

Transcription of Interview with Aaron Dixon
Interviewed by James Johnson, 11 July 1970

- Johnson: My name is Jim Johnson. The day is June 11...July 11 and I'm talking with Aaron Dixon, captain of the Black Panther Party. Aaron, the first question I want to ask you, can you give us...give me a kind of history of the Black Panther Party? Local and National?
- Dixon: The Black Panther Party was founded in 1966. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale and the basic basis the party worked from^{was} the the ten point program and platform drawn up by members of the Black Panther Party, Huey and Bobby, and little Bobby Hutton. They went door to door to all the Black homes in West Oakland to talk about all the Black mothers and fathers and children and ask them what their basic wants and desires and needs were and out of this came the ten-point program. The Black Panther Party was started here in Seattle in 1968...April 1968 and that grew out of some friends of mine and some SNCC members and BSU members who had gone down to a conference in San Francisco...Black Student Union conference and Bobby Hutton had been killed a few days earlier so we got there in time to attend the funeral of little Bobby Hutton who had been murdered by Chief Gaines and his fascist pigs. They also attempted to murder the minister of information, Eldridge Cleaver, and so we attended the funeral and after the funeral later on that night chairman Bobby Seale came to address the Black students and we talked to Bobby after that and told him that we would like to have a chapter or branch in Seattle of the Black Panther Party.
- Johnson: This question, the next question I want to ask you is more in lines on your own personal views and...you know...how you got into the Party yourself, I mean, what possessed you to do this; to risk your life; to become entirely (slur) of oppression of Black people, I mean why did you do it?
- Dixon: Well, see I analysed the situation and observed like so many other Black people have done and we, I relate to what Harriet Tubman said when she said, "Black people have only two things to choose from and that's freedom and that's death," because there's no point in living when you know that your race, your people are being destroyed systematically in a genocidal fashion. And what's happening to the Black Panther Party is not significant because that has been happening to Black people for four hundred years ever since Black people have been here in America. So...but what is happening to the Black Panther Party is just a magnifying glass to what has been happening to Black people. It has just been magnified...so I also relate to what Bungie Carter said that a fly to dies a natural death, his death can't balance out to two dead flies. So I'm saying that I would rather my life mean something because I know that I must die anyway and I would rather my life to have gone for the service of the people rather than my life to have been--to have meant--nothing, rather than my life to have meant and to have weighed the amount of two dead flies.
- Johnson: Do you believe that the techniques, the tactics, used by Black Panther Party are truly effective? Lot of people talk about...you know...working through the system...maybe using Black capitalism as a means of getting freedom. How does the Party feel about this?
- Dixon: Well, social practice is the criteria for truth. You can see that the Black Panther Party is under national attack by the Nixon, Agnew, Mitchell regime and that Attorney Mitchell said that the Black Panther Party was the

number one threat to the security of this nation. That is very correct because we are going forth to clearly expose contradictions that involve this decadent America. We're telling the people that they have a right. They have a right to express themselves, they have a right to defend themselves. Telling the people, every man and every child, and every woman on the face of this planet earth has the right to have and acquire and have the best that human technology and wisdom can develop...and Huey said every man has a right to live and so therefore every man has a right to defend himself. And this is all that we're telling the people. We're letting the people know that they have the power and you can clearly see that this is...this is...there's some validity to this and there's some validity what the Black Panther Party is doing because that is why we are being constantly harrassed and constantly attacked, see, because these pigs are attacking our breakfast program, they're attacking our free medical clinics, they're attacking our liberation schools, our free clothing clinics, our free bussing program. They're attacking all of these functional programs which we are trying to go forth and serve the basic needs of the people.

Johnson: I'd like to ask you how they are attacking it specifically.

Dixon: Oh, there've been many instances where pigs have directly attacked our breakfast program. They've attacked the breakfast program in L.A. They've broken the breakfast program in L.A. at...with guns drawn and intimidated the young children and intimidated the community workers who were working in that breakfast program. And here in Seattle in High Point the pigs busted in one of our breakfast programs and arrested a young ten-year-old brother for stealing a screw driver so...but indirectly what the Nixon, Agnew, Mitchell regime is attacking when they attack the Black Panther Party are these programs because they do...they do not want the people to relate to this... these Socialistic programs because these socialistic programs clearly draw the lines of demarcation because the Black Panther Party is going forth and giving away free food, providing free medical attention while these buffooned pigs are trying to send...spending billions and billions of dollars...trying to send people to the moon.

