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**‘Black Oppressed People All Over the World Are One’:
The British Black Panthers’ Grassroots Internationalism, 1969-1973**

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On March 21, 1971, over 4,500 people opposing a proposed UK government Immigration Bill marched from Speakers’ Corner in Hyde Park, London to Whitehall. The marchers, mostly people of color, paraded across the metropole under the banners of anti-racist organizations such as the Black Unity and Freedom Party, the Pakistani National League, and the British Black Panther Movement (BBPM). The Bill had drawn their ire because of its extensive restrictions. For Commonwealth citizens, the Bill’s patriality clause meant that unless they had lived in the country for five years or had a parent or grandparent who had been born in the UK, they could be asked for papers or deported at any time. Since the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962, the government had curtailed the free flow of migration, and the proposed Bill would taper that flow to a drip. The Bill sent the message that, if passed, the United Kingdom would not welcome any more black immigrants.¹

The marchers delivered letters to 10 Downing Street and the Home Office that called for the bill’s immediate withdrawal. The letters decried the bill as, “blatantly racist” and “a gross violation of the rights of black people in Britain.” *The Times* reported that the protest had been organized by the Indian and Pakistani Workers’ Associations, who had brought workers from Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Sheffield, Leeds, and Bradford to London. Among the groups, *The Times* observed that, “the most militant marchers came from the Black Panther Movement.”²

The BBPM’s protest tactics led in part to their characterization as the most militant protestors. “For most of the two-hour [march],” *The Times* noted, “[the Panthers] shouted slogans and gave the clenched fist salute.”³ Indeed, Panther members foregrounded the

importance of a strong public presence. As Panther Hurlington Armstrong recalled, “Along the side of other movements, we was the strongest and the most militant.”⁴ Indeed, with many members wearing berets, jackets, and badges and carrying British and American Black Panther newspapers, the BBPM’s visual politics fueled its public recognition.⁵ The Panthers also carried a banner on the march that defined their ideology. Emblazoned with the slogan, “Black Panther Movement: Black Oppressed People All Over the World Are One,” the banner proclaimed the Panthers’ two-pronged agenda (see Figure 1). The BBPM had a global lens, through which they sought alliances with other people of color. They also defined blackness broadly. Mozambique-born, South Asian BBPM member Tony Soares remembered that black, “was a political affiliation rather than a skin colour.”⁶ This reflection epitomized the Panthers’ vision, to empower to communities in Britain and elsewhere through a conscious embrace of blackness.



**Figure 1. Front page, *Black People’s News Service*, May/June 1971.
Source: Black Panther Movement, *Black People’s News Service*, May/June 1971, in NEW/17/7, GPI.**

The British Black Panthers' protest tactics manifested their anti-imperialist politics. These took shape in the movement's day-to-day community organizing; its denunciations of British racism; its function as a clearinghouse of information about African-descended peoples; and its rigorous study of the history and culture of the African diaspora. Through these activities, the Panthers created a sense of belonging for many black Britons and disseminated information about people of color across the diaspora.

Active from 1967 to 1973, the British Black Panthers comprised an anti-racist movement of first- and second-generation immigrants from Britain's former Caribbean, West African, and South Asian colonies. Centered in London, they stood out among the UK's major Black Power organizations for their militarism and secrecy, as well as for their connections of intellectual study to community organizing. Biafran playwright Obi Egbuna founded the BBPM in Notting Hill in April 1968, leading it as a small revolutionary vanguard organization until the summer of 1969. When Egbuna was jailed for allegedly threatening a police officer, a group broke with him and took the movement to Brixton, the center of London's Afro-Caribbean community.⁷ The group had taken issue with Egbuna's preference for the media spotlight rather than the day-to-day struggles of London's black community. Althea Jones-Lecointe, a woman, led the second phase of the Panthers as a mass movement. Between 1968 and 1973, roughly three hundred people joined the BBPM, while several thousand participated in their protest events. The movement maintained four branches in London, in Brixton, Clapton, Acton, and Finsbury Park.⁸

This article builds upon recent examinations of the trajectory of black politics and anti-racist organizing in Britain during the interwar and postwar eras.⁹ Historians such as Marc Matera and Kennetta Hammond Perry have established how dissenting, diasporically-oriented black voices across the early and mid-twentieth century drew attention to "institutionalized

[praxes] of racial discrimination” in Britain through anti-racist campaigns and coalitions.¹⁰ This article extends the arc of Matera and Perry’s work by demonstrating how London continued to serve as a site of diasporic formation in the 1970s, with the BBPM fostering black internationalism among working- and middle-class black Britons. The British Black Panthers emerged following the establishment of a handful of moderate, integrationist political organizations between 1964 and 1967, epitomized by the work of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD). As Perry notes, these movements “transform[ed] the state into an arbiter of discriminatory complaints without accounting for the ways in which the state remained complicit in fomenting the ... ‘colour bar.’”¹¹ Likewise, scholars have charted how interactions between African-American activists and black Britons helped nascent black British movements expand.¹²

Such groups benefited from the ideas and activism of a handful of black internationalists. Among them was Trinidadian-born activist Claudia Jones, who fused her position as a Communist with her membership in the overlapping Caribbean and African diasporas to form a distinctive black internationalist politics.¹³ However, Jones passed away in December 1964, before many of the future Black Panthers had reached adulthood. Although a few UK Panthers had encountered the work of radical internationalist intellectuals such as C.L.R. James, George Padmore, Martin Delany, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Frantz Fanon, the British Panthers did not have domestic models that showed them how to transfer black radicalism to the streets. The BBPM, then, drew from this intellectual grounding while bringing black internationalist politics to London’s streets en masse.

While a few works have detailed the contours of British Black Power, to date there has been little scholarly exploration of the BBPM’s community organizing efforts.¹⁴ The relative

novelty of examining a black British social movement on its own underscores the significant gaps that remain in the literature. This lacuna has resulted in a limited understanding of the BBPM's organizing strategies, achievements, and legacies for postwar black Britons.

This article comprises the first detailed examination of the British Black Panther Movement's social history. In it, I trace the contours of the movement as represented in the BBPM's newspapers and in oral histories with its members, and I outline the Panthers' efforts to tie quotidian struggles to black internationalist politics, an endeavor I call grassroots internationalism. As such, this research establishes the British Black Panther movement's organizing praxis and the forms of racism to which its members responded. This work offers a bulwark against overarching narratives that fail to interrogate Black Power movements on their own terms. It takes up historian Robin D.G. Kelley's calls to seriously consider the visions of social movement activists and to decenter the United States and sub-Saharan Africa in accounts of Black Power and black internationalism.¹⁵

According to historian Rosalind Wild, the BBPM was one of the two most significant Black Power organizations in Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s, both of which spawned spinoff movements. These included the Universal Coloured People's Association (UCPA), Britain's first Black Power organization founded in 1967, which re-emerged as the Black Unity and Freedom Party (BUFP) after an organizational split in 1970, and the Black Liberation Front (BLF), which grew out of the BBPM's demise in 1973.¹⁶ The groups exhibited strong continuities with colonial subjects who sought freedom from British domination by migrating to the metropolis during the interwar period.¹⁷ Wild notes that, among these groups, the BBPM was the most active in terms of its promotion of black culture and the least publicity-focused, maintaining secrecy about its membership and keeping few written records.¹⁸ It was also the only

major British Black Power organization to be led by a woman, and although it had relatively few women members, it explicitly opposed sexism, regarding it as equivalent to racism.¹⁹ The BBPM took inspiration from the US Black Panther Party (USBPP), who emphasized the international and intercommunal nature of their organizing efforts and defied the label of black nationalism.²⁰ Although the BBPM maintained correspondence with and received a few visitors from the USBPP, including Connie Matthews in 1970, no official affiliation was established between the two movements.²¹

Moreover, this article argues that the BBPM situated local people in London and across Britain within the contexts of anti-imperialism and black internationalism, rendering their everyday struggles visible in a diasporic framework. The British Black Panthers were local people with an internationalist mindset. From London's streets, they engendered a sense of international solidarity with a range of struggles within and beyond the African world, advocating for the right of self-determination for all people who struggled against oppression and exploitation.²² The BBPM maintained an ethical commitment to the black British neighborhoods of London, and they stayed connected to grassroots.²³ With their study of black history and culture and their efforts to chronicle instances of racism and anti-racist organizing throughout Britain and internationally, the BBPM articulated an anti-imperialist politics that drew directly on black Britons' lived experiences.

