework. This is what the Black Panther Party would like to achieve with the help of the power of the people, because without the people nothing can be achieved. (Newton 2002: 171)

It was within this rationale of a 'liberated territory', which could forward the cause of revolutionary intercommunalism, that Newton sought to expand and accelerate the survival programs of the BPP in late 1970.[7] Newton's theory of intercommunalism thus reconceptualised the survival programs of the BPP as a means towards an anti-imperialist struggle for liberated territory within the belly of US empire and found common cause with anti-imperialist struggle for liberated territory in the Third World.[8] The revolutionary intercommunal vision of the BPP survival programs post 1970 was made clear in Newton's 1971 declaration of the BPP's common cause with the anti-imperial struggle of FRELIMO in Mozambique:

> To achieve this end, we struggle here inside the United States to get rid of our oppression. Others struggle inside their territorial boundaries to get rid of oppression. The more territory we liberate in the world, the closer we will come to an end to all oppression...Today the philosophy of revolutionary intercommunalism dictates that the survival programs implemented by and with the people here in America and those same basic People's Survival Programs being implemented in Mozambique by the Mozambique Liberation Front are essential to bringing about world unity...We are a large collection of communities who can unite

and fight together against our common enemy. The United States' domination over all our territories equals a reactionary (in opposition to the interests of all) set of circumstances among our communities: Reactionary Intercommunalism. We can transform these circumstances to all our benefit: Revolutionary Intercommunalism. (Newton 2002: 236)[9]

Newton believed that BPP survival programs would now function with a dual purpose. Such programs would not only address the basic needs of the black community that had been racially excluded from the spaces and spoils of US welfare capitalism and which would be further marginalised by economic and political changes associated with reactionary intercommunalism (lumpen-proletarianization, state retrenchment, super-exploitation). But also serve as a 'necessary part of the revolutionary process' by practically educating and politicalising community members through their participation in alternative institutional forms of community co-operation and collaboration. Survival programs were therefore seen as a 'means of brining people closer to the transformation of society' towards communist ends (Newton 2009b: 357). Newton dubbed the dual-purpose strategy of BPP survival programs, which helped the community survive the material and ideological effects of reactionary intercommunalism whilst also educating and politicalising the community around revolutionary intercommunalism 'Survival Pending Revolution':

> All these programs satisfy the deep needs of the community but they are not solutions to our problems. That is why we call them survival programs, meaning survival pending revolution. We say that the survival program of the Black Panther Party is like the survival kit of a sailor stranded on a raft. It helps him to sustain himself until he can get completely out of that situation. So the survival programs are not answers or solutions, but they will help us to organize the community around a true analysis and understanding of their situation. When consciousness and understanding is raised to a high level then the community will seize the time and deliver themselves from the boot of their oppressor (Newton 2002: 230).

The dual purpose of the BPP survival programs is best appreciated through examining how such programs both looked to save and organize the Black community along revolutionary intercommunal lines. Survival programs such as the BPP free breakfasts for school children and medical centres inherently dealt with racial disparities of US welfare capitalism. This brought the racial contradictions of the US state's ideas of universalism into full view and sought to organize the Black community around these contradictions. However, a common misconception about the BPP"s survival programs is that they were solely for the Black community and not truly intercommunal. Although the Panthers embedded these programmes in poor, black working-class communities they often offered their services to the whole of society on the basis of unity in class struggle. As New York BPP leader Carlton Yearwood explained, 'when we provide free breakfast for school children, we provide them for poor whites and poor blacks.' This commitment to class struggle across its racial modalities could also be found in the BPP medical centres.

Although the centres highlighted and focused on problems specific to the Black community, such as sickle-cell-anaemia, BPP-run medical centres offered services to all people no matter their colour (Bloom and Joshua 2013: 187, 292; Burke and Jefferies 2016: 111-114, Spencer 2016). BPP survival programs thus offered real institutional glimpses of an actual true universalism that transcended the racial divisions of US welfare capitalism.