Johnson: So from what you're saying it sounds like your're very self-defense oriented. Is that really the purpose of the Party in terms of tactics... I mean are you...do you see yourself as playing a role of watching the pigs or do you see yourself in a different position?

Dixon: We're not only watching the pig and observing the pig, but we're exposing him for what we see. Take for instance the Black Panther Paper, the Black Panther Community News Service. This is the only true voice that the people have as far as a paper because they can't get any true representation out of the P.I. or the Times or...so Huey said that the voice of the Panther must be heard throughout the land, the voice of the Black Panther Paper must be heard throughout the land because this is the only voice that the people have...and we clearly expose all the fascist, capitalist, racist elements within our society, we expose Black capitalism, we expose Ron Careene (slur) we expose tricky Dick Nixon, we expose all the enemies of the people. See so we don't just sit by and observe the pigs, but we put into practice what we see and we let the people know that they're being a victim of genocide and the Party was founded on lines of self defense and our lines of self defense will never be...we will never compromise because we know that we have a right to defend ourselves because in the second amendment of the Constitution it says that every man has the right to bear arms and so we just righteously put that into practice and when the party first started Huey and Bobby used to carry weapons openly and this was for educational purposes, this was for people to observe and to see that a Black man would stand up, that he has the right to bear arms, and that he

.will stand up and defend himself.

Johnson: You know here in Seattle conditions are, or do you see conditions here in Seattle as being different than they are in Oakland? You know, you have the National Party with national objectives but really are they applicable here in Oakland [sic] are the...is the nature of the pig here in Seattle the same as in Oakland? Do you expect to deal with him in the same fashion?

Dixon: Well, there's oppression here in Seattle, there's hungry people here in Seattle, there's people here who need clothing and there's people here who are being killed by the pig and there are people here who are being brutalized by the pig. This happens in every Black community, there's... there's oppression here in Seattle. It's on a different level than it is in Oakland, New York and the fascists here have done quite a well [sic] job of covering up the oppression but its here and the people are realizing its here, people...there are people here who are feeling the yoke of oppression.

Johnson: This is on the question of Black Panther Party as a revolutionary party. Julius Lester talks about...I was saying Julius Lester talks about a revolutionary as one who makes revolution. Do you see the Black Panther Party as making revolution? Or can you...

Dixon: That can clearly be seen that the Black Panther Party is making revolution, because we definitely have a revolutionary ideology, and we relate to the struggles of the North Vietnamese and the Korean people led by the courageous leader comrade Kim Elsung. We relate to the struggles in Africa of our revolutionary Black brothers in Africa and our revolutionary brothers in South America. They also relate to the Black Panther Party as a revolutionary organ within Babylon. But anybody can clearly see that the Black Panther Party is creating revolution because we're practitioners, we put things into practice. We don't just use rhetoric. Right now we have a bus outside which is waiting to take people from the Black community free of charge to Monroe penitentiary to visit their friends and their relatives and it is free transportation provided by the Black Panther Party with a free meal served there and back because we see that there is a need for there to be more communications with the brothers who are imprisoned and who are confined because a lot of Black people cannot afford transportation, to pay money for transportation up there and we are going for to provide it. This is just one of the functional programs that we have gone forth and put into practice. We are not...we do not base ourselves on rhetoric, we base ourselves on practice. We relate to everybody else on the same level. We relate to people according to their practice (Johnson: Yeah, right on.) not by what they say.

Johnson: Speaking about Black capitalism a lot of Black organizations believe that... I don't know if you can use the word...green power as the way of liberating Black people in the United States that they believe that the man's power emanates from money, and therefore if Black people want to get power they got to get some money. What do you think about that?

