

# Alexander tries to keep state job

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sion on his support of former national board chair William Gibson of South Carolina, who was ousted by Myrlie Evers-Williams in 1995. Alexander lost his seat on the national board during that political struggle.

He called the suspension an insult to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg branch and to the memory of his late father, Kelly Alexander Sr., who was national board chair at his death in 1985.

He was supported in comments by national board member Larry Carter of Des Moines, Iowa and Frank Bowden of Robeson County, who ran unsuccessfully this week for an open at-large seat on the national board.

Alfred Alexander, Kelly's brother and president of the local chapter, had asked from the convention podium Monday that his brother be re-instated.

At Tuesday's press conference, as he had Monday, Alfred Alexander invoked his father's name in support of Kelly Alexander.

"It is a sin and disgrace to the memory of my father that his son is being put under this kind of scrutiny," Alexander said. "We should not allow this national board to get out of town without making a decision about my brother."

Kelly Alexander met with N.C. delegates Sunday in an attempt to capture the position as representative of Region V, which includes the Carolinas and several other southeastern states.

It was North Carolina's turn to lead the region delegation and the position traditionally goes to the president of the state chapter.

Alexander's effort failed, however, with at least one Charlotte-Mecklenburg delegate voting against him in a close vote which gave the position to Skip Alston, a Guilford County commissioner.

Alston, first vice president of the N.C. chapter, is acting as president during Alexander's suspension.

Tuesday, after Alexander called a press conference to announce his reform movement, Alston said he does not think Alexander will be re-instated at all.

"The checks (pre-signed by the former treasurer, but used by Alexander after a new treasurer took office) are going to be Kelly's least problem," Alston said. "All the evidence is a whole lot more serious than that."

"We found out there was more wrong than anticipated. That's why the suspension was extended 60 days. The board is very fair and is acting in the best interest of the state conference."

Alston pointed to the continued use of the NAACP credit card and other factors, including missing state branch computer records.

"We have our suspicions," Alston said. "There's some type of cover-up. Documents and memos are gone. Records on different things are gone. Records are missing."

Alston summed up Alexander's reform declaration, including allegations that the state branch is in financial dis-

array since his as "hogwash."

"That is not at all connected to the true sense of this operation," Alston said. "That's just one person's point of view."

"Thousands of people upstairs are excited and rejuvenated by what has happened," Alston said of the new leadership of Kweisi Mfume and Myrlie Evers-Williams.

"This is a new beginning and things are going to be accounted for," he said. "Money has been misspent. The suspension was a unanimous decision by the national board, a board Kelly spent 12 years on. It is not going to condone someone getting caught with their hand in the cookie jar."

"The evidence is there," Alston continued. "The public is going to see it. Kelly should humble himself and try to work it out."

Countering Alexander's claim that the N.C. conference is in financial disarray, Alston said, "The (N.C.) organization is in better shape now than it has ever been."

"In the past, we would have spent \$10,000 to \$15,000 bringing friends to this convention. We will not spend one cent on this convention."

Alston said some local delegates from Charlotte "have rooms in high-priced hotels."

He said the state organization also raised nearly \$100,000 during its Mother of the Year fund raising competition, which occurred after Alexander's departure. Alexander alleged that the event was unsuccessful during his press conference.

"We have not spent the money on suites," Alston said. "We put it in our state conference."

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# Time runs out on 'Nats'

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Inkatha Freedom Party oversaw the transition from apartheid to black-led democracy.

But a breakup of the arrangement was only a matter of time. De Klerk finally announced last month that the Nats would leave the government at the end of June. He said they were increasingly ignored by the ANC and that a new constitution would scrap power-sharing anyway in 1999.

No celebrations or solemn ceremonies took place in the final days. De Klerk and the other Nat Cabinet ministers cleaned out their offices in Cape Town and Pretoria, putting off most requests for interviews or photos.

In his last official speech after 18 years in government, de Klerk told the Cape Town Press Club on Thursday his party would change from protecting white privilege to representing all races. He even said he expected a non-white to someday lead the Nats.

Considered a traitor by white extremists for negotiating his people out of power, de Klerk wants to create a centrist Christian coalition comprising his party, conservative blacks and the mixed-race minority that could challenge the ANC.

"I am confident that...our time outside government might be much shorter than many experts would now predict," said de Klerk, who shared a Nobel Peace Prize with Mandela in 1993 for their talks on ending apartheid.


That seems improbable anytime soon. The National Party's past, full of rigid bureaucracy and finger-wagging defiance of world opinion, includes atrocities against black opponents that continue to scar the national psyche.

It is certain to change its name, but stories of its injustice and barbarity - systematic murder, torture, harassment and degradation - surface daily before a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Confessors can get amnesty, but blacks are unlikely to forget for at least a few generations.

Little regard is given for South African achievements under National Party rule - Africa's strongest military, economy and infrastructure; Dr. Christiaan Barnard performing the world's first heart transplant in 1967; secretly building at least six atomic bombs.

Most notoriously, successive National Party governments devised a cradle-to-grave system of white privilege and black subjugation, denying 75 percent of the population the right to vote.

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