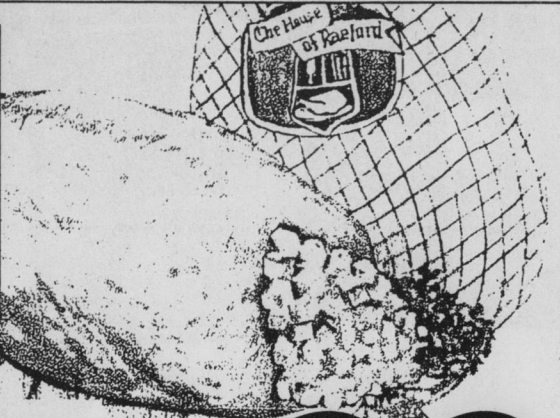


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STATE AND NATIONAL

WEDNESDAY IN THE NEWS

Top stories from state, nation and world

Homosexual testifies he tried to avoid fight

WILMINGTON — A man beaten outside a gay bar in January was trying to leave the bar and didn't want to fight, he testified Tuesday during the trial of three Camp Lejeune Marines charged in the case.

Crae Pridden said he had been in Mickey Ratz, a club catering to homosexuals, and was leaving to go to a restaurant across the street.

Defense attorney John Burney challenged the extent of Pridden's injuries and raised questions about his character. During cross-examination, Burney held up a long computer printout he said contained Pridden's criminal record. Pridden acknowledged he had been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol and driving with a suspended license.

Pridden said he was bruised all over his body, but Burney said photos introduced as evidence showed only head injuries.

Clinton promises new policies against Serbs

WASHINGTON — President Clinton said Tuesday that the Bosnian Serbs' refusal to accept a peace plan for their war-ravaged country was "the most difficult and frustrating problem in the world today" and promised to seek tougher sanctions against them.

"There are lots of other things we can do to make life more uncomfortable for the Serbs, and I wouldn't rule those out," the president said at a joint news conference with visiting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Clinton said the United States was working through the United Nations to put pressure on Serbia, which is providing military support for Bosnian Serbs seeking territorial gains from majority Muslims in the former Yugoslav state.

Radical cleric on trial for old crimes in Egypt

FAYOUM, Egypt — Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, who rails against Egypt's government from pulpits in the United States, went on trial in absentia Tuesday with 48 other Muslim militants on charges they were acquitted of three years ago.

Although the trial is on other charges, Egypt accuses Abdel-Rahman of instigating escalating violence by Muslim extremists against police and foreign tourists.

Mandela calls for end to factional violence

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Nelson Mandela pleaded with his followers Tuesday to refrain from violence, admitting that members of the African National Congress are partly responsible for bloody black factional fighting.

Mandela, president of the ANC, urged his supporters to show tolerance for their political opponents, such as the Inkatha Freedom Party.

The ANC has often blamed the political violence that has killed thousands in recent years on its opponents, accusing government security forces and Inkatha of instigating the fighting. But Mandela conceded that the ANC is not blameless in its battles with Inkatha.

U.S. Marine convicted by court martial board

MOGADISHU, Somalia — Marine Gunnery Sgt. Harry Conde had wiped away the tears, but the shock and sorrow were still clear after his court-martial conviction Tuesday.

Conde, 33, arrived in Somalia on Jan. 6, less than a month after a U.S.-led coalition began Operation Restore Hope to ensure aid agencies could get food supplies to the starving.

Tuesday, he sat a convicted felon, busted in rank and fined \$1,706. A court-martial board found him guilty of aggravated assault and assault with a dangerous weapon for shooting two Somali teen-agers, one of whom snatched the sunglasses off his face.

—The Associated Press

Edmisten: Students should get involved in local government

By Jason Richardson
State and National Editor

N.C. Secretary of State Rufus Edmisten urged the UNC Young Democrats not to lose faith in the political process and to get involved at the local level in a speech Monday.

"The political route is the best, quickest way to achieve changes for the good," Edmisten said, pointing out that minorities in American society had used political machinery to enact social changes.

But Edmisten added that the political process had gained a sordid reputation in recent years. "We are almost teaching the public to say that public officials are trying to steal something from them," he said, while addressing the group in the Student Union.

Edmisten also stressed what he saw as a need for students to get out into the community, rather than merely being active on campus. "What I'm trying to encourage you to do here tonight is not to just be active at the University of North Carolina, but to be active in your county," he said.

Americans need to realize that all areas of their lives are affected by government, Edmisten said. "From the time you get up to the time you go to bed, government will have affected your life in literally hundreds of ways," he said.

He also said students should plan for their future political careers instead of simply expecting to move up the political ladder by chance. "These things don't just happen. You plan them."

