Building the BRC with Cyber-democracy

By Abdul Alkalimat

The Black Radical Congress is off and running. We had a successful Congress 1998 and have high expectations for Congress 2000. This is the time to build through struggle, study, and discussion. One of the great tools we have is this web site. Our web site is the basis for a new process called cyber-democracy.

Cyber-democracy is educational, consensus building discussion based on sharing information created by those who are able for all of us. This information will be free and available any time people want to get it. Our BRC web site will be the basis for BRC cyber-democracy. Everyone can get a free email address, and use free Internet access found in almost every community. For people who are isolated, they need to buddy-up with someone who is on line. This is basic literacy for the 21st century.

Not everyone was able to attend the congress in Chicago. Furthermore, at the congress there was not enough time to say everything that needed saying. We resisted the temptation to rush to judgement, we did not vote when there was too much unreadiness to make binding decisions. The Congress started a process that can continue through BRC cyber-democracy. We have three main points for discussion on the BRC web site and we invite everyone to join in and share ideas with the rest of us:

1. **Battlefronts**: Each of the 26 workshops will continue to live on the web site. The discussion can continue by sending in summations of practice. This is the critical test for the BRC: the test of our politics is what we do and how many people in our communities join in.
2. **Draft Freedom Agenda**: We have two alternative drafts to study and discuss. They are very similar, but very few of the many thousands interested in the BRC have read either one of them. Now is the time to read these drafts and contribute to a new draft that we need to adopt in our October Continuations Committee meeting.
3. **Organization and Program 10 Points**: We have a new proposal for BRC organizational structure and program for the time between Congress 98 and Congress 2000.

This cyber-democracy is the 21st century equivalent of town democracy. We will be defining Black politics at the cutting edge of the new information age. Thousands all over the world will be participating, we need at least 100 voices in the discussion. This is a new process and we need ground rules:

1. Every participant in the BRC should contribute to this process. We need collective intelligence.
2. Someone should down load new material posted on the web site and have it at each BRC meeting so that everyone in informed by our experiment in cyber-democracy.
3. People should limit their contributions to one posting per day, and incorporate responses to all other posting so we create a broad dialogue. Posts shorter than 250 words will be most effective and most read.
4. The framework for the online discussion will be the Principles of Unity.

The BRC web site is a technical resource for BRC activists. Local committees can write in to get help in conducting local workshops in cyber skills and cyber-democracy. This is the most open process in the history of the Black liberation movement. Join us!