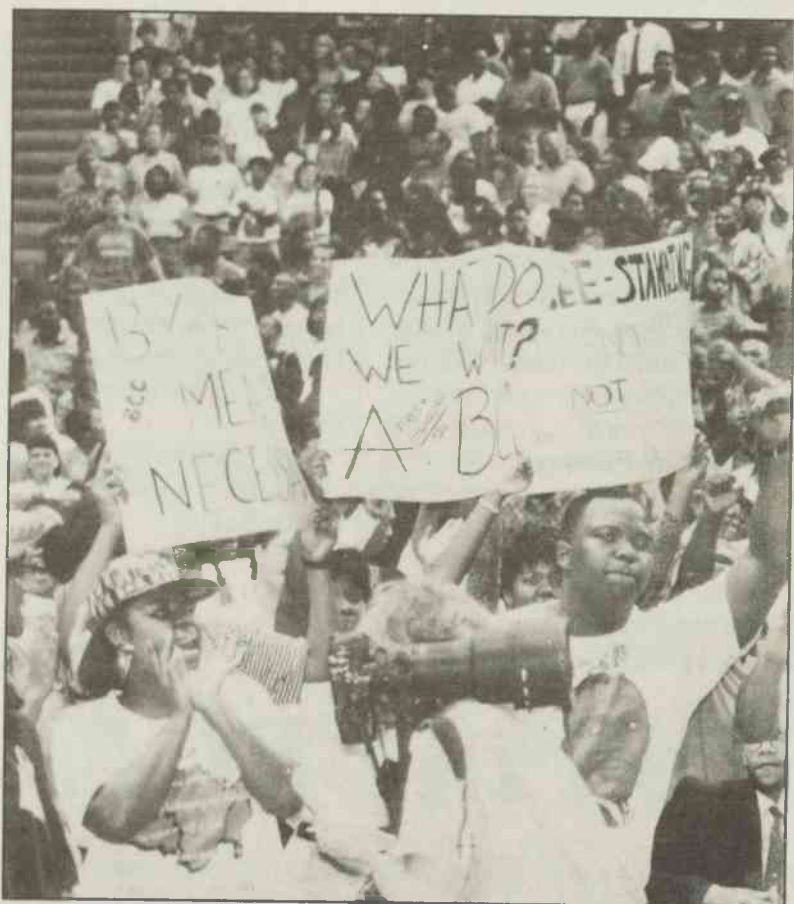
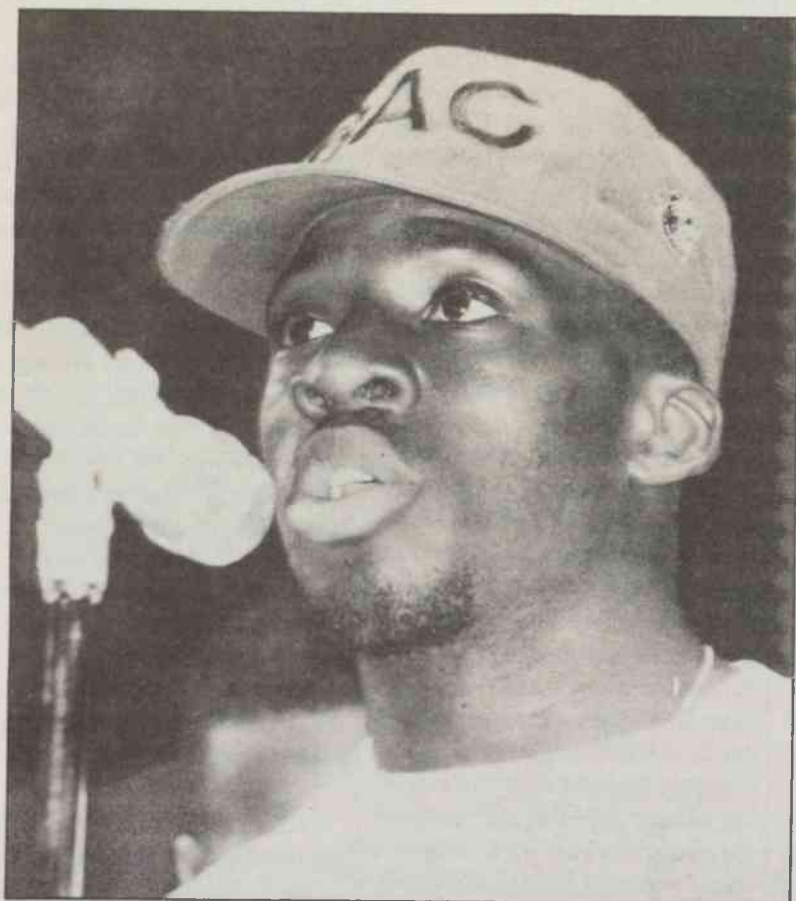