The BPP survival programs did not only offer alternative institutional forms of community co-operation and collaboration that transgressed the racial division of US welfare capitalism. They also offered a critique of the political economy of capitalism and offered glimpses of alternative anti-capitalist forms of community co-operation and collaboration. BPP survival programs inherently questioned the nature of wage-labour and profit in their organisation and delivery:

> All our survival programs are free. We have never charged the community a dime to receive the things they need from any of our programs and we will not do so. (Newton 2002: 230)

While the Party, through its various chapters across the US, often initiated programs, the day-to-day running of them often involved the wider community, local businesses, churches and professionals such as doctors and nurses. Survival programs depended on such people volunteering their time and labour and organisations offering space and resources. Panther run medical centres, for example, often saw white and black middle class healthcare professionals offering their labour for free and being coordinated and managed by BPP members and community volunteers (Burke and Jefferies 2016: 111-114).

This questioning of the capitalist political economy was embodied in the BPP's approach to funding their survival programs. From 1971 onwards the Panthers shifted from an earlier blanket denouncement of Black capitalism (black owned business) to embracing the limited merits of Black capitalism for the Black community. This saw the BPP utilise resources donated or cajoled from local Black businesses in order to fund survival programs. Newton offered an explanation of such a new approach by attempting to highlight how Black capitalism's funding of the survival programs heightened the contradictions between Black capitalism and a (white) corporate capitalism that dominated both the Black community and Black capitalists:

> When the Black capitalist contributes to the survival programs and makes a contribution to the community, the community will give him their support and thus strengthen his business. If he does not make any contribution to the survival of the community, the people will not support him and his enterprise will wither away because of his own negligence. By supporting the community, however, he will be helping to build the political machine that will eventually negate his exploitation of the community, but also negate his being exploited and victimized by corporate capitalism... In this way Black capitalism will be transformed from a relationship of exploitation of the community to

a relationship of service to the community, which will contribute to the survival of everyone (Newton 2002: 233).

Black capitalism's funding of survival programs, or rather the return of Black capitalism's profits to their community, would therefore bring forth its own negation through providing a context that would allow the anti-capitalist nature of evolutionary intercommunalism to take seed:

> 'The most important element in controlling our own institutions would be to organise into cooperatives, which would end all forms of exploitation. Then the profits, or surplus, from the cooperatives would be returned to the community, expanding opportunities on all levels, and enriching life. Beyond this, our ultimate aim is to have various ethnic communities cooperating in a spirit of mutual aid, rather than competing. In this way, all communities would be allied in a common purpose... (Newton 2009a: 178)

BPP survival programs post-1970 functioned to provide practical measures to materially and ideologically survive the effects of reactionary intercommunalism but also offered examples of new ways of organizing labour and capital that offered people glimpses of transcending reactionary intercommunalism altogether. The institutional practices of the BPP's survival programs, as Singh (2004: 205-206) has suggested, are best seen as a 'projection of sovereignty' that rivalled the 'reality principle' of the US state. This entailed a practical deconstruction of the idea of state power (policing, education, welfare), which reimagined spaces and practices along anti-capitalist and intercommunal lines of self-determination. The BPP survival programs' offered alternative ways of life to the racially divisive, class exploitative and gendered[10] structures of capitalist society and were aimed towards eliciting a broad spectrum of support for these alternative forms of life. The BPP survival programs thus reimagined and reorganized institutions (welfare, employment, local economy) that were being destroyed or co-opted by the processes of reactionary intercommunalism. This is made explicit by Elaine Brown's comments, in 1972, which articulate that resisting the material and ideological effects of a new form of global capitalism was now the fundamental rationale of the BPP and its approach of survival pending revolution:

> ... the whole concept of transforming institutions. Because, as you have stated here, production is so "decentralized", and just as our ideological assault is difficult because of the factor of pin-pointing the evil, the real assault cannot be, as many "guerrillas" suggest (i.e. Cleaver) made to destroy at the point of production, - for it can be hardly identified...The character of assault, it would seem, should be transformation of production. (Brown and Newton 1972: 1)

It was this strategy of dealing with the effects of an unprecedented new phase of global capitalism that helped inform Newton's decision to refocus all BPP activity across the US back to Oakland in the summer of 1972. Newton and the BPP leadership's decision to close all chapters of the BPP other than the