In so doing, the movement instantiated everyday black Britons as diasporic peoples, raising their concerns to a level of national and international importance within a postcolonial black public sphere.²⁴ The Panthers accomplished this through education and material support to those members of the black British community who faced racist harassment or mistreatment. Despite the BBPM's small membership of less than three hundred people, its protest politics and

uncompromising support for black Britons led it to “punch well above its weight,” in the words of Jamaican-born Panther Neil Kenlock.²⁵ While the BBPM deployed blackness as a politics of oppression under which they envisioned Africans, Afro-Caribbeans, and South Asians as mutual constituents, these multiple, overlapping diasporas at times impeded the movement’s success.

This article uses a body of first-hand accounts of the BBPM—the movement’s newspapers and oral histories conducted with former members—as key sites for understanding the Panthers’ organizing efforts and protest politics. I examine in detail forty-four issues of the Black Panthers’ newspapers that I collated from across seven public and private archives in Birmingham (UK), London, New York, and Durham, North Carolina. Collectively, these newspapers form a rich source body that broadens how the history of the British Black Panthers can be shaped. It also introduces significant new evidence about the nature and extent of anti-black racist violence in Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The newspaper articles expand upon the Panthers’ memorable protest events, often corroborated in their oral history testimonies, and they detail the depth and extent of the BBPM’s organizing. Thus this article opens up new perspectives on the forms of black political mobilization in Britain, and it enables us to reconsider how history is crafted based on the availability of particular written sources. The Panthers’ newspapers also attest to the materiality of black politics in this era, and to the elements of global news that readers apprehended.²⁶

The BBPM’s newspaper took on four separate titles, manifesting the movement’s evolving structure and ideology. The paper emerged in July 1968 when Egbuna consolidated a faction of the UCPA into a revolutionary vanguard. The UCPA’s newspaper *Black Power Speaks* first listed the Black Panther Party as its editorial board that month.²⁷ From December 1969 to July 1971, the movement’s most active period, the paper was called *Black People’s News Service*

(BPNS). Spurred on by a critique that radical intellectual C.L.R. James delivered to BBPM members about a lack of engagement with international black and working class struggles, the Panthers shifted their focus to international socialist issues, publishing the *National and International News Bulletin (NINB)* from July 1971 to February 1972.²⁸ The *NINB* was printed under the auspices of the Black Peoples' National Information Centre (BPNIC), a clearinghouse of black organizations and information. When the BPNIC slowed its activities in February 1972, the Panthers circulated *Freedom News*, which continued until the movement split apart in March 1973. In that month, the Brixton Panthers produced a single issue of the newspaper *Black Life Brixton*, while the North London Panthers printed *Freedom News: North and East London Community Voice* until October 1973. The newspaper's evolution paralleled the movement's initial focus on collective solidarity within the black British community; its later shift to a greater embrace of internationalist politics; and its eventual fracturing due to varying racial and class concerns among London's black neighborhoods.

The BBPM newspapers invite a detailed reconstruction of the movement's activities in the absence of many written records. Panthers worried about the state surveillance that Egbuna and others endured in the movement's first phase, and therefore they maintained secrecy around their activities. The organization did not keep records, nor did it publicly identify individuals' contributions to the movement. Therefore, this effort to write the movement's history has engendered a concomitant need to reconstruct a Panther archive.

As a medium of exchange, the BBPM's newspaper instilled the idea that local people belonged to a diasporic community. Members, especially Youth League (YL) members, sold the newspapers weekly in local markets (see Figure 2). YL member and later dub poet Linton Kwesi Johnson remembered selling papers in Brixton, Croydon, and Balham markets.²⁹ The BBPM

sometimes sold the US Black Panther Party's newspapers, which Panther Clement John drove to Heathrow Airport to collect once a month when they arrived from the US.³⁰ The sale of newspapers provided an opportunity for Black Panthers to interact with other people of color in their local communities and to share concerns.



Figure 2. Panther newsstand outside Desmond's Hip City, Brixton, 1973.
Source: Neil Kenlock private collection.

The BBPM aimed through its newspapers to record and disseminate as much information as possible about black people in Britain, offering a corrective for the absence of black people's stories from British news and politics. The paper had the goal of informing black people in Britain about their history, experiences of racism, and anti-racist and anti-imperialist struggles. The front cover of the *BPNS*'s March 1970 proclaimed the paper's aims:

Black People's News Service is meant to serve Black people, because the racist capitalist establishment in Britain [sic] has deliberately distorted black people's history, has refused to give the true reason why we black people are here in Britain, and are suppressing information about the day to day struggle of black people here and all over the world.³¹

The suppression of black history was a central element of what Perry has called, "the mystique of British anti-racism," through which the nation imagined itself as racially liberal and tolerant.³²

The lack of information about black British people's lives in mainstream narratives implied that racism and black struggles did not exist. Black people in late 1960s Britain often experienced racism in atomized ways through experiences at job interviews, rental offices, in classrooms, and in interactions with the police; the individual nature of such experiences obstructed possibilities for black solidarity. The newspaper thus served two critical functions: it enabled readers to learn about other black people's experiences of racism and anti-imperialist organizing, and its exchange facilitated conversations between BBPM activists and the public.

The Panthers' newspapers documented and cultivated a highly active movement that bridged local people's quotidian concerns with international campaigns against race and class oppression. The paper chronicled 364 events that the Panthers organized between May 1969 and October 1973, an average of one event every five days. At the center of this effort lay the Panthers' indictment of police harassment of and violence toward people of color, which the BBPM recorded 148 incidents of in England and Wales during this period. These episodes substantiated rumors that had circulated in the late 1960s and early 1970s mainstream British press about police harassment of the black community, particularly Afro-Caribbean people. The London Metropolitan Police had worked to silence accounts of police harassment through legal sanctions and public relations arguments that black people who complained were overly sensitive

to issues of race.³³ The BBPM newspapers therefore acted as a key site for raising public awareness about police violence toward black people in the early 1970s.

Through its newspaper, the BBPM integrated the concerns of black people across Britain and the African, South Asian, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean diasporas. During this period, the Panthers staged 147 events in solidarity with black people suffering racist treatment from UK institutions. Such solidarity events were national in scope: BBPM members demonstrated in London and traveled on weekends to support comrades in other cities, including Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, Bradford, Bristol, Derby, Sheffield, Leeds, and Nottingham.³⁴ They also visited at least sixty black people in Britain's prisons and hospitals. The newspaper coupled these efforts with wide-ranging international reports on the struggles of black and other oppressed people in fifty-eight countries outside the UK. They also held a total of seventy-seven cultural, women's, and youth events and called for eighteen mass public protests. In practical terms, the Panthers raised funds; held demonstrations and meetings; offered legal aid, health advice, and prison and housing support; and circulated informational materials. As such, the Panthers promoted the social, cultural, and political life of black Britons, centering their experiences within an anti-imperialist, diasporic network.

Full membership in the BBPM required a considerable commitment of time and energy.³⁵ Membership remained small; no more than fifty Panthers were active at any one time in the Brixton branch and roughly twenty in the Finsbury Park branch, with a total of roughly three hundred members over the five years of the organization's existence.³⁶ As Johnson remembered, "You couldn't become a member of the Panthers just like that."³⁷ Would-be members had to have a "track record of involvement and activity" before they were invited to join, he indicated.³⁸ This requirement limited full membership to those whom the central committee believed

dedicated to the cause. This exclusivity engendered a sense of collective loyalty, but it also limited membership to those who were willing to join as a lifestyle choice.