Edmisten, a UNC graduate, said his own political life had been inspired by his love of county conventions and his experiences in UNC's student government. He said he also was inspired by Bernard Boyd, his professor of biblical

literature at UNC. "Every day, I would walk into class, and Dr. Boyd would say, 'Everything makes a difference. I never forgot that.'"

He praised today's students for being "a new breed of people who care and are not cynical."

"Ten years ago, campuses were the most cynical places in the nation," he said, referring to his unsuccessful 1984 campaign for governor. "People would boo you if you disagreed with the most right-wing beliefs in America."

The backlash against the cynicism of the 1980's "gives the Democrats one last chance to be the dominant political party in America," Edmisten said, bashing the Republican Party for trying to obstruct President Clinton's budget plan. "The Republicans are filibustering our president's attempt to bring some financial sanity to America because they just can't stand the fact that he got elected."

"Too bad. Too good. Bill Clinton is the president, and he deserves a chance," Edmisten said.

Edmisten was introduced as "the man who served the subpoena on Richard Nixon," and he proceeded to tell the story of his encounter with the former president.

He said that as deputy chief counsel to the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, he had been involved in the questioning of Alex Butterfield, a White House aide who revealed that Nixon had taped his conversations. Edmisten said he had asked for and gotten permission from committee chairman Sam Ervin, D-N.C., to serve the subpoena on Nixon.

"That was my little footnote in history," Edmisten said. "I was the only person who ever got to serve a subpoena from Congress on a sitting president."

White professor says racial discrimination caused tenure denial

By Anna Burdeshaw
Staff Writer

A white professor who said he was the victim of racial discrimination at predominantly black St. Augustine's College in Raleigh took his case to court last week, nine months after he filed a lawsuit against the school's administration.

Dr. Allan Cooper, who became a political science professor at St. Augustine's in 1981, filed suit against St. Augustine's President Prezell Robinson and Vice President of Student Affairs Dwight Fennell in June. Cooper claimed the only reason administrators gave for denying his 1991 tenure request was his race.

"My race was the only reason ever given to me before the case started," Cooper said. "They gave two other reasons in court that took us completely by surprise."

He said those reasons were that only 20 percent of the faculty could be tenured at a time and that Cooper had been at the school for only 12 years. But Cooper said neither of those arguments was backed by official school policy.

"Of course, it also came out in court that only 10 percent of the faculty is now tenured," Cooper said. "And in 1991, five professors got tenure, and four had been there less years than I had."

Robinson and Fennell did not return repeated phone calls to respond to Cooper's allegations.

Although he originally hoped to gain tenure through the lawsuit, Cooper now is asking for \$1 million. He said he changed his request when U.S. District Court Judge James Fox ruled it inappropriate for Cooper to teach at a school where he was not wanted.

"The judge had indicated that the jury could not grant me tenure ... they

would have to grant me lifetime compensation instead of tenure," Cooper said. "That's where the million dollars came from."

Cooper said the administrators virtually had conceded that he was as qualified as any other tenured professor. "The college has a written process for how you get tenure ... and the college has admitted in court that no one else who's ever gotten tenure did any more than I did," he said.

Cooper said he thought it was the administration, not faculty members or students, who had a problem with his race.

"I've had a couple of students over the years who have made negative comments about my being white at first, but after a year or so I've been one of their best friends," Cooper said. "My student evaluations have always been the highest at the school."

Carlos Bates, vice president of St. Augustine's student body, agreed that Cooper was well-respected and liked by students in the political science department but added that he was not sure Cooper should be granted tenure.

"I think he's an excellent professor, but there are other excellent professors who don't have tenure," Bates said. "Tenure is a very sensitive issue."

The case has added a new twist to tenure questions raised at other N.C. colleges this year. Although Cooper said he was familiar with UNC speech communication Professor Paul Ferguson's tenure battle, he did not think their cases had much in common.

"One of the big differences between mine and Ferguson's (cases) is that his problem started with his department not recommending him," Cooper said. "He was questioning the standards of the university. I'm not questioning the standards at St. Aug's."

He said the problem at St. Augustine's was the administration's varying interpretation of standards, which he said were dependent on which professor was being considered for tenure.

Ferguson said he agreed that the cases had fundamental differences. "I haven't noticed much similarity," Ferguson said. "He based his case on racism, and that was never an issue in my case at all."

However, Ferguson said he thought both cases were important in bringing about changes in the tenure selection process.

"I think tenure has always been a political issue," he said. "What's starting to happen is what should have happened long ago, and that's a much more open examination of the whole process."

Although a closer look at the tenure process could disrupt a school's academic environment, Ferguson said the benefits were worth the cost.

"I think high visibility cases like this can be disruptive in that every person involved gets taken over by the tenure issue ... but that's a worthwhile tradeoff," Ferguson said. "If people have been wronged, they need to stand up for themselves."

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