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# VIOLENCE STRIKES CAMPUS

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Three Guilford students — sophomore Michael Bates, junior Michael Six and senior Christopher Barnette — were arrested on Jan. 22 on charges of assault and battery and hate crime assault following a violent altercation in Bryan Hall on Jan. 20.

Shortly after midnight, three Palestinian students, sophomores Osama Sabbah and Faris Khader and North Carolina State University first-year Omar Awartani were allegedly assaulted by approximately 15 Guilford students including Bates, Six and Barnette.

Bryan resident Peter Deng, a sophomore, said that the alleged aggressors called the Palestinian students “dirty terrorists.”

“A fight is a fight, but this was a jump,” said sophomore Dan Jimenez, who witnessed the altercation.

According to hospital records, all three Palestinian students sustained injuries. Sabbah sustained a contusion on his right hand and a concussion. Khader sustained a fractured nose, multiple contusions, and a concussion. Awartani has head contusions, a severe concussion, and a broken jaw.

When questioned about possible injuries sustained by the alleged attackers, who are all members of the football team, Assistant Head Football Coach Pat Randolph had “no comment on the situation.”

“It was the most extreme aggressiveness I’ve ever seen in my life,” Awartani said. “Coming from Palestine, it’s hard to believe the worst thing to have happened to me happened in America at a Quaker school.”

An R.A. on duty said brass knuckles were confiscated from one of the attacking students.

Students have expressed concern about Public Safety’s response time.

“I called Public Safety a few minutes after it started, and they told me that they already knew about the fight,” said Bryan resident Laura Herman, a first-year. “I thought ‘Oh good, they’re right across the street and on their way,’ but no one came for so long.”

“For the longest time, there were only students trying to calm things down,” Jimenez said.

“Public Safety and the R.A.s should have been there much faster,” said Deng, who was one of the students who tried to break up the fight.

Security Coordinator Keifer Bradshaw disputed these claims.

Bradshaw said that students did not see Public Safety officers because they were “consumed by the crowd.”

“The officers on duty received the call at 12:30,” Bradshaw said. “The response time was three minutes.”

Students have also expressed concern about the number of people that passively watched the fight.

“What bothered me most is that so many people just stood around and watched — what were they thinking?” Awartani said. “You don’t have to be white, black, brown, pro-Palestinian or anti-racist to have stopped it, just a human being.”

“It was disgusting,” Jimenez said. “It was as if everyone was watching at the Coliseum in Roman times. I don’t understand why (more) people didn’t try and stop it.”

On Jan. 23, Dean of Campus Life Aaron Fetrow held a press conference in the Office of Advancement for reporters, and allowed several students to attend. Fetrow discussed topics ranging from the school’s tactics for handling this situation, the parent and student responses, and possible repercussions and sanctions for the students involved.

“We believe that a very, very unfortunate conflict between students who knew each other has occurred,” said Fetrow in the press conference.

On the afternoon of Jan. 24, members of QLSP held a candle-light vigil for peace.

Over 100 people attended including students, faculty and staff. Students recited stump speeches before a candle-lit procession through campus. A silent worship followed the procession.

In the late afternoon, a campus-wide open forum was held. President Kent Chabotar spoke about the ramifications of the attacks and the school’s subsequent plans of action.

“We all need to seek truth, we all need to seek justice, and we all need to seek reconciliation,” Chabotar said. “Those are hard — impossible to achieve without due process and without listening to each other.”

An hour of open discussion followed the words from Chabotar. Topics ranged from what sort of actions need to be taken immediately to how the community can prevent this event from fading away into obscurity.

While Chabotar was giving his final statements, flyers circulated through the audience announcing a student walk-out from classes the following day, Jan 25.



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Lucy Rowe comforts Melanie Pringle during stump speeches in front of Founders Hall leading up to a candle-light vigil and Quaker worship in front of Dana Auditorium on Jan. 24.

See more photos on pages 6&7

“ It is very easy to sit in a room with people who were not present at the altercation ... and say ‘I know what happened.’ ”

- Aaron Fetrow, Dean for Campus Life