

STATE AND NATIONAL

## Racial tensions mount in Olivet College brawl

By Chris Trahan  
Staff Writer

A small Michigan college was pushed into the national spotlight last week as many of the school's black students vacated the campus, claiming racial tension was putting their personal safety at risk.

Students at Olivet College, located 30 miles southwest of Lansing, Mich., exploded in a violent brawl last Thursday evening after a white woman had a fight with her boyfriend, who also is white. When the boyfriend returned with two black friends, the woman called an all-white fraternity for help, according to police reports.

Davonne Pierce, a black student at Olivet, was the resident assistant on duty at the dorm where the brawl occurred.

"When I came out, there were two black students and about 10 white students facing off with each other, and I tried to get between them," he said. "A white guy hit a black guy to start the fight, and when the word spread, about 20 blacks and 35 whites were all brawling."

Shannon Cunningham, editor of Olivet's student newspaper, The Olivet College Echo, said she indirectly was involved in the scuffle because the girlfriend belonged to her sorority.

"After (one of the white) fraternity brothers checked up on the girl, about 70 people got involved in a pushing and shoving match which broke right along racial lines," she said.

In the face of student unrest, university officials have attempted to downplay the incident, Cunningham said.

Jerry Rashid, assistant director of Olivet's News and Information Service, said the fight was just a name-calling incident.

"It was not really violent," he said.

As a result of the violence, Donald Morris, president of Olivet College, gave students the option not to attend class for the remainder of the week to ease the racial tensions.

"There was so much anger and racism that I was shocked," Pierce said. "White students, whom I thought were my friends, were calling me 'nigger' and other racial slurs."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has had several complaints from black Olivet students and their parents since last Thursday's brawl.

The NAACP is working to alleviate the racial tension at Olivet, although it is not serving in any official capacity, said Ernest Bradley, the complaints and civil rights director at the Detroit branch of the NAACP.

"(The NAACP) is trying to mediate the situation, to identify the problems at Olivet and to achieve a win-win situation for both sides," he said. "The young people are totally frightened for their safety, and we are attempting to get things back to normal."

Olivet has an enrollment of 704 students, approximately eight percent of whom are minorities. After the president declared class attendance optional, about 183 students, including most of the university's black population, left campus. No reports have been issued on how many students have returned for this week's classes.

Even if most of the students return to the school, Olivet's reputation will be tarnished, Rashid said.

"The fact that there are racial problems here is not good," he said. "This school prides itself on admitting minorities, and the fight just hurt what the school is built upon."

Bradley said the school has a history of racial tension and discrimination by the college administration.

"The school is lacking in black cultural education and equity in discipline procedures," he said. "Historically, blacks have been suspended when participating in a fight, but whites have not been suspended. There is a real threat recognized here, and the kids are just very frightened."

## Judge rules honor court records open to Ga. student paper

By Jason Richardson  
Staff Writer

A recent ruling in favor of a University of Georgia student newspaper could open the door for college publications and citizens to access the records of previously closed student judiciary proceedings.

In the recent court case, the University of Georgia's student newspaper, The Red and Black, won the right to view student judiciary records but did not have its request to attend meetings of a student judiciary committee granted.

Despite winning part of its case, The Red and Black has appealed the decision of Fulton County Superior Court Judge Frank Hull to the state Supreme Court in hopes of gaining access to student court meetings.

The University of Georgia has filed its own appeal in an effort to deny the paper access to student records.

In her decision, Hull ruled that although the public had, under the Georgia Open Records Act, a right to see student disciplinary records, the state open meetings law did not require the student court in question to open its hearings to the public.

Lance Helms, editor-in-chief of The Red and Black, said the suit was a battle

over the Buckley Amendment to the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act, the national law which protects the privacy of student records.

But Helms said Hull's decision meant that the Buckley Amendment did not forbid the release of student disciplinary records.

The University of Georgia Organized Court of the Student Judiciary deals with judgments involving groups of 15 or more students.

The cases typically involve Greek organizations and are closed to the public, Helms said.

The cases in question involved hazing and disorderly conduct charges filed against the Omega Psi Phi and Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternities last spring.

The Red and Black filed with the university to open the hearing records last May, shortly after the Organized Court found the fraternities guilty of hazing and disorderly conduct. The paper filed suit in July after being denied access.

Both of the fraternities temporarily have been closed.

The University of Georgia is appealing the case because it could lose federal funding if found in violation of the Buckley Amendment, said William Bracewell, director of the university's office of judicial programs.

Helms said the paper continued to pursue the action out of a desire to report and examine problems such as hazing, alcohol abuse and date rape, often associated with large campus groups, especially fraternities.