As a collective, the BBPM generated a strong sense of belonging, often in the absence of support from members' parents and other community ties.³⁹ Neil Kenlock related that, "I wanted to give my entire life for the struggle of black people."⁴⁰ African-American Ray Eurquhart considered himself a "family member" who belonged to the Panthers who had a home and a community with the BBPM.⁴¹ Eurquhart was stationed in the East Midlands with the US Air Force. He located the Panthers by seeking out radical black groups at London's Colletts bookshop. Likewise, Kenlock remembered that, "We were all one family."⁴² Another Panther, David Udoh, had migrated to Britain from his native Nigeria to study theology and pursue a vocation as an evangelical minister. But Udoh soon observed that, "the church not only said nothing against [racist discrimination], but in fact some of the landladies and landlords who said, 'Sorry, no blacks, no dogs, no Irish' were church members."⁴³ This powerful cognitive dissonance between Udoh's expectations for the church and what he saw happening around him led him to, "[feel] that we had to do something about it."⁴⁴

The BBPM provided spaces in which members could gather, study, live, and organize. The movement purchased four houses in different London neighborhoods: at Barnsbury Road in North London; on Shakespeare Road in Brixton; in Tollington Park in West London; and in East London's Clapton neighborhood.⁴⁵ Poona-born intellectual-activist Farrukh Dhondy asserted that as one of the few members of the central core who was employed full-time he was able to obtain a mortgage in order for the group to buy the Tollington Park house.⁴⁶ Various Panther members lived in the houses, with Eurquhart recollecting that as many as twelve people lived in the Barnsbury Road house at one time.

Inside these four houses, British Panthers spoke freely about individual experiences of racism on London's streets. They also found social outlets and built friendships in spaces that were safe and generative. The flats also enabled members to devote their free time to the movement. "It didn't take long before we were completely immersed in it," Panther Danny DaCosta averred. "Our whole activities was [sic] based around the activities of the Movement, in Shakespeare Road and in Barnsbury Road, traveling to different areas of London, supporting other brothers and sisters."⁴⁷ The flat at Shakespeare Road in Brixton became the nerve center of the movement, offering a darkroom, library, bookshop, and meeting spaces for members. The Panthers also established the Unity Centre, a drop-in center in Brixton that distributed information about black history, black resistance, and English working class struggles.⁴⁸

Developing community-wide resources was costly, and finances caused considerable concern. Several celebrities contributed to the BBPM, prominent among them were actor siblings Vanessa and Corin Redgrave. The Redgraves helped the Panthers to lease and in some cases purchase the flats that became their headquarters, and they donated funds for legal assistance in the Panthers' most well-known court case, the Mangrove Nine Trial of 1971.⁴⁹ In 1972, author John Berger donated half of his £5,000 Booker Prize winnings to the movement. Berger explained that the Panthers' internationalist approach was a key reason why he donated.⁵⁰ Donations also supported the legal aid fund that the Panthers had founded in May 1970 in order to support the "many blacks being incarcerated."⁵¹ Contributions also enabled members to learn crucial skills. Armstrong, the BBPM's Minister of Defence, remembered the movement sponsoring his fees to take karate lessons. Johnson augured that such lessons contributed to one of the Panthers' visions, that, "Self defence [was] no offense," and that BBPM members saw it important to defend themselves against police brutality and other racist violence.⁵²

On top of donations, the BBPM expected members to contribute financially, which sometimes strained members' economic stability and family relationships. Members saw themselves as a collective to which they remembered being willing to "give everything."⁵³ But some Panthers were thrown out of their homes over the way in which they devoted their resources to a movement that many parents did not understand. "My mother was getting fourteen pounds a week as a cleaner at Buckingham Palace and my father was getting something like twenty-one or twenty-two pounds a week to drive buses," Armstrong remembered. "I was getting fifty-five pound a week and I was giving the organisation forty pounds a week. My family was going ape!"⁵⁴ Armstrong's parents' anger at his financial contributions was exacerbated by their acceptance of the mystique of British anti-racism; in fact, many black parents were reluctant to acknowledge their children's frustrations. "It was way down in, many years, when people started to realise that police were corrupt," Armstrong asserted.⁵⁵

The BBPM proclaimed their presence on London's streets in order to deter racist violence. Many members donned black berets, dark glasses, leather jackets, and Black Panther badges as they traveled across the city.⁵⁶ As Dhondy wrote in *The Times of India* in 1969, "Black Panthers, with their rough uniform of beards and berets and dark glasses, prowling around the ghettos are an effective deterrent to the National Front or other freelance thugs."⁵⁷ Dhondy saw the Panthers' physical presence as a way of stopping the harassment of people of color by racist groups like the National Front.⁵⁸ During marches, the Panthers moved en masse in order to maintain safety. Eurquhart remarked that, "We had security along the sides and security in the back. We learned that the hard way."⁵⁹ Aware of the limitations that the police and the government had placed on their movement, and of the contingent nature of state violence, the Black Panthers nonetheless proclaimed their adaptation of Black Power in the streets.

The BBPM's grassroots organizing centered upon raising awareness of police brutality, in the face of many white and black Britons' insistence that the British state was faultless. Clement John, who had arrived in the UK from Grenada at age seventeen, asserted that the, "continuous harassment [black people] had to go through" became a rallying point for the black community.⁶⁰ It also triggered his decision to join the BBPM:

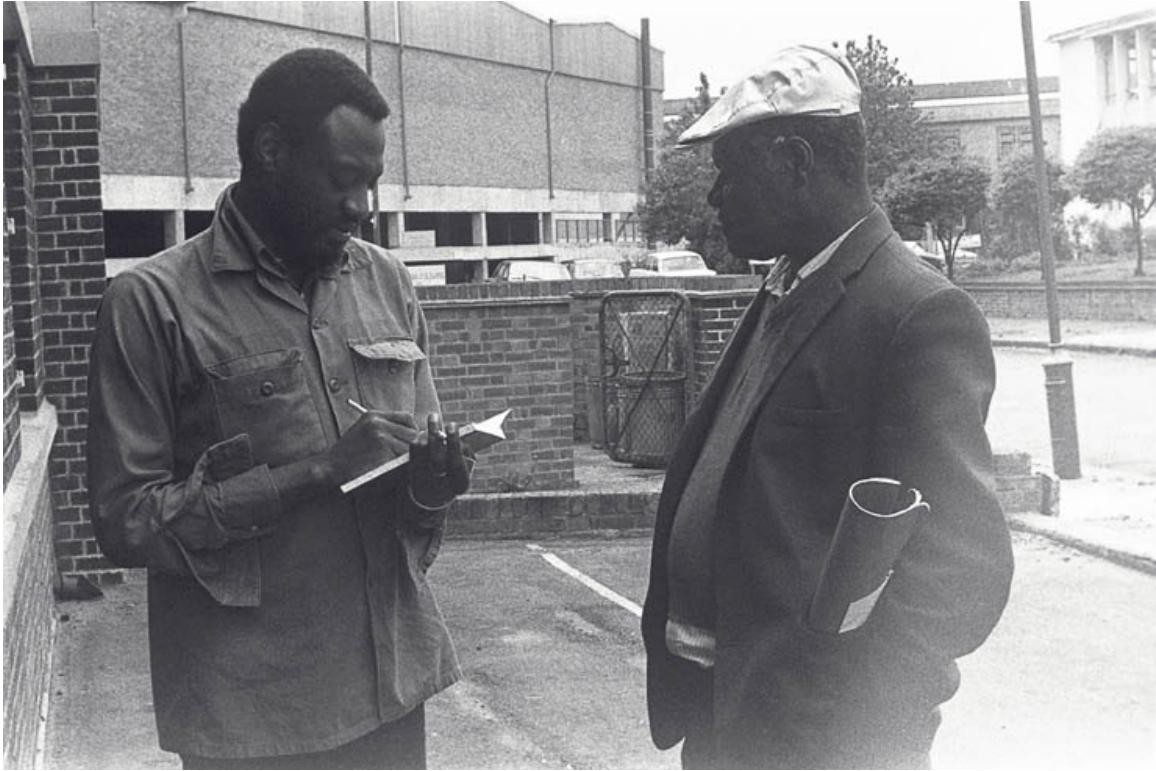
I became involved ... when young black people living in Acton at the time where I resided were being brutalised by the police. They didn't have to do anything. They would just walk in the street and next thing you know, a police van comes along, pick them up, throw them in the van, bring them to the nearest police station, put their head in the toilet, flush it. Sometimes they use a cushion against their abdomen and punch the living daylights out of them, because by doing this, you do not see the fist mark on the skin... And because of all these injustices, that's what got me involved.⁶¹

