



## WORKS

which is building up autonomous alternatives to the current power structure that controls our communities.

The survival programs of the Black Panther Party are examples of dual power structures created within oppressed communities. In the 60's and 70's the Panthers provided free health clinics, free breakfast programs for children and free grocery packages to senior citizens. They also developed independent schools called Liberation Schools that provided students with an empowering education that instilled cultural pride and a commitment to community and service in the name of the people. The Panthers were able to generate massive community support around these programs and their politics because they identified a need in the community the government wasn't providing and they stepped in to fill the void. Systems of dual power within our neighborhoods enable us to rely upon ourselves while at the same time developing an infrastructure that would hold revolutionary potential and experience should one day in the future the conditions become ripe for revolution or local, regional or national uprisings. Again this ties in with the concept of the Panthers Survival Programs. The Panthers labeled them survival programs because they were programs to provide until the revolution while simultaneously building community support and empowerment. The community is relying on itself, not the state or local government.

Other examples of dual power and autonomous infrastructure that support community needs are community gardens created on abandoned or vacant lots/fields within our neighborhoods that would develop empowering relations among neighbors and could also be used to grow organic food that could be distributed (free) to community members. After school programs and child care (by responsible community members), food co-opts that would provide a space to purchase healthy foods at discount charges (or free if possible), Adult GED and Adult Basic Education classes, Alternative Schools (not Charters!) that could operate after school to offer a education that promotes free thought, cultural/ community pride and responsibility, etc. Another empowering tactic that should be considered is the occupation of abandoned houses—there is no excuse for people to be homeless or neighborhoods lacking community centers when there are so many abandoned houses. Activists should seize these abandoned houses and turn them into community center hubs that provide programs that will unite the community. In turn the support these programs will generate from the people will make it difficult for the city or police to enforce an eviction order because we will have turned something that was run down, abandoned and considered worthless into a vital component of the neighborhood that the people could take pride and collective ownership of.

