

# Did Khalid X Help or Hurt the Cause?

*Editor's note: This article is an attempt by the Black Ink to address the issue of the much talked about Minister Khalid X who spoke at the black cultural center's rally on Friday, Sept. 18 in the Dean Smith Center. It is necessary to speak on this subject in this publication for two reasons. First, because white society has had a history of evaluating black leaders without the input of black people (Notice how Martin Luther King, Jr. has been characterized as one of our good leaders and Malcolm X as a troublemaker). Secondly, we feel that it is important to create an open forum for different ideas within the black community. We know that on any given issue, all black people do not feel the same. Nevertheless, we are constantly reading in white publications what "black students feel" as if we all shared one mind. In the*

*two very different viewpoints on the minister's Sept. 18 message. Our*



*hope is that the two opposing perspectives will spark debate among students, and that from that debate each person will develop a stance*

## One Hand

Black people in America (and on this campus in particular) have been much too quiet for much too long. What the term "quiet" indicates is not a shortage of words. (Supporters of a free-standing black cultural center have been trying to "negotiate" for years.) "Quiet" signifies an immediate necessity for a sequence of point-blank statements and actions. We can't expect to get what we want if we can't say what we mean. It seems a bit strange that at this hallowed institute of learning, it would take someone from the outside to bring this fact to light. Minister Khalid Mohammed X spoke the truth up on that stage, and every single member of the audience felt the vibe. "If the truth hurts, then let it hurt!" It's about time somebody started steppin' on some toes.

anything and anyone that tries to hold him down. A quick accusation of racism and hate is an ignorant listener's only means of protecting himself from the truth. Well... that and a hangman's noose. An educated black person cannot help being angry. The minister did an incredible job of putting that feeling into words, not one of them was false. His soul-stirring message was anything but racist, but it was definitely long overdue.

There is a strong speculation that Khalid Mohammed X's speech has sparked a loss of non-black support in our fight for a free-standing Black Cultural Center. The answer to this is simple. An individual so easily swayed by a half-hour discourse was not truly devoted to the movement at all. A revolution has no room for doubt. The minister certainly laid some serious cards on the

are others, besides black students who see a need for it. Many students who were not black came to the BCC rally on Sept. 18. They came with the earnest intention of trying to learn what the movement was about and decide whether or not to give their support. What they heard was a much applauded speaker characterizing them as "crackers." No, in your mind you, Minister Khalid Mohammed X was not the only speaker; and those who spoke before him did very well. They did well because they were able to articulate the reasons why a BCC was necessary and offer steps to take in achieving that goal without alienating potential non-black supporters who did not deserve to be insulted. The aspect of the minister's speech that was probably the most detrimental to our cause was the hate that he preached. He spoke

## DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

*following article, members of the Black Ink staff would like to offer*

*on this issue based on his or her own beliefs.*

Some misinformed critics have called the man a racist. They have accused the good minister of preaching a message of hate. The fact is that many of these very same student critics were not present to hear the brother speak. But first of all, let's understand that this is nothing out of the ordinary. Anytime a black man gets "tired" enough to stand up and speak his mind, anytime black people come together collectively toward a goal, expect that every finger will point and that every voice will rise to tear that movement down. All of this comes out of fear. When it comes to a discussion of racial politics, whites are often frightened away. Blacks, however, tend to get angry; maybe white folks have a reason to be afraid. All Khalid Mohammed X did was say what was in his heart. He said it plainly and intelligently without diluting his words into a petition of petty grievances. That's what scared some people away—his frankness and his knowledge, his awareness of himself. The educated black man is the most deadly weapon in the world with the capability of destroying

table, and he did not water down what crossed his lips. But if some idea that he expressed was not entirely understood, that only serves to reiterate the need to build a free-standing BCC.

"You can't negotiate up on freedom nowadays... If you can't fight for it, then forget it."

—Malcolm X, 1965

## The Other Hand

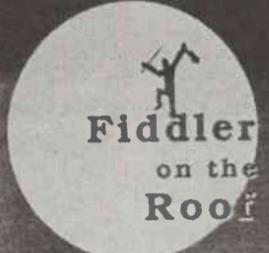
The speech given by Minister Khalid Mohammed X at the BCC rally was dangerous to our entire cause. First of all, it had the unfortunate effect of alienating those non-black supporters of a free-standing Black Cultural Center. This battle that we are fighting—which is, in essence, a battle to make blacks and non-blacks aware of the richness of African-American culture—must include more than just black people. It must include anyone who thinks our cause is just whether they are white or belong to some other minority. The fact is that if we are to achieve our goal of a free-standing BCC, we must show the administration of this University that there

angrily of how the black man's problem was "the goddamned white man," which had the effect—if not the intent—of portraying all whites as our oppressors. Such a change changes the character of our movement from one trying to enlighten ourselves and others on the subject of black culture, to one venting rage on white people—even those who don't deserve it. But, what worse is the effect of vented anger and hatred on us, the black supporters of a free-standing BCC. Anger and hatred serve no purpose but to deprive us of the ability to think, reason and to decide on effective courses of action.

In our fight for a free-standing BCC, it has become evident that we have the moral advantage, for our cause and our intentions are just. But we lose that advantage of morality if we turn this movement into an open season on "the white man." We will lose our battle for a free-standing BCC and all other battles for justice.

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