Dixon: Well, Black power...excuse, Black capitalism came from Black power and the word Black power was co-opted by the Nixon administration. They stole this word from brother Stokley Carmichael and twisted it around to mean Black control of the Black community even Black control of the heroin, even Black

control of dope, Black control of capitalism, you know we say white capitalism is no better than Black capitalism, we don't relate to either because all forms of capitalism oppress people and the Nixon administration has made Black is beautiful the term Black is beautiful and Black power, he has made this term into more or less like it's a hobby, you know, it... it's a hobby. It's a natural thing for Black people to say, "I'm going to do my thing, you know, I'm going to get down, I'm going to make some money with some Black capitalism, I'm going to do my thing," and you here alot of niggers talking this type of line but this all comes from the Nixon administration, because you look at the Mod Squad--got a Black pig on there, look at Bill Cosby--he's a Black CIA agent, a fascist Black CIA agent and they're trying to get niggers to relate to these type of things, trying to, you know, make a better fascist, trying to say Black fascist is better than White fascist, you know. A fascist ain't worth a fuck, I don't care what color he is. (Johnson: Yeah.)

Johnson: This kind of leads me to a question of what do you do with a Black capitalist and, you know, sometimes when you use the work Black you almost... okay, you're talking about nationalism, in a sense, because you're trying to bring a group of people under a certain fold. You know, you're trying to liberate a certain people. What if Black people won't be liberated? For example, look at Viet Nam where we're 40 per cent of the front lines. You see we're fighting Vietnamese people. As a member of the Third World, how can we ever justify this. How do you relate to these Black people in the United States who do not seem to be trying to liberate themselves from the Man but to become Black capitalists or, as they said at the Black power conference in Newark, to get a piece of the American pie.

Dixon: Well, if you go forth and investigate and see the high technological capability that the United States has as far as brainwashing the people you can see that it's a very high form because America has the highest form of technology to date and so that encompasses all forms. They control everything, they control television, they control news media, they control...they control everybody's lives, they control everything that happens in everybody's lives. And these things play a very large influence on the way people think and so investigating of the past struggle we see that we just have to struggle and work against it. We just have to show the people the contradictions. We have to show the people that the Mod Squad isn't the right thing...example to follow. We have to show the people that Huey P. Newton has set standards for what Black...for what a Black man should follow because in order for Black people to survive they have had to relate to the image of the pimp and that was the image that everybody related to. That's the image that everybody today relates to, that was the standard that was set for a Black man to be a pimp in order for him to survive, you know? (Johnson: Yeah.) So what we are saying is that there has been a new standard set for what a Black man should relate to and Huey P. Newton has set the example. He has set that example as a Black man standing up in fascist America, armed, saying, "I will defend myself, I will shoot you, if you shoot me," and this standard has been set by Huey P. Newton...and

Johnson: Can I ask you a question right there. You said, "I will shoot you if you shoot me." Most Black people in the United States have not been shot at by the pigs so what else do you do in terms of defending Black people, or else how else are Black people being attacked? It's not just a matter of being shot at; most Black people haven't been shot at.

Dixon: Well, there's genocide that's being waged against Black people. This genocide has been being waged ever since they've come here. This genocide comes in the form of dope. One of the highest forms of genocide, slow genocide, is murdering off our young people, murdering off Black people. Birth control is another form of genocide. I was walking the other day down there on foot on 12th and Yesler, right in the heart of the Black community, I saw a family planning...what's that...you know, family planning. (Johnson: Yeah, Planned Parenthood) Yeah Planned Parenthood centers and they were giving out birth control items to young Black people. This is a form of genocide that we definitely don't relate to and this is a form of genocide that is being perpetrated against the people. But another one of the higher forms of genocide that is being perpetrated against the people is that of railroading of our brothers and sisters to jails and prisons and penitentiaries because the penitentiaries are full of Black people. They are full of them...daily, daily, every day there are thousands upon thousands of Black people who are being railroaded to prisons and jails all around America. The eighth point on our ten point program and platform says that we want our Black men and women held in federal, state, and county, city prisons and jails to be freed immediately. Because they have not had a fair trial because in the Constitution of the United States it says that a man is to be tried by a jury of his peer group. A Black man has never been tried by a jury of his peer group. A peer group is somebody from the same economical, historical, political and geographical background. You have never seen a Black man tried by a jury of Black people from the Black community who understand the basic wants and needs of Black people.

