



does it place those things in an essentialist idea of identity, where you have people who claim to speak for all workers, women or all black people and for what they should think and do. The onus is on every individual to come to terms more fully with who they are, who or what oppresses them, and work with others who share their experiences to liberate themselves and each other. This, for Jones-LeCointe was what Black Power and the Panthers were all about.

This was practiced in one of the movement's biggest campaigns: the Mangrove Trial. There was a restaurant in Notting Hill set up by Frank Critchlow, the Mangrove, which was described by historians Bunce and Field as 'the beating heart of Notting Hill's West Indian community'. 'Black people who wanted advice on housing or legal aid went there, as did black radicals who wanted to discuss the revolution in the Caribbean, or the fortunes of the American Black Power movement' The police raided this restaurant numerous times, officially over licensing issues and drug raids, though the raids didn't produce any evidence. The Black Panthers helped organise a protest against police harassment, after being involved by one of the staff at the Mangrove, Darcus Howe. Howe, Critchlow and a number of others were arrested, and they became known as the Mangrove Nine. The Panthers were very successful in using the trial to expose institutional racism in the police and courts, and to mobilise their community against it. All of the Mangrove Nine were acquitted.

The Mangrove campaign should be of great interest to anarchists – it was an excellent example of direct action against state oppression, but also in defence of a community. By defending a restaurant which provided advice on housing and legal issues to people who faced a great deal of discrimination, they defended a system of mutual aid and the self-organisation of black people in London. They linked the particular oppression in front of them to what was described in one Black Panther publication, Black People's News Service, as a politics for the 'Liberation of ALL oppressed People, and primarily the liberation of Black People totally from every form of enslavement and exploitation.' I don't think there's much in this to disagree with from an anarchist point of view, and there's a great deal to learn from it.

The Mangrove campaign was the largest immediate success of the Black Panthers in Britain. Many of the issues they campaigned on were addressed in the coming years, as their photographer Neil Kenlock pointed out in an interview with VICE and another with Organised Youth. More moderate and reformist groups had only managed to obtain the most limited concessions from the government on discrimination, and nothing at all on immigration legislation. After the Black Panthers were most active in Britain, a much stronger race relations act was put in place and talk of repatriation of immigrants was off the table. Another Black