Oakland branch and request all members return to Oakland as a base of operation sought to focus all remaining BPP resources on making Oakland a liberated territory. [11] This saw the BPP attempt to extend its survival programs in Oakland in order to educate and politicise a potential revolutionary force. This reflected the revolutionary intercommunal vision Newton believed was now needed to both survive and possibly radically alter the regime of reactionary intercommunalism:

> We are now free to move toward the building of a community structure that will become a true voice of the people, promoting their interests in many ways. We can continue to push our basic survival programs, we can continue to serve the people as advocates of their true interests, we can truly become a political revolutionary vehicle which will lead the people to a higher level of consciousness so that they will know what they must really do in their quest for freedom. Then they will have the courage to adopt any means necessary to seize the time and obtain that freedom. (Newton 2002: 207-208)

Conclusion: The lessons of Newton's proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization and Survival Pending Revolution as a first response?

The characterization of the BPP's survival programs as alternative anti-capitalist/socialist forms of self-determination has been made before (see Genet 1992, Hardt and Negri 2009, Singh 2004). However, what I have attempted to demonstrate in this article is that what is missing from these accounts is how Newton's theory of intercommunalism began to theoretically underpin the rationality of BPP strategy and the BPP survival programs from late 1970 onwards. The acceleration and expansion of BPP survival programs post-1970 and the eventual attempt to consolidate the BPP back in Oakland in 1972 are largely unintelligible without an understanding of Newton's theory of intercommunalism. Indeed, if we accept the premise that Newton's work offers a proto-theorization of the age of neo-liberal globalization then it becomes clear that the strategy of survival pending revolution is in many ways one of the first, if not the first, forms of resistance to neo-liberal globalization. As such, in the conclusion of this piece I want to reflect on how reading Newton's theory of intercommunalism as a proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization impacts on how we should approach both the history of neo-liberal globalization in the US and what lessons we can learn for resistance today from viewing the BPP's survival programs as a first response to the effects of an impending neo-liberal social order?

If we accept the premise that Newton's theory of reactionary intercommunalism offers a proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization then it becomes apparent that the history of the BPP is also entwined with the history of neo-liberal globalization. Re-reading Newton's theory of intercommunalism forces us to reconsider elements of academically popular narratives of neo-liberalism in the US. In particular, Newton's work centers race as a central factor in the unfolding of neo-liberalism in the US. Whilst narratives of neo-liberalism, such as those offered by Harvey (2005) or Brown

(2015), focus on issues such as the inter-linked processes of financialization and the dismantling of welfare capitalism in the First World and the spreading of capitalist production and proletarianization in the Third World, or the spread of neo-liberal market rationality across all facets of social life, they are often entirely silent on the issues of race and its relationship to the neo-liberal restructuring of US society.[12] This is particularly odd given that the social order that neo-liberalism in the US precedes is the era of Civil Rights/Black Power at home and decolonization and Third World liberation abroad.

Newton's proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization radically differs from such narratives placing the issue of race and racism at the centre of the unfolding of neo-liberalism in the US. Newton believed that reactionary intercommunalism's shifting of imperial focus, from land to technology, would herald the reconfiguration of the material reality of white supremacy that had underpinned US society since its formation; including its post-war social democracy. This would see the ruling circle enrich themselves through technological innovation and the expansion of the geography of capitalist production and enact processes that would in turn lead to the relative decline of white citizens' material and political power. Neo-liberal globalization would not simply be the transformation of capitalism in US but rather the transformation of the racial capitalism that has underpinned US society since its colonial inception. Empirically, Newton's thought appears prescient, as the effects of neo-liberal globalization on US society and the relative political and economic decline of the power of white citizens have helped engender the resurgence of white nationalist and xenophobic populism in the US (Narayan 2017a). Equally, analytically, Newton's work reaffirms how race is the modality of class for vast sways of subjects and how neo-liberal globalization's effects on the racial settlement of US society must be confronted rather than silenced.

Re-reading Newton's theory of intercommunalism as a proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization in turn forces us to reconsider the present day significance of Newton's rearticulating of the BPP towards survival pending revolution. As suggested above, it is tempting to simply see the BPP survival programs as providing services that filled in the cracks of the racialized divisions of US welfare capitalism. But Newton's conception of survival pending revolution also meant that survival programs were aimed at reimagining and re-organizing institutions that Newton believed were being coopted or destroyed by the processes of reactionary intercommunalism. The strategy of survival pending revolution thus questioned the moorings of traditional leftist concepts about organising resistance (unions, industrial working class, welfare state) under welfare capitalism whilst also offering a critique of the destructive aspects of the on-coming processes of neo-liberal globalization (automaton, deindustrialisation, state retrenchment).