Johnson: Yeah, so you feel that Black people are being held illegally in the jails of the United States.

Dixon: They have been put there illegally. And we say they have a right to be free, out on the streets, and the people are going to free them.

Johnson: You know you talk about the pig, you know, the police being the pig. Is it possible for a Black man to exist in the police department?

Dixon: See we call a pig, we define him as a pig in the manner that he acts and we will call him--we see a Black policeman or we see a white pig, we're going to call him a pig until he proves himself otherwise. That a Black pig is no better than a White pig--a pig is a pig is a pig...I don't care what color he is: pink, polka dot, stripe. But we relate to the Afro-American Police Guild in Chicago, I think they also have one in San Francisco that we relate to because they have shown through their practice that they do not endorse the murder and genocide that is being perpetrated against the Black people because when Mark Clark and Fred Hampton were murdered in Chicago by the fascists there in Chicago, the Policemen's Guild, Afro-American Policeman's Guild came out with the statement condemning the actions of Hanner and local pig force there. They came out condemning the murder and we relate to that because they are showing through their practice that they don't relate to that fascist and...see we judge people through what they say and what they do.

Johnson: The Black Panther Party shows the revolutionary vanguard. At the level of the struggle that we're in today, is this a completely an over-ground...you know...above ground in view of everybody being able to see their actions. Is the Black Panther Party very visible to the people. Are they planning to go underground or maybe you can't answer that. Do you see the

need for an underground struggle?

Dixon: Well, Huey and Bobby used to be in RAM which is called Revolution to Action Movement (slur). And also Albert Williams used to be in it. And Huey wrote an essay called "In Defense of Self Defense" and in this essay he explained how the vanguard party cannot be an underground party because the masses of the people must have something to relate to and they must have...there has to be a large amount of propoganda, a large amount of educational devices going on within the community and this cannot possibly be done by being underground. Chairman Bobby said if we worry about what will happen to us, we will not be able to accomplish anything. So organizations that go underground just to be going underground, we say they are faggots, they are punks because they are relating to what will happen to them and they are not concerned about the interest of the people because you cannot teach the people how to defend themselves, you cannot teach the people how...you cannot teach the people the contradictions and you cannot serve the people by being an underground organization. Now we're going to stay on top of the ground as long as we can, as long as possible, but like onething we've had to do, we've had to come out of our uniforms and there are two reasons we've had to come out of our uniforms. One is the rate of oppression--repression that was coming down on the Party and another reason was because Huey saw a need for memebers of the party to start dressing just like the people, start relating to the way the people dress rather than separating themselves from the people by the fatigues that we used to wear and the black leather jackets and black berets.

Johnson: Does the Black Panther Party ascribe to Marxist and Leninist doctrine? I'm not too hip on that especially, in other words, are they revolutionaries in the sense of, say, Chairman Mao?

Dixon: Chairman Mao was a revolutionary, Marx was a revolutionary even though he was a racist. Lenin was a revolutionary even though he was a racist. There are some ideas that we take out...take from Marxist-Leninism because there are some pretty righteous ideas that they have and we apply those ideas that are applicable to the situation here in Babylon, the same way that Mao did, the same way that Kim Yosung did and the same way that Castro did. The struggle that we're going to have here in America will be completely different from what any other struggle in any other part of the world. We look upon it as being a Yankee Doodle type of revolution, but the ideology of the Black Panther Party is the ideology of the sufferings of Black people and we have just taken the things that can help us in our struggle from Marxist-Leninism we will put it into our own ideology. That's the ideology of the Lumpken proletariat because in the struggle that's in Russia and the struggle in China they looked upon the working force as the main force of the revolutionary struggle. Here in America we look upon the Lumpken as the vanguard, as the main source, as the main power of the revolutionary struggle. The Lumpkens are the brothers on the blocks, the brothers and sisters who refuse to work and who have never worked, who have hustled in order to survive and who have always been the ones to be victims of fascist pig brutality, and the ranks of the Party members who are in the party are from the ranks of the Lumpken proletariat, people who used to hang out on the block, used to drink wine and get loaded all the time because these are the ones who are the most oppressed and these are the ones who are going to take action. And they have proved that here in America.