Kent Middleton, a professor at the University of Georgia's College of Journalism and Mass Communication, said Hull's initial ruling reinforced a Missouri judge's decision that non-academic records were similar to police records in that they did not fall under the Buckley Amendment.

Middleton said the judge had used poor reasoning in denying the students and the public access to the meetings.

"(Hull) argued that the student judiciary is not a governing body, and therefore is not by law required to have open meetings," he said.

Hull ruled that because the court's decisions can be appealed to the university president, it does not constitute a governing body and cannot withhold non-academic records, Middleton said.

"Under that logic, the only governing body in the University of Georgia system is the Board of Regents," he said.

Helms said the case could have a major impact on campus papers nationwide.

If the Georgia Supreme Court grants the newspaper's appeal, most student newspapers, except those in states where the local government has put additional blocks on meetings and records, could have access to disciplinary case histories and the freedom to attend student court meetings, he said.

But Bracewell said the case dealt only with Georgia open meetings and records laws and would have no effect on out-of-state publications.

The Daily Tar Heel does not have access to UNC student honor court proceedings or records. The Honor Court releases the results of cases but does not release names.

Tom Ziko, an N.C. special deputy attorney general, said UNC-system schools, in compliance with the Federal Education and Privacy Rights Act, are not allowed to release student disciplinary records.



### Labor leader Kinnock resigns following defeat

LONDON — Neil Kinnock announced his resignation as leader of the Labor Party on Monday, ending a nine-year term in which he rebuilt the party but failed to regain control of the government.

Kinnock called his decision "an essential act of leadership" following the party's fourth straight election defeat to Conservatives on April 9.

The loss was a shattering blow to both the Labor Party and Kinnock, who took the party from disarray to a credible challenge to Prime Minister John Major's Conservatives.

Kinnock looked tense and drawn as he read a statement at the House of Commons. "It is not to do with any personal sensitivity — it arises entirely from my desire to see that the Labor Party will gain further strength," he said.

Kinnock and his deputy, Roy Hattersley, who will also quit, will stay on as caretakers until June. Both will remain members of Parliament.

### Mandelas plan to split after 33 years together

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — A shaken Nelson Mandela said Monday he was separating from his wife Winnie, but insisted the move was not linked to charges she lied about kidnapping and beating four black youths.

The African National Congress president did not say why he was living apart from his wife of 33 years.

ANC officials had been pushing for the separation, fearing controversy over Winnie Mandela could damage its efforts to become South Africa's first black government.

Monday's announcement came one day after new allegations that she lied and indicated the ANC wanted to distance itself from her.

Earlier Monday, Winnie Mandela denied accusations from one of her co-defendants that she beat four young men, one of whom was found dead.

Winnie Mandela and John Morgan, her driver, were convicted last year of taking part in the abduction of the four young men.

### Libya proposes turning suspects over to Malta

UNITED NATIONS — In a late attempt to avoid U.N. sanctions, Libya has proposed turning two suspects in the Pan Am flight 103 bombing over to Malta.

But the Security Council is unlikely to approve, U.N. diplomats said Monday.

But Venezuelan Ambassador Diego Arria said Malta was not truly a neutral country because of reports that a suitcase bomb intended for the Pan Am flight reportedly was loaded in Malta. There was no word whether Malta would accept the proposal and take custody of the two men.

The United States and Britain are demanding that they be handed over for trial in the West, but have said they do not object to intermediaries taking initial custody.

### Flooding stymies downtown Chicago

CHICAGO — Downtown Chicago virtually shut down Monday when the Chicago River's retaining wall cracked, sending water cascading into a turn-of-the-century tunnel system beneath the city's business district.

The flooding knocked out electrical power to a large section of the downtown area, forcing thousands of workers to be evacuated at midday.

Thousands more were sent home at the fringe of the problem area as a precaution.

Traffic was snarled and commuters jammed trains and buses in an eerie, early rush hour mess.

City workers threw gravel, rocks, sandbags and mattresses off barges into the river, hoping to plug the car-sized hole in the retaining wall, which holds the Chicago River in its course.

The mayor said the cause of the problem was not immediately determined.

### Rascals deliberations delayed another week

FARMVILLE — Jury deliberations in the trial of a former day care operator charged with sexual abuse recessed for a week Monday because of the death of the judge's girlfriend.

Superior Court Judge D. Marsh McLelland, his voice cracking with emotion, told the jury a recess was the only way to handle the problem.

McLelland said he found Kathleen Johnston, 67, of Burlington, dead Sunday night.

The interruption came in the marathon trial of Robert Kelly Jr., 43, of Edenton.

Kelly is charged with 100 counts of sexually abusing 12 children at Little Rascals Day Care Center, which he owned and operated with his wife, Elizabeth.

—The Associated Press

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