This was down to the racialized and imperial forms of domination that underpinned such revered aspects of welfare capitalism and the neo-liberal transformation of capital that were now rendering such strategies and tactics increasingly ineffective.[13] Newton's strategy of survival pending revolution thus articulated that to achieve self-determination for all of the people, and not just some of the people, now required new strategies and tactics that could

deal with the global effects of reactionary intercommunalism and provide an alternative intercommunal way of organizing society. BPP survival programs, and their creation of alternative intercommunal forms of life in liberated territory, were essentially some of the first evocations of such new tactics that Newton believed could help people achieve self-determination in an age of reactionary intercommunalism.

What such a strategy brings home today, in an actual age of neo-liberal globalization, is that there can be no simple return to supposed benign forms of welfare capitalism or state power.[14] These prior forms of capitalism not only have their own crimes of domination (racism, imperialism, patriarchy) but the foundational categories of such systems, such as wage-labour, are increasingly called into question by technological advancement. The current order, as Newton understood 40 years ago, requires new alternative revolutionary intercommunal institutions and forms of life that could achieve liberation for all. But this can only happen through reimagined and reorganized institutions (welfare, employment, economy) of the nation-state that are grounded in revolutionary intercommunal values. As our neo-liberal present increasingly fractures communities across the globe into antagonistic relationships, and further co-opts or destroys their communal institutions of resistance, it may be high time to return to the history of the BPP survival programs as both a source of inspiration for our own survival pending revolution.

Notes

1 The Panther 21 had been a group of the New York Chapter Panthers who had been indicted and imprisoned in 1969 on charges of planning to attack police stations and an education office in New York. On January 19th 1971, 17 members of the Panther 21 had written an open letter in support of the Weathermen Underground and its advocating of guerrilla warfare against the US state. The same letter had openly criticised the BPP's gradualist politics and proclaimed the Party to now be reformist rather than revolutionary.

2 This account of Newton's theory of reactionary intercommunalism draws from Narayan (2017a). The argument that Newton provides a proto-theorization of neo-liberal globalization does not centre on Newton predicting the entirety of the neo-liberal social order. Rather, Newton provides one of the first accounts of the reconfiguration of the colonial/imperial relationships between the centre and periphery of the global economy, the global spread of multinational corporations and capitalist social relations, the end of state socialism, and the attack on welfare capitalism across advanced economies. Whilst Newton saw these processes as taking shape in his immediate context, it was his belief that the effects of these processes would increase in vivacity as reactionary intercommunalism brought the world into ever-closer capitalist interconnection and interdependence.

3 I take this term from Prashad (2013: 5)

4 Indeed, in 1972 and against the grain of Marxist thought, Newton was convinced that the Soviet Union would fall due to such changes in nature of imperialism: 'The situation in the First Workers State provides the best example of a struggle for sovereign territory deteriorated into a struggle to accommodate the needs and desires of the people with concessions to U.S. technology, its might, and the infiltration, thereby, of imperialist ideology. One need only take a look at the Russian people today- the so-called "socialist people" hopping around for tips. Or consider those people who went through the 1917 Revolution, only to end up dreaming of mink coats and two-car garages' (Newton 2002: 265)

5 I use racial capitalism in the manner suggested by Robinson (2000). This highlights how racialization and racism predate capitalism but became integral blocks in the emergence of capitalism. The capitalist system is thus fused with and often dependent on forms of racialization and forms of domination based on such racialization

6 There is a tendency in the historiography of BPP to create an either/or situation in assessments of Newton's theory of intercommunalism. When rank and file members or ex high-ranking Panthers (e.g. Bobby Seale) have questioned the influence of the theory historians have also tended to question the theory. This often sees intercommunalism dismissed as abstract theorising and unrelated to BPP praxis. What this position fails to understand is that Newton theorised in reaction to the history and praxis of the BPP. The survival programs of the BPP, such as free breakfasts for school children, actually began in late 1968 whilst Newton had been in prison on murder

charges. But the increasing importance of such programs in BPP praxis from 1971 onwards only makes sense with Newton's theory of intercommunalism and the strategy of survival pending revolution. For an attempt of narrating the BPP's survival programs with reference to Newton's theory of intercommunalism see Heynen (2009).