Johnson: From your own background, your own family background wouldn't you consider yourself being brought up somewhat close to the middle class?

Dixon: No, I wasn't nearly brought up close to the middle class because I'm from Chicago and I'm...I was brought up strictly in the working class but you know I've gone hungry before and my parents, my father and my mother who always taught me to think for myself and they've always related to the simple things in life and they have never...they never were aspiring to become...trying to way off into fantasy, trying to get things they knew they couldn't get so I don't...no I can't see myself, no I couldn't say that I was brought up in the middle class.

Johnson: Well, this is kind of typical of Seattle...That Seattle, it's hard to compare Seattle to Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant or south side of Chicago because Black people in Seattle have had jobs. They've had them, maybe they don't have them now but they've had jobs, they've been working, there's no real slums in Seattle so it's hard to perceive Black people in Seattle as actually becoming revolutionary minded or making a break away from the Man. Now in terms of talking about the Lumpken proletariat, I...you know...I have visions of Harlem and the masses of people there... but I don't in Seattle so does this bring a split between Black people, would you say that...?

Dixon: Well, see I consider myself a Lumpken because I've always refused to work and I still refuse to work. Now there are a lot of brothers in Seattle who do refuse to work. They are against all forms of the Establishment and continuously trying to rebel but some people call Seattle Peyton Place, some people call Seattle pimp town but what has to happen and what is happening or what is going to happen is that the Negroes in Seattle will have to fry in the frying pan a little bit longer and the arrival of Chief Gaines from Oakland, the war mongrel, the fascist Chief Gaines I think is a very significant thing that Wes Uhlman who has taken on the image as being a super liberal has exposed himself and clearly shown that he is a super fascist bringing a war mongrel in Seattle to be the chief of police. He says he didn't bring him here to play role as hatchet man. But we see Chief Gaines through his past history, he is nothing but a hatchet man.

Johnson: Past history, you mean that in Oakland he had a pretty high position of power?

Dixon: In Oakland he was chief of police. Oakland has no mayor. They have a city, I think, its a city council. But see Chief Gaines was responsible for the death of little Bobby Hutton and he was responsible for the...for trying to murder Eldridge Cleaver, the minister of information and just a month after Chief Gaines took office, Huey P. Newton was shot and wounded and imprisoned and has been imprisoned ever since and alot of the members of the Black Panthers have felt the murderous tentacles of pig Chief Gaines. So we are looking at Chief Gaines' practice, we're looking at his past history in Oakland, California, and we don't know what that faggot is going to do, you know, because he's crazy. (Johnson: Yeah.)

Johnson: The Black Panther Party has been in Seattle for what...you said...since 68 of April...April 68...so about a little over two years now and from my own observation it seems like they've changed here and there they've... not a change in the sense of being different people but in terms of tactics maybe in Seattle. In the summer of 68 there was something like...oh, close to 200 people who were...you know...maybe indirectly affiliated with the Panthers. Is that true?

Dixon: Right that's true.

Johnson: What happened?

Dixon: Also in that same time in Oakland there were over 5,000 Panthers. In Los Angeles there were over 8,000 Panthers, in New York there were over 10,000 Panthers but see we had to let our ranks grow because we were in the process of building defense for Huey P. Newton...Our ranks were not closed, our ranks were open and we were taking anybody to come to the Black Panther Party in order to do support work for the minister of defense Huey P. Newton and from this we learned and we observed that in order for us to move in a very righteous manner it would be better and would be to our advantage if we were a strong group of dedicated people rather than a large group...200-300...crazy, insane fools running around doing whatever they wanted to because there were a lot of provocateur agents, there were a lot of pigs, there were a lot of fools and jack napes who wanted to do what they wanted to do, who didn't relate to the rules and regulations of the Black Panther Party. They stole in the name of the Party, they robbed in the name of the Party and Huey just sent a message out saying that we have to deal with it, we have to purge our ranks so the Black Panther Party went forth and purged our ranks, we had a major purge and because Huey saw that we could work much more better if we have a small dedicated group of hard core people rather than a bunch of crazy, insane fools so in January of 69 we had a purge and the purge is still going on and we cannot let any more members in the Black Panther Party, we do not accept any more members in the Black Panther Party nor do we accept any more branches or chapters of the Black Panther Party. But we have an organizing bureau of the Black Panther Party called the National Committees to Combat Fascism. And we have National Committees to Combat Fascism here in Seattle as Bobby Seale Community Information Center and these are full-time workers, people who relate to the struggle and who are participating full-time in working alongside with the Black Panther Party. They follow the same rules that the members of the Black Panther Party follow and they relate to the same ideology.