John himself was arrested multiple times, including on March 2, 1970 while protesting against the imprisonment of Bobby Seale in the US.⁶²

The BBPM devised several tactics for dealing with the police. They traveled throughout the city to support people who were arrested.⁶³ Udoh and others, "would gather each time a black youngster was arrested, and [ask] questions."⁶⁴ In 1972, when Johnson saw, "three black youths being manhandled by police in Brixton market," he employed a strategy he had learned in the BBPM. He had, in his words, "the audacity to inquire about the welfare of people who were being arrested ... As a Black Panther I was trained to write down their names and addresses, to tell their parents, and take the policemen's numbers."⁶⁵ The BBPM also routinely published first-person accounts of police harassment. Such accounts demonstrated that individuals who experienced racist treatment at the hands of police were not alone, and that they were believed to be telling the truth. As explained in the *BPNS* in March 1970 following the arrest of a group of teenagers, "The BBPM is publishing these statements of the Black youths themselves not only that we as Black people should understand more clearly the brutality of this vicious exploiting

system, one arm of which is the police force, but so that we should organise ourselves towards the destruction of this racist system.”⁶⁶ By documenting multiple first-person testimonies of police harassment, over time the BBPM built the case for systemic British racism and helped inspire resistance against it.

The BBPM presence on London’s streets held institutions accountable and pushed for appropriate allocations of public services to the black community. BBPM members traveled the city’s streets twice weekly, “[distributing] information and [exchanging] experiences with the working people of the black community.”⁶⁷ (See Figure 3). In one incident in June 1969, a bus stopped short outside Manor House Station in north London, badly injuring a black female passenger. While the injured woman recovered in hospital for two months, a friend of hers contacted the BBPM. The Panthers visited the woman, advised her on legal matters from their collective knowledge base, and helped her in her interactions with her publicly appointed lawyer.⁶⁸ Through this and other daily activities that included court advocacy, landlord-tenant mediation, and support for squatters’ rights, the Black Panthers supported black Britons in times of need, which over time bolstered the community’s well-being and identified them as a key source of help.



**Figure 3. Darcus Howe takes details from a local man, n.d.
Source: Kenlock private collection.**

The Panthers advocated on behalf of blacks throughout the country, traveling to a number of cities outside London in what Kenlock referred to as the “rent-a-mob” phenomenon.⁶⁹ “If we heard of injustices outside London, we’d hire two to three coaches and go there to support them,” he recalled.⁷⁰ When the Panthers heard that someone had been beaten up at a pub in Birmingham and arrested for assault, roughly twenty members pooled money and hired a bus to travel there on the weekend. They marched in the city center with members of the Afro-Caribbean Circle (ACC), Birmingham’s Black Power organization. While protesting, Kenlock stopped in front of a group of enthusiastic children, whom he posed for a photograph holding the protest’s fliers entitled “Why We Are Marching” (See Figure 4). The fliers symbolically attested to the young boys’ potential future in the movement. The events offered an impression of the organized

resistance that black people were capable of mounting. Onlookers, Kenlock averred, “would be shocked, they'd never seen black people defiant before.”⁷¹



Figure 4. Boys in Birmingham pose with Afro-Caribbean Circle and Black Panther protest fliers.
Source: Kenlock private collection.

The Panthers’ willingness to travel outside London in order to raise the concerns of black people to national importance derived from the movement’s ideology. The Panthers were Marxist-Leninist, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist.⁷² Put another way, Johnson characterized the British Panthers’ ideology as Jamesian. Caribbean radical historian CLR James, the great-uncle of Panther Darcus Howe, “had the phrase, ‘Every cook can govern,’ which summarized our outlook,” Johnson explained.⁷³ James characterized Black Power as a movement at the

cutting edge of a century of black insurgency, the combining of race and class elements under a broadly-defined, significant banner.⁷⁴ With this philosophy and through various sessions in which the Panthers learned from James at public meetings and in private gatherings, the British Panthers set forth the idea that any member had an important role to play in the life of the community. Later shifts in ideology fractured the movement, however, with a Trotskyist alignment taking hold by 1972. Some members grew frustrated with a lack of attention to class, and an increasingly doctrinaire approach especially among the BBPM's Central Core.

The Panthers attempted to unify recruits from several diasporas: South Asians, West Africans, Afro-Caribbeans, and African-Americans; these groups had varying encounters with British racism, with Afro-Caribbeans targeted most heavily by police. Armstrong recounted that, “we said no matter where you come from, how much money you got ... the colour of your skin was what determined the treatment you got and we were all the same colour.”⁷⁵ Although the BBPM membership was predominantly Afro-Caribbean, several South Asian members joined, including Farrukh Dhondy, Mala Sen, Tony Soares, and HO Nazareth. Nazareth had come to the UK at age twenty-one in 1965, having grown up in a lower middle class background in India. He joined the movement after having experienced racist treatment in his job search, and after having watched as police harassed his Afro-Caribbean friends while they left him alone. The police's differential treatment of Nazareth from his Afro-Caribbean friends revealed the potential limitations of the politics of inter-ethnic solidarity that the BBPM espoused. Nazareth contended that his experiences “of a racial nature” were “not of the same sort” as his Afro-Caribbean compatriots.⁷⁶ That said, the BBPM appealed to Nazareth because of their rights campaigns on issues of health, employment, housing, and education. He thought that these issues were, “good sensible things that you needed to fight wherever you came from.”⁷⁷

The BBPM's turn to interethnic coalition was partially a pragmatic attempt to obtain greater visibility and recognition. With non-white, New Commonwealth-descended populations numbering just 2.1% of the British population by 1971, the BBPM by necessity became an immigrants' movement.⁷⁸ "Black people in Britain were not enough en masse to make an impact so you had to make it international," Kenlock remembered.⁷⁹ The Panthers took an increasingly internationalist approach in 1971 and 1972, reflecting the growth of anticolonial movements in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, as well as minority ethnic movements in Italy, Ireland and Israel. Members' evolving understanding of the divisions wrought by capitalism and imperialism also fueled the BBPM's attempts at interethnic solidarity.

Though civil rights issues promoted interethnic coalition-building, class divisions hindered the movement's recruitment of South Asian members. Many South Asian BBPM members were middle-class and university educated. Nazareth's first job in the UK was as a computer programmer before he attended university, and Farrukh Dhondy had received an international scholarship to study at Cambridge.⁸⁰ Those South Asian members who were working class believed that their concerns were not well-represented. Tony Soares joined the BBPM's North London chapter for a short time in 1970 but found the movement to be more ideologically rigid than he wanted. "I felt that the ordinary people did not relate to that," Soares averred.⁸¹ He left to form the Black Liberation Front which was explicitly aligned with workers' struggles.⁸² In addition, Armstrong remembered that although the group traveled to London's East End in order to support South Asians there, "they still saw themselves as a different breed, and they rejected [us.]" Armstrong claimed that Indians, "always thought they were a bit more intellectual."⁸³ The intersections of race and class engendered divergent social concerns that failed to attract many South Asians to the movement.