[7] As Spencer (2016: 117) highlights the community programs became the lynchpin of the Party from 1971 onwards and became the most visible aspects of the Party's Black Panther Newspaper.

[8] Newton's position on liberated territory can actually be seen as a critique of China and other socialist Third World countries' approach to revolutionary struggle. Whilst Newton was often publicly supportive of states such as China (see Newton 2009b) in private he was critical of what he saw as Third World replication of the Soviet Union's approach of 'Socialism in One Country' (see Brown and Newton 1972, Newton 1972a & 2002). Newton's conceptualization of liberated territory was more akin to the idea of a global socialist struggle.

[9] It had been a chance meeting with FRELIMO leader Samora Machel and other representatives of FRELIMO in China in late 1971 where Newton had come to the conclusion that the BPP's survival programs could go beyond simply showing the contradictions of US capitalism and offer new alternative institutions that could inspire mass mobilization. Somewhat ironically, Machel had initially rejected meeting with Newton due to the militarized image of the BPP espoused by Cleaver (Brown 1992: 303).

[10] To argue that the Panthers attempted to disrupt gendered social relations may seem odd given the indictment of institutionalized misogyny made by ex-Panther leaders such as Elaine Brown (1993). However, the rightful acknowledgment of the failure of the BPP to overcome chauvinism, misogyny and machismo has largely come to obscure the attempts by the party to disrupt gendered social relations and also the pivotal role women played in the Party. As Robyn Spencer's (2016) wonderful recovery of the organizational history of the Oakland Chapter has shown, in areas such collective child rearing, housework and sexual relations the BPP often promoted egalitarian gender roles. However, in practice these egalitarian gender roles were normally subverted towards misogynistic ends. The BPP's failures on gender issues were thus a failure of action rather than centering on a scarcity of ideas about how to achieve gender equality. Indeed, the BPP was rather unique when compared to other Black Power groups in not reproducing the idea of male supremacy in the fight against white supremacy. Due in large party to activity of COINTELPRO, by 1968, women came up to make up the majority of the Party's rank and file and it is likely no coincidence that Newton's shift towards survival pending revolution also took place at a time of high levels of female BPP membership (see Spencer 2016: 109-110).

[11] Newton's decision to refocus all BPP activity across the US back to Oakland in the summer of 1972 is a classic example of where Newton's theory has largely been ignored. Due in large part to CONITELPRO, and shifts in support from allies, the BPP had become unviable as a national organisation by 1971 (Spencer 2016: 117). However, Newton's decision to refocus Panther activity in Oakland was not simply to 'cut its losses' as Bloom and Joshua (2013:380) suggest; nor does it simply mark the BPP turn towards social democratic politics. Newton's theory of intercommunalism inherently underpinned the decision to centre Oakland as a base of operation and helped inform a new

strategy in the face of state repression and declining support for the BPP. Indeed, Newton's 1972 decision to put forward BPP Chairman Bobby Seale for Mayor of Oakland, and Minister of Information Elaine Brown for a seat on the Oakland City Council, was geared towards educating and politicalising Oakland's disposed communities rather than signalling a turn to social democratic politics.

[12] For an alternative to these accounts of neo-liberalism in the US, which bears many of the hallmarks of Newton's thinking on the link between race and class, or rather class as being experienced through race, see Taylor (2016) and Spence (2015).

[13] As Newton told sociologists Franz Schurmann and Alberto Martinelli in 1972: 'You have to organize the people wherever they are...the whole development of technology is to get rid of labour. I think it's unrealistic to think it any other way and I think the left is hung up on the factory phase that does not go through transformation.' (Newton 1972c: 1-2).

[14] See Harvey (2003: 209-11) for an idea of a return to what he calls a '...a more benevolent New Deal imperialism.' And see Streeck (2014) for a contemporary idea of returning to a supposed age of nation state power without any real reflection on the forms of domination wrapped up with such conceptions of nation state power,

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