Johnson: I see...In...I think it was November of 68, they had an election here in Seattle and there was...Curtis Harris ran for an office under the name of the Black Panther Party. Why do you think that he received such little response from the Black community here in Seattle?

Dixon: Well, there were a number of reasons...because, partly he was young and we didn't do, we weren't keeping up in our political work and we had a lot of jack napes and fools in the organization who were making it bad on the Party and the mass media was doing a tremendous job of distorting the image of the Black Panther Party. So from that many people became afraid of us and many people looked upon us as being gangs and a bunch of gangsters.

Johnson: But today your image is better because of certain moves that you've done to rectify your image? I think maybe you're probably relating to your medical clinic and your free food program and your clothing program. Can you tell me something...about that...is it...has it been successful?

Dixon: Yeah, all these programs have definitely been successful, like our breakfast program. We fed over four hundred kids every single morning but we found that the...where you find the large majority of oppression as far as Black people are concerned here in Seattle are in the projects. That's where a lot of the welfare mothers live and that's where the majority of the poor people here in Seattle live is in the welfare...in the projects, projects such as High Point, Holly Park, and Yesler Terrace and Rainier Vista. These people are rashly oppressed, you know. Like these programs have worked best in these areas, you know.

Johnson: Lot of people are going to be listening to this tape. They're going to be students...Black students. They'll be going to a school that has something like 30,000 White kids out there. They'll be very unsure about their lives. What can you tell them...the message as a Black revolutionary, as somebody who is actually fighting for them, in a sense. That is true...you do consider yourself fighting for the people, struggling for the people? (Dixon: Right on.)

Dixon: Well, I have to say that at 23rd and Jefferson, there's a giant, huge gas chamber and concentration camp which has only one entrance in and one entrance out and a pool,...the swimming pool, the Medgar Evers swimming pool, which it is called, is heated by gas. This is nothing but a concentration camp. They have concentration camps in other parts of the state. And we're saying that the fascists are planning genocide upon Black people, because the fascists have already planned and tried to apply genocide to the Black Panther Party. But see when...if they succeed in wiping out the Black Panther Party, they will succeed in wiping out Black people. So that's why the Black Panther Party says that every Black home in the Black community should have a 357 Magnum and a shotgun loaded with double-0 buck or rifle slugs to defend themselves with because these fascists will not stop at anything. They will murder all Black people if necessary and attack against one is an attack against all, we must realize that...we must relate to that. So all I have to say, to sum that up is arm yourself or harm yourself...seize the time.

Johnson: There's another question which Black students are asking and that is going into the system. Black engineers, Black lawyers, Black doctors...they're basing their whole lives...you know...the time they're in school and the work they're doing on...that by the job they are doing they will be able to further the liberation of Black people. Do you believe this is possible within the system?

Dixon: Well, that's already been seen because the system puts the limitations on what people can do, especially when they work as individuals because you try to work as an individual...the system, the repressive state is always there to make sure you are limited as far as what you do. I think this...that's a dream, that's a dream that niggers have that they can work through the system, that's an excuse, that's a cop out for them not to relate to the righteous problems that are happening because we don't have time. We cannot take time to try to work through the system because the system must be destroyed. We are against the system and all its remnants.