The Panthers' interethnic organizing commingled with their intergenerational efforts to establish a Youth League in November 1970.⁸⁴ Howe led the YL's meetings at the Shakespeare Road Panther headquarters and larger venues. Johnson joined the YL after Althea Jones-Lecointe appeared as a guest speaker at his high school debating society. Jones-Lecointe was a biochemistry PhD student at the University of London who came from a family of radical women activists in Trinidad.⁸⁵ Johnson could not recall what Jones-Lecointe spoke about that day; rather, her symbolic presence and personality mattered to him. "[Her visit] got me interested in the Panthers, it was she who inspired me and got me involved politically," he recollected.⁸⁶ Johnson described Jones-Lecointe as, "one of the most extraordinary people I have ever met," and, "a simply brilliant orator and a great teacher."⁸⁷ The YL also offered the Panthers a pipeline to recruit teenagers into the movement.⁸⁸

Youth League members joined in movement work, from direct organizing to socializing to education. Johnson and others went door-to-door, "trying to get black people involved and get them aware of what we were doing."⁸⁹ YL members raised funds by selling newspapers and by designing and selling Panther t-shirts.⁹⁰ They also held cultural events and dances at the Metro Youth Club, a community center for Brixton teenagers. As the Brixton YL reported in the *BPNS* in May 1971, it helped black youth to, "develop a political understanding of the situation of black people in England."⁹¹ The Panthers' educational work with YL members engendered an interest in black history, culture, and consciousness. YL members read books, discussed contemporary issues, and dissected BBPM campaigns.⁹² They also extended their educational efforts outside the movement. In September 1971, students at Dick Shepard School and Tulse Hill School - Kenlock's and Johnson's schools - started black studies programs. These programs

filled massive gaps in the public curriculum around the histories of African-descended peoples, the British Empire, and black culture, and they spread black consciousness beyond the YL.⁹³

The BBPM saw grassroots education as critical in achieving black internationalism's potential. The Panthers educated black people about their historical circumstances and diasporic citizenship. The BBPM held weekly studies and discussions of working-class politics and black history, "in order to have a better understanding of the racist capitalist system that oppresse[d them,]" the *BPNS* proclaimed.⁹⁴ The movement required all full and YL members to take part in its educational system, which they also opened to non-members.

Panthers and other community members studied theory and practice at Unity Centre bookshop and in the library at their Brixton headquarters. BBPM students studied with CLR James, American feminist activist Selma James, and Guyanese historian Walter Rodney, among others.⁹⁵ The Panthers approached reading, speaking, and self-expression through writing and photography rigorously, generating high expectations among members. DaCosta recalled that, "You needed to study, you needed to know what was happening."⁹⁶ Members saw an understanding of black and working class history as a critical precursor to all organizing.

BBPM members and affiliates read across genres, from imperial history to black literature. The Panther curriculum included readings in Marxist-Leninist theory; the histories of the Caribbean, slavery, the British Empire, and the Labour Party; postcolonial theory; and the writings of African-American activists. Johnson recalled analyzing Eric Williams's *Capitalism & Slavery*, and CLR James's *The Black Jacobins*. The works of Frantz Fanon, Malcolm X, and W.E.B. Du Bois inspired Howe.⁹⁷ DaCosta recalled reading Eldridge Cleaver, Angela Davis, and Stokely Carmichael.⁹⁸ Dhondy introduced the study of EP Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* in order to educate members about the Labour Party and "who [they]

were talking to.”⁹⁹ It was within this rich educational environment that Johnson, “discovered African-American literature and poetry. That’s what inspired me to start to write verse myself,” he recalled.¹⁰⁰ In the YL, Johnson began writing poetry and founded a writing collective. His motivation to write, “sprang from a visceral need to creatively articulate the experiences of the black youth of my generation, coming of age in a racist society.”¹⁰¹

The Panthers’ growing internationalism led them to help organize the National Conference on the Rights of Black People at London’s Alexandra Palace in May 1971. The conference’s theme, “Towards Black Unity,” signaled how the proposed 1971 Immigration Bill had convinced black activists of the need to unify their movements toward a socialist revolution. Conference organizers proclaimed, “International Solidarity the World Over,” indicating shared revolutionary aims with other global movements. The committee promised speakers from the Caribbean, Palestine, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Africa, and the United States.¹⁰²

The Conference newspaper’s cover laid bare the goal of uniting ‘non-white’ people in Britain (See Figure 5). Set against a red background, a drawing at the top illuminated this vision. The drawing included a Sikh man, an African man, an East Asian woman and child, an Indian woman, and an African woman and child. Strikingly, the African woman was the only person not facing the viewer. Rather, she stretched her arms to hold hands with both genders and with members of two different religions. Metaphorically and physically, the African-descended woman connected the diverse range of black people pictured. While later mainstream calls to multiculturalism might have deployed similar images in appeals to “color-blindness,” the multiple uses of the word “black” signified that blackness providing the overarching unifier among the people depicted.



Figure 5. Black Panther Movement, "National Conference on the Rights of Black People in Britain," *Special Conference Issue*, May 1971, cover.
Source: NEW/17/5: "National Conference on the Rights of Black People," Alexandra Palace, 22-23 May 1971, GPI.

The Panthers emerged from the Alexandra Palace Conference having expanded their vision and formed coalition with other Black Power organizations. In July 1971, the BBPM overhauled its newspaper to reflect this broadened outlook, changing the paper's name to *National and International News Bulletin*, updating its masthead, and increasing its international coverage.¹⁰³ The *NINB* started as a dispatch of information on global black struggles. Rather than its previous front-page articles about confrontation between the police and black Londoners, the

first issue of the *NINB* focused on events outside London that precipitated the need for national and international unity.¹⁰⁴ The first issue featured an article about Handsworth, another Birmingham suburb where police special forces had attacked a party thrown by the Afro-Caribbean Self-Help Organisation. In part, Dhondy, one of the paper's editors, wanted to reach new international audiences in order to raise awareness around the struggle of the Mangrove Nine. Dhondy mailed copies of the *NINB* to sympathetic left-wing groups and their newspapers around the globe.¹⁰⁵ The newspaper also took on new rhetorical strategies, borrowing the masthead image from the Conference's logo, which signaled their intended diversity. A new slogan: "Correct Information is the Raw Material for New Ideas," emphasized that the communication of accurate information was tantamount to advancing their cause.¹⁰⁶

In addition to communicating news about a range of anti-imperialist mobilizations, the Panthers built solidarity with nationalist struggles, including that of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Armstrong recollected that the Panthers secretly invited IRA members to speak to the group.¹⁰⁷ Eurquhart and others attended standing-room only conferences that Irish Republicans led.¹⁰⁸ "We identified with the IRA at the time," Armstrong remembered. "Gerry Adams and these guys... used to come over and do lectures, but we had to smuggle them into the venue and smuggle them out 'cause they were wanted in England."¹⁰⁹ That the IRA inspired the Panthers reflected the extent to which secrecy and radical revolutionary activity existed in tandem within the BBPM.

But the Panthers were not unified about whether to support the IRA publicly, as tensions emerged around the use of violence and the BBPM's relationship to nationalist causes. The Panthers debated whether to march in response to the Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry's Bogside neighborhood on January 31, 1972. According to Eurquhart, the Panthers discussed at

length the possibility of alienating black and white liberal supporters, and they feared being labeled as terrorists and suffering far right retaliation. “They could really say, these people are... not just black people... These are fucking terrorists, Communists.”¹¹⁰ In the end, the Panthers chose to march because, “the Irish had a legitimate national question. And we had a legitimate national question. So we saw it intersect.”¹¹¹ Here, Eurquhart’s invocation of “a legitimate national question” referred to the Panthers’ support for nationalist causes. In contrast, Dhondy and others drew a line at the use of violence. He argued with YL members who called for, in his words, “IRA-style raids and gunfights.”¹¹² Along with others in the BBPM leadership, Dhondy refused to agree to such tactics because of the small size of the black population in the UK and, in his mind, the BBPM’s lack of pursuit of a nation-state solution. “We don’t have a country which we want to join,” he insisted. So although the Panthers allied themselves with the IRA’s anti-imperialist vision, they did not share the organization’s tactics or its nation-state aims.