One-On-One With H



Students demonstrate their support of a BCC



Tim Smith speaks to the crowd of onlookers

The following is an exclusive interview with filmmaker Spike Lee by Black Ink co-editor Chandra McLean. Lee provided the one-on-one interview prior to his press conference and appearance at the Dean E. Smith Center on Sept. 18.

BLACKINK: What do you believe you will accomplish by speaking here tonight?

LEE: Well, I think it is really on the students. I'm just here to support it and let them know that they're not in this alone. But it's the students who had the initiative to start this, so it's on them.

INK: What motivated you to call the BCC and inquire about the demonstrations that have been going on?

LEE: I was reading my paper and I saw this article in the New York Times about the incident here, but what really got me was that black athletes, football players, were leading this, and that's unheard of. You know the mentality of most athletes, and I said these must be some serious brothers to jeopardize their football career. But they're making a stand and they have backbone. I think that's what we need today. Too many of us have this jellyfish spine, and when it's time to make a stand, we just think about how it's going to affect our checkbook. These brothers are committed, and once I read that I just called information down here and said, 'Give me the Black Student Union' [he laughs] and Arnie picked up the phone. I said, 'Yo, I want to come down there, and we had several calls that day; and we finally just solidified that the rally would be tonight.'

INK: Why do you feel that UNC needs a free-standing BCC?

LEE: I consider myself lucky because I went to a predominantly black school- Morehouse College- and the last four or five years I've

done lectures, most of them being at predominantly white colleges. Black students are catching hell there, and any kind of building or organization they can find refuge in is needed. I don't know what the big deal is. Black folk, we built this country. They should be lucky that's all the students are asking for. It really just comes down to empowerment I think Tim said.

This was his quote in the Times piece: 'They don't want to do anything that would give black folks empowerment.' They know that thing is bullshit about a black student union is going to foster separatism... that's bullshit because if the students are successful it's going to give them a sense of power, and there's no telling what they're going to do. They could turn things really upside down. They could revolutionize education at white institutions across America. What's important here is that the athletes are at the vanguard of this. The reason why that is im-

portant is that college sports is powered by the muscle, brawn, speed, and intelligence of the black athletes. If these schools didn't attract black athletes through football and basketball, there could be no multimillion dollar T.V. contracts. So, the only way that you can deal with people of power is really economically, and we talk about doing something that is going to have an effect on their pocket book, then they are going to have to wake up and notice. I mean you may protest and all of that stuff, but when athletes across America, black student college athletes say, 'If we don't get such and such and such, we're not going to play'... uh oh! They got to do something! Dean Smith with no brothers on his team? Shoot! There ain't that many Larry Birds and Christian Laetners to go around, you know? In a lot of ways, integration has done a great disservice to us as far

as black businesses. There was a time when Bear Bryant Alabama wouldn't play no black folk, so the black athlete had to go to predominately black schools. Not just black students, but I think students in general are just being pimped. So much money is made off of students today. The money they get from scholarships is miniscule compared to



Lee awaits questioning

the amount of money that is generated through the box office and paraphernalia. When Patrick Ewing was at Georgetown, every black kid in America had a Georgetown T-shirt or sweatshirt or hat. You think Patrick Ewing saw any of that, or John Thompson? No. That money went directly back into Georgetown. So, college athletes, this is big business, and I think that the black athletes need to realize that they have power. All of this money is being generated off of their talent and their skills, and they really shouldn't think that they're powerless because they are not at all.

INK: How do you feel about predominantly white institutions?

LEE: I think people have to go where they can go to get an education. A lot of black students would love to go to a predominately black