Johnson: Okay...see I think I have another question here. Well...yea...on the history of the Party. The BSU and many other Black student organizations... they talk revolutionary many times but it seems that they're placing an undue amount of stress on degrees and they consider this as a liberating force and the Black Panther Party seems to be, from what you are saying, a purified organization. It seems to have...you know... your lives are on the line. That a lot of Black people are benefitting from the fact that when you say something the Man gets scared and he dishes out money but the Lumpken proletariat doesn't get it. It goes to the Blacks who are on the fringe and haven't said anything. But many of these Blacks still are human beings, they still are honest people and they still don't feel right about what they're doing. So, as a member, as a leader of the Black Panther Party, in relating to this direct question which Black students are asking...you know...what can I do? You know, you said arm yourself is one thing, but still again in terms of their lives being productive I can see that in a state of self defense, but in terms of them building, creating revolution, creating, and if you see revolution as a necessary stage for liberation, what do you suggest they do if they do get an engineering degree, or if you think that that's the thing they should do.

Dixon: I think that they should relate to what the Lumpken are doing and that they should attend the university of the streets because that's where you look and learn things, that's where you learn how to survive, that's where you learn about the suffering of the people. That's how you also can serve the people is in the streets, with the people not sitting off in some jive-ass classroom reading some sociology book that doesn't apply to the sufferings of the people. Because I spent two years in college at the University of Washington. Those were two of the most fucked-up years, and I wasted two years, you know. I could have been out there serving, righteously serving the people. I was stuck off in some classroom. Because the hour is upon us, the time is now and we don't have too much time. Because we have enough doctors. There are enough doctors who relate to the revolutionary struggle, there are enough lawyers who relate to the revolutionary struggle who have already gone to school, there are enough technicians and electricians who have already gone to school and who are willing to apply their skills in the revolutionary struggle for the people so that these...so what I'm saying is that we need warriors, we need revolutionaries, we need people out there on the streets to organize with the people, to work with the people, to serve the basic needs of the people, because when you go to school your life is being programmed. You're going into an institution that is programming your life and controlling you, in essence telling you what you are going to be doing in the near future. And so the university...the students in the university should bring themselves back to the community, back to the streets because that's where the real university lies, in the streets. That's where you live to survive and that's where you learn to deal with these day-to-day things that occur within the Black community.

Johnson: Okay, one other area...this last area that I'd like to talk about right now and that is again on your own personal life. You said you were from Chicago, when did you come to Seattle?

Dixon: I left Chicago in 1958, September 1958.

Johnson: And you've lived here in Seattle since then. You went to...what schools did you go to while you were here?

Dixon: I went to Garfield, went to Queen Anne, I went to Meany Junior High School, went to Catherine Blaine Junior High School, I went to Coleman School Elementary

Johnson: How did you...what did you think about these schools? You just talked about you didn't believe the University was really where it's at in terms of educating you to realities of life. How did you feel in grade school, since at that time people weren't getting Black. [slur]

Dixon: In grade school I felt what I've always felt ever since I've been in school is that...you know...I just couldn't relate being in school. I just never could relate sitting behind a desk studying...you know...because there was no interest in it because it did not relate to me, it did not relate to what was happening. It didn't relate to my family, it was just trying to teach people to move on an individual level and for you to try to get a better score than this person here. I've always hated school, I've never liked school. I used to try to skip school as much as possible because school wasn't teaching me nothing and I couldn't righteously relate to it, period. And I think that I...you can see that on a very large scale because like a lot of the young people today who are going to high school--they are not going to high school, they are dropping out, they don't ever go to school...like people said that the problem at Garfield and Franklin is one of attendance, kids don't go to school. That's because there is nothing for the young people to relate to...there is nothing for them to relate to. That shit that they're teaching them in school doesn't relate to their daily survival, they daily struggle. It's not going to teach them to survive or how to live from day to day.

Johnson: Can the system ever teach them that?

Dixon: The system is going to teach them what they want to teach them and that's to perpetrate exploitation and they perpetuate the theme, do your own thing. In order for a person to do his thing, he has to step on somebody else. That's what the system teaches and that's what the system will always teach until we get rid of it, until we destroy it and make an ideology, have an ideology for the people, where the people will be struggling for everyone. Where I repeat, every man, woman and child on the face of the planet Earth will be able to enjoy the highest form of technology that humans, that man's human wisdom can develop.

Johnson: I see. Okay, I need some...