In the end, the Panthers joined a sizeable march in support of the IRA’s cause. On February 5, 1972, *Freedom News* reported, the Panthers marched with an estimated fifteen thousand people to Prime Minister Heath’s residence. They carried their flag and a banner that proclaimed, “The Black Panther Movement Stands in Total Solidarity With the Irish Liberation Struggle,” and which openly identified them with their Irish comrades.¹¹³ The demonstration made Eurquhart feel, “so connected and proud” to participate in the international leftist movement.¹¹⁴ He called the event the “Avenge Derry” demonstration and remembered shouting in call-and-response, “We want him... dead” in reference to Major-General Robert Ford, Commander of the Land Forces in Northern Ireland at the time of Bloody Sunday.¹¹⁵

The BBPM supported several international causes alongside that of the IRA. Between 1969 and 1973, the Panthers and the BPIC published 92 different bulletins in which they

foregrounded black history and narrated black people's stories of oppression from around the diasporas. Panther international news bulletins cast a wide net, developing knowledge about autonomous black movements in the Caribbean, Israel, South Africa, and elsewhere.

In a flier from September 1969 entitled, "Black People Get to Know Yourself," the BBPM summoned black Britons to an awareness of black history and culture. They justified this call by tracing the origin of man to Africa and satirizing the "so-called European civilisations," which had conquered Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Americas.¹¹⁶ Here the BBPM questioned the notion of "civilization," which had been used to justify racism against colonial subjects across European empires.¹¹⁷ The authors asked readers if they knew, "that the systematic denial of the civilisations Europeans met in Africa, is the method the racist system has been using to justify its barbarites [sic] against black people." Here, the Panthers connected European conquests of Africa to the post-colonial experiences of diasporic peoples.

The Panthers also raised questions about Europe's ongoing efforts to achieve global predominance. In January 1973, Britain joined the European Economic Community. Kenlock argued that Britain's accession to the EEC came across as an insult to the people of the New Commonwealth and the labor they had done for the British Empire. "The first thing they did was stop bananas," he remembered, indicating how membership in the EEC radically reshaped Britain's foreign trade patterns.¹¹⁸ France had their former colonies import bananas into Europe, which as he understood it, led Britain to institute a barrier against the Jamaican banana trade, rendering Jamaican banana plantations, "overgrown, bush, nothing... Unsustainable."¹¹⁹ Britain's membership in the EEC also severed the possibility of return migration for families like Kenlock's. The membership and ensuing trade policies that the British government pursued

hardened many black Britons' relatively fluid diasporic circulations, rendering futile the dreams of some black Britons to return home to the Caribbean and South Asia one day.

From the time of its inception in 1967, the movement had faced internal tensions over the relationship of race and class, which limited the possibilities for the broad-based coalition that the BBPM's leadership sought. For a time, the Panther Movement foregrounded race over class for a time, with the notion that black people regardless of class background, ethnicity, education, and employment status must build solidarity. However, differing expectations about the role of class and ideology led in part to the movement's demise. Some middle-class intellectuals, led by Howe and Dhondy, thought the movement had drawn too heavily on Marxism-Leninism at the expense of articulating an ideology that explicitly accounted for race, and that the movement's leadership had taken on too doctrinaire an approach. They left the movement and formed the collective and magazine known as *Race Today*.¹²⁰

Others shared Howe and Dhondy's dissatisfaction with the movement. In early 1971, some working class members, including Tony Soares, came to believe that ideological detracted from necessary grassroots organizing. Soares and others in the North and West London BBPM branches left to form the Black Liberation Front (BLF). Frustrated with the increasingly rigid Marxist-Leninist focus of the BBPM, the BLF took black working-class concerns as its struggle, alongside support for Ron Karenga's strain of cultural nationalism.¹²¹

A firebomb attack sealed the movement's demise. On the night of March 15, 1973, Dhondy lay sleeping inside his flat above the Unity Centre in Brixton. He awoke suddenly to find himself encircled by smoke. He jumped out the window onto the sidewalk below wearing only his undergarments.¹²² By morning, the fire had destroyed Unity Centre and its library of black history, politics, and literature. Although no arrests were made, the Panthers believed that

members of the National Front had thrown the firebomb.¹²³ In June 1973, the members who remained after the BLF split and the fire at Unity Centre changed the organization's name to the Black Workers' Movement (BWM). Johnson reflected that, "We'd moved on from the ideology of Black Power to a more black working class ideology."¹²⁴

The Black Panther Movement had provided thousands of black Britons with a vehicle to collectively voice the entrenchment and extent of British racism. Panther activities had emphasized the particularity of affiliates' identities, and the specificities of the oppressions that harmed Afro-Caribbeans, South Asians, women, and the working class. The BBPM had deployed Black Power as a malleable construct that allowed for interethnic organizing and could be used to build solidarity with a range of anti-imperial struggles.

By 1973, a short period of intensive political and intellectual growth had taken place particularly among blacks in Brixton. The BBPM had organically connected aspects of black British life that had heretofore been separate: they had married the grassroots everyday struggles of black Britons with the internationalist aspirations of the African diasporic movement. They had also attempted, with limited success, to link anti-racist struggles across ethnic lines. Panther members had analyzed their shared experiences of imperialism, while simultaneously confronting the crumbling empire's tight grasp on immigration, policing and public services as ways of controlling its black population. The London-based BBPM had served as the clearinghouse of a network of diasporic anti-imperialist movements, fostering unity and investigating and disseminating news about events that affected people of color across the diaspora. Such unifying aspects, however, had been hampered in part by variegated police behaviors toward black Britons. The police's harsher treatment of Afro-Caribbeans and West

Africans than toward other black groups generated a sense of urgency that potential South Asian recruits could not match.

Perhaps most importantly, the BBPM connected the British state's racist treatment of black people in the UK to its relations with its former colonies. In this way, the movement fused black internationalist politics and everyday black British people's concerns, envisioning black Britons as diasporic subjects at the center of multiple nationalist movements for anti-imperial justice. As they enacted anti-imperialist politics on the streets of London and in the UK, the Black Panthers critiqued the nation-state. They noticed how the UK was using imperial methods to organize diasporic peoples domestically, and they emphasized the state's role in buttressing racism against people of color in Britain. In so doing, the Panthers bridged the disjunctures of the colonial past with the realities of the postcolonial present, pragmatically employing strategies in order to actively engage with life in the metropole.

¹ The term 'Black' is used to identify people from Africa, the Caribbean, and southern Asia. This decision is intended to emphasize shared experiences of racism and displacement as was the practice of the UK Black Power Movement. As Linton Kwesi Johnson recalled, "In those days, black simply meant non-white." Johnson, interview by author, August 2, 2011, London (hereafter Johnson), digital audio recording and transcript in author's possession, 4:10.

See also Kennetta Hammond Perry, *London is the Place for Me: Black Britons, Citizenship and the Politics of Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 15-16; Rosalind Wild, "'Black Was the Colour of Our Fight.' Black Power in Britain, 1955-1976" (Ph.D. diss., University of Sheffield, 2008), 1fn2.

² "Immigrants Protest." *The Times*, 22 March 1971, 2.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hurlington Armstrong, interviewed by Rakhee Kewada, July 31, 2009, London, (hereafter Armstrong), 10, transcript and audio recording in IV/279/2/17/1, "Do you remember Olive Morris? Oral History Project," Remembering Olive Collective, Olive Morris Collection (hereafter OMC), Lambeth Local Archives (hereafter LLA), Minet Hall Library.

⁵ HO Nazareth, interview with the author, July 29, 2011, Queen's Park, London, digital audio file and transcript in author's possession (hereafter Nazareth), 46:00.

⁶ Tony Soares, interview by author, July 22, 2011, London, (hereafter Soares), digital audio recording and transcript in author's possession, 22:30.

