



Yet as we see today the spirit of the movement lives on as everyday in every urban colony there are ordinary people of color, activists, organizing and mobilizing their communities around issues such as police brutality, political representation, control of community resources, education, mass imprisonment, etc. The same issues that our communities mobilized around in the 60's and 70's. The potential of Black resistance therefore still remains within our communities. Although these local formations of activism are not formally connected they are interrelated nevertheless and speak to the new ethos in the Black liberationist tradition and that is local autonomous movements challenging state repression within their own spaces and with their own ideological positions based on the challenges they face. These autonomous movements constitute a Black Autonomous Movement, though no one has formally adopted that name, their actions constitute such a movement in this phase of our people's struggle within the United States.

II. AUTONOMOUS STRUGGLE

The concepts of autonomy and autonomous struggle actually are not a new experience within our people's history of collective struggle. Within traditional Afrikan society, specifically West Afrikan culture, villages ruled themselves autonomously within larger tribal and ethnic federations. In the United States during slavery escaped slaves, commonly referred to as "Maroons" created autonomous fugitive communities within the dismal swamps of Virginia and North Carolina. Autonomy therefore is nothing new within our collective experience of resistance and struggle. While the origin of the word autonomy has its roots in the Greek language meaning "self" plus "law" its concept is universal and is based on the foundation of all democratic movements: consensus. Anyone involved in grassroots activism understands that nothing can be accomplished without consensus and this is the strength of the Black autonomous movements in the Black colonies. These movements are born of local problems and grievances lead by longtime activists who live within the oppressed communities. No "national" or "vanguard" movement is dropping leaders in on the people explaining to them the correct political line or how best to organize within their own territories. Through consensus these communities have developed solutions to confront the problems they are faced with.

It is necessary to clarify that autonomy and autonomous struggle is about creating alternative and revolutionary systems of community and government within and in opposition to the capitalist and corporate democracies of Western societies. The reality is as radical activists we are not presently in a position to, nor are the people presently inclined to, overthrow the government. So we must carve out our own spaces by meeting the needs of the people within whatever spheres of influence we have within our communities. In doing this we are creating systems of dual power,