⁷ For more on the movement's founding and first phase, see Anne-Marie Angelo, *Global Freedom Struggle: The Black Panthers of Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming); Angelo, "The Black Panthers in London: A diasporic struggle navigates the Black Atlantic," *Radical History Review* 103 (2009): 17-35; Robin Bunce and Paul Field, "Obi B. Egbuna, CLR James and the Birth of Black Power in Britain: Black Radicalism in Britain 1967-1972," *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 3 (2011): 393-414.

⁸ Tony Graham Lumumba announced the establishment of the North London chapter in May 1970. Lumumba, "Letter from North London," *Black People's News Service* (hereafter *BPNS*), May 1970, 3, in NEW 17/3, George Padmore Institute (hereafter GPI), London. The West London chapter was first mentioned in June 1970. *BPNS*, July 1970, in CRIM 1/5522/3, The National Archives: Public Record Office (hereafter TNA: PRO). The Clapton chapter was first identified in *BPNS*, May-June 1971, in NEW 17/7, GPI.

⁹ Marc Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015). See also Hakim Adi, *West Africans in Britain, 1900-1960: Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and Communism* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1998); Minkah Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2011); Susan Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich: Race and Political Culture in 1930s Britain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ Perry, *London is the Place for Me*, 21. See also Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto Press, 2010); Perry, "Little Rock in Britain: Jim Crow's Transatlantic Topographies," *The Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 1 (2012): 155-177.

¹¹ Perry, *London is the Place for Me*, 245-46.

For other anti-racist groups in the UK during this period, see Brian W. Alleyne, *Radicals Against Race: Black Activism and Cultural Politics* (New York: Berg, 2002); Fryer, *Staying Power*; Dilip Hiro, *Black British White British: A History of Race Relations in Britain* (London: Grafton, 1991); Ron Ramdin, *Reimagining Britain: Five Hundred Years of Black and Asian History* (Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 1999); Edward Scobie, *Black Britannia: A History of Blacks in Britain* (Chicago: Johnson Pub. Co., 1972); Wild.

¹² Stephen Tuck, "Malcolm X's Visit to Oxford University: U.S. Civil Rights, Black Britain, and the Special Relationship on Race," *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 1 (2013): 76-103; Stephen Tuck, *The Night Malcolm X Spoke at the Oxford Union: A Transatlantic Story of Antiracist Protest* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Saladin Ambar, *Malcolm X at Oxford Union: Racial Politics in a Global Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Robin D.G. Kelley and Stephen Tuck, eds. *The Other Special Relationship: Race and Rights in Britain and America* (London: Palgrave, 2014); Joe Street, "Malcolm X, Smethwick and the Influence of the African American Freedom Struggle on British Race Relations in the 1960s," *Journal of Black Studies* 38, no. 6 (July 2008): 932-50; Rob Waters, "Black Power on the Telly: America, Television, and Race in 1960s and 1970s Britain," *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 4 (2015): 947-970.

¹³ Carole Boyce Davies, *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2008), xiii-xiv; Bill Schwarz, "Claudia Jones and the 'West Indian Gazette': Reflections on the Emergence of Post-colonial Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 14, no. 3 (2003): 264-285.

¹⁴ Rosalind Wild's PhD thesis offers the most in-depth charting of the British Black Power Movement organizations. See Wild; Angelo, "The Black Panthers in London"; Bunce and Field, "Obi B. Egbuna, C.L.R. James"; *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 3 (2011): 393-414; Tanisha Ford, "'We were people of soul': Gender, violence, and Black Panther style in 1970s London," in Ford, *Liberated Threads: Black Women, Style, and the Global Politics of Soul* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 123-158.

¹⁵ Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), ix. See also Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, 62; Kelley, "How the West Was One: The African Diaspora and the Re-Mapping of U.S. History," in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. Thomas Bender (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2002), 123-147, 137.

¹⁶ Wild, 86-87.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 98-99.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

²⁰ Murch, 59.

²¹ For more on the correspondence between US Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver and UK Black Panther Tony Soares, see Angelo, "'We all became black': Tony Soares, African-American internationalists, and anti-imperialism," in Robin D.G. Kelley and Stephen Tuck, eds. *The Other Special Relationship: Race, Rights, and Riots in Britain and the United States*. (London: Palgrave, 2015), 95-102. On Connie Matthews' February 1970 UK visit, see *Black People's News Service*, March 1970, NEW/17/2, GPI.

²² Fanon Che Wilkins argues that as opposed to Pan Africanism, black internationalism, "enables scholars to make sense of solidarity efforts within and outside the African world." Wilkins, "'A Line of Steel': The Organization of the Sixth Pan-African Congress and the Struggle for International Black Power, 1969-1974," in Dan Berger, ed. *The Hidden 1970s: Histories of Radicalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 97-114, 111fn2. See also: Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Practice of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); Michael O. West, William G. Martin and Wilkins, eds. *From Toussaint to Tupac: Black Internationalism Since the Age of Revolution* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2009).

²³ Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, "Introduction," in *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America* (New York: NYU Press, 2005), 1-16, 3.

²⁴ Here I deploy Donna Murch's vision of diaspora as, "a specific process of community formation" rather than an explicit ethnic definition. See Murch, "When the Panther Travels: Race and the Southern Diaspora in the History of the BPP, 1964-1972" in Nico Slate, ed. *Black Power Beyond Borders: The Global Dimensions of the Black Power Movement* (London: Palgrave, 2012), 57-78, 61.

²⁵ Neil Kenlock, interview with the author, July 29, 2011, Stratham, London, digital audio file and transcript in author's possession, part I of IV (hereafter Kenlock I-IV), 36:00.

²⁶ Jacqueline Nassy Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 42.

²⁷ Black Panther Party, ed. *Black Power Speaks*, July 1968, in CRIM 1/4962/1, TNA: PRO.

²⁸ Farrukh Dhondy, interview with the author, July 26, 2011, Hammersmith, London, digital audio file and transcript in author's possession, part I of II (hereafter Dhondy I), 32:30.

²⁹ Johnson, 3:15. See also Nazareth, 22:30.

³⁰ Clement John, 48:30, in John and David Udoh, joint interview with the author, June 18, 2015, Lewisham, London, digital audio file and transcript in author's possession, (hereafter John and Udoh).

³¹ *Black People's News Service*, March 1970, NEW/17/2, GPI.

³² Perry, *London is the Place for Me*, 19.

³³ James Whitfield, *Unhappy Dialogue: The Metropolitan Police and Black Londoners in Post-war Britain* (Portland, Or.: Willan Publishing, 2004), 50-51; Nicole Jackson, "Imperial Suspect: Policing Colonies within 'Post'-Imperial England," *Callaloo* 39, no. 1 (2016): 203-215.

Reports of police harassment included: "Allegation of police brutality taken up by anti-racialist front," *The Guardian*, 16 May 1966, 3; "Students protest at hospital over alleged police brutality," *The Guardian*, 15 January 1969, 18; "Police cleared of race charge," *The Times*, 31 August 1970, 2; "Inquiry call on police brutality accusations," *The Times*, 12 July 1971, 2.

³⁴ Kenlock IV, 15:00; Danny DaCosta, interviewed by Ana Laura Lopez de la Torre, July 6, 2009, London (hereafter DaCosta), 7, transcript and audio recording in IV/279/2/9/1a-1b, OMC, LLA.

³⁵ Dhondy I, 20:30.

³⁶ Wild, 99-100; Dhondy I, 36:30.

³⁷ Johnson, 2:15.

³⁸ Johnson, 2:30.

³⁹ Kenlock I, 23:00.

⁴⁰ Kenlock I, 11:30.

⁴¹ Raymond Eurquhart, interview by author, February 14, 2007, Durham, N.C., digital audio recording and transcript in author's possession (hereafter Eurquhart), 39:30.

⁴² Kenlock II, 39:00.

⁴³ Udoh, in John and Udoh, 05:15.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 05:32.

⁴⁵ Armstrong, 15.

⁴⁶ Dhondy I, 43:45.

⁴⁷ DaCosta, 2.

⁴⁸ Black Panther Movement, "Fire Bomb War on Black People," *Black Life Brixton*, March 16, 1973, 1, in Box 4, Folder 13, Series II.2, Darcus Howe Papers (hereafter DHP), Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

⁴⁹ On the Mangrove Nine trial, see Joshua B. Guild, "Pressure: Policing Black Autonomous Spaces in London During the Era of Black Power," in 'You Can't Go Home Again: Migration, Citizenship, and Black Community in Postwar New York and London.' (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2007), 199-273.

⁵⁰ Michael White, "Berger's black bread," *The Guardian*, November 25, 1972.

⁵¹ Black Panther Movement, "Black Peoples Legal Aid and Defence Fund," May 1970, in JLR 3/1/5, GPI.

⁵² Johnson, 27:15.

⁵³ Armstrong, 12. See also Kenlock II, 1:15.

⁵⁴ Armstrong, 6.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ John and Udoh recalled that the leather jacket, beret, and badges were not required but worn at an individual's choice. John and Udoh, 52:30.

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- ⁵⁷ Farrukh Dhondy, “Black Power in Britain: A movement in embryo or a fantasy?” *The Times of India*, 27 April 1969.
- ⁵⁸ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain: The Institutional Origins of a Multicultural Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Martin Walker, *The National Front* (London: Fontana, 1977).
- ⁵⁹ Eurquhart, 47:00.
- ⁶⁰ John, in John and Udoh, 23:10.
- ⁶¹ Ibid, 03:45.
- ⁶² “Racist pig magistrate refuses bail to four black activists and one white photographer,” *Black People’s News Service*, March 1970, 2.
- ⁶³ John, in John and Udoh, 25:30.
- ⁶⁴ Udoh, in Ibid., 21:10.
- ⁶⁵ Johnson, as quoted in Dorian Lynskey, *33 Revolutions Per Minute: A History of Protest Songs, From Billie Holiday to Green Day* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011), 303.
- ⁶⁶ “Racist magistrate sentences innocent black youth to three months imprisonment!!!” *Black People’s News Service*, March 1970, 3.
- ⁶⁷ “Panthers harassed while serving the people,” *BPNS*, May/June 1971, 4, NEW/17/7, GPI.
- ⁶⁸ *BPNS*, July 1970, CRIM 1/5522/3, TNA: PRO.
- ⁶⁹ Kenlock I, 23:00.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., 22:30.
- ⁷¹ Ibid., 22:45.
- ⁷² Eurquhart, 1:39:00.
- ⁷³ Johnson, 8:00. James defined this phrase in his 1956 work, *Every Cook Can Govern: A Study of Democracy in Ancient Greece; Also, Negro Americans and American Politics*. Detroit: Correspondence Pub. Co.
- ⁷⁴ Wild, 115 and 4.
- ⁷⁵ Armstrong, 15.
- ⁷⁶ Nazareth, 12:45.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., 14:30.
- ⁷⁸ Percentages determined by author from statistics in: “Table 3: Population by sex, marital condition, area of enumeration country of birth and whether visitor to United Kingdom or not,” Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, *Census 1971: Great Britain, Country of Birth Tables* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1974), 26, 68 and 83.
- ⁷⁹ Kenlock IV, 55:05.
- ⁸⁰ Nazareth, 20:30 and Dhondy I, 43:45.
- ⁸¹ Soares, 13:45.
- ⁸² Ibid., 13:40
- ⁸³ Armstrong, 14-15.
- ⁸⁴ Kenlock I, 43:00.
- ⁸⁵ W. Chris Johnson, “Guerrilla Ganja Gun Girls: Policing black revolutionaries from Notting Hill to Laventille,” *Gender & History* 26, no. 3 (2014): 661-787, 661, 666.
- ⁸⁶ Johnson, 2:00.
- ⁸⁷ Respectively, Johnson, 2:15 and Johnson, as quoted in Wroe.
- ⁸⁸ Dhondy II, 38:30.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid., 25:00.

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- ⁹⁰ Black Panther Movement, *National and International News Bulletin* (hereafter *NINB*), August 6, 1971, Box 5, Folder 1, Series II.2, DHP.
- ⁹¹ Brixton Youth League, "Peoples' views", *BPNS*, May 1971, 4, NEW 17/7, GPI.
- ⁹² Johnson, 24:15 and Black Panther Movement, *BPNS*, May 1971.
- ⁹³ Black Panther Movement, *Freedom News*, June 10, 1972, Box 4, Folder 13, Series II.2, DHP.
- ⁹⁴ "What we do in practice," *BPNS*, March 1970, 8.
- ⁹⁵ Eurquhart, 24:00 and 58:00.
- ⁹⁶ DaCosta, 6.
- ⁹⁷ Johnson, 4:35; Darcus Howe, interview by author, London, July 28, 2011, part II of II (hereafter Howe II), digital audio file and transcript in author's possession, 27:05.
- ⁹⁸ DaCosta, 11.
- ⁹⁹ Dhondy I, 38:30.
- ¹⁰⁰ Johnson, 5:00.
- ¹⁰¹ Linton Kwesi Johnson, "Trust between the police and the black community is still broken," *The Guardian*, March 28, 2012, 34.
- ¹⁰² Program, "National Conference on the Rights of Black People," Alexandra Palace, London, May 22-23, 1971, 2, JLR 3/2/13, GPI
- ¹⁰³ The transition of newspaper name and format took place in early June. The May/June 1971 issue of *Black People's News Service* did not report on the Conference. The June 6 issue of the newspaper was entitled *National and International Joint Information Centre News Bulletin*. The June 11 issue bore the title *National and International News Bulletin*. Box 5, Folder 1, Series II.2, DHP.
- ¹⁰⁴ Black Panther Movement. *National and International Joint Information Centre News Bulletin* No. 1, June 6, 1971, Box 5, Folder 1, Series II.2, DHP.
- ¹⁰⁵ Farrukh Dhondy, *CLR James: Cricket, the Caribbean and World Revolution* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001), xiii.
- ¹⁰⁶ *NINB*, Box 5, Folder 1, Series II.2, DHP.
- ¹⁰⁷ Armstrong, 11.
- ¹⁰⁸ Eurquhart, 1:42:00.
- ¹⁰⁹ Armstrong, 11.
- ¹¹⁰ Eurquhart, 36:00.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 35:00.
- ¹¹² Farrukh Dhondy, interviewed by Rakhee Kewada, July 31, 2009, London, (hereafter Dhondy, OMC), 18, transcript and audio recording in IV/279/2/15/1a, 1b, OMC, LLA.
- ¹¹³ *Freedom News*, February 19, 1972, 1, NEW 17/10, GPI.
- ¹¹⁴ Eurquhart, 34:30.
- ¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:43:00.
- ¹¹⁶ Black Panther Movement, "Black People Get to Know Yourself," September 1969, JLR 3/1/5, GPI.
- ¹¹⁷ On the "civilizing missions" of European empires, see Antoinette Burton, ed. *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and Through the Nation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).
- ¹¹⁸ Kenlock II, 28:45.
- ¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 28:00.
- ¹²⁰ Farrukh Dhondy claimed that he, Mala Sen, Barbara Beese, and Darcus Howe broke up the movement. Dhondy he recalled that, upon witnessing growing factionalism within the group, the

group, “said, ‘we’re going to smash this movement up.’” Dhondy I, 50:00. In contrast, Howe asserted that, “The Panthers died a natural death. We didn’t break it up.” Howe I, 29:00.

For the formation of *Race Today*, see Robin Bunce and Paul Field, *Darcus Howe: A Political Biography* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 153-170.

¹²¹ Wild, 104-5.

¹²² Dhondy I, 56:30.

¹²³ Black Panther Movement, “Fire Bomb War on Black People,” *Black Life Brixton*, March 16, 1973, 1, Box 4, Folder 13, Series II.2, DHP.

¹²⁴ Johnson, as quoted in Wild, “Black was the colour of our fight,” 104.