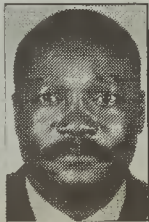




Seems like a fight nearly broke out...No not at the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club...but the NAACP meeting. When a young member rose to speak he was told he could not by Alfred Alexander, who was chairing the meeting. Fly's not sure why he was chairing the meeting since the Rev. Conrad Pridgen is supposed to be president of the local chapter. More on that later.

So when the young man insisted he be given a fair chance to speak in a supposedly open meeting, the branch security officer said, "I'll put your (expletive deleted) out of here." A dozen roses to anyone who can guess the reply to that manly challenge. Thanks and congratulations to the little old lady in the corner whose correct answer was "Put me out!" Cooler heads prevailed a bit quicker than the Tuesday Morning crowd and no blows were thrown. Pity. Fly missed the Holyfield-Tyson fiasco.

• While we're rolling on the NAACP tip, Fly's spies got a peep at the Alexander brothers, Kelly and Alfred, lunching last Friday at 300 East restaurant with none other than Terry Belk, the local's political action chair. Fly has heard the Alexanders are pushing Belk to run for Kelly's old job as president of the state NAACP conference.



Belk

Kelly Alexander resigned from the post last year after questions were raised about his handling of nearly \$600,000 in state conference funds. The national chapter has barred Alexander from holding any NAACP office for 10 years.

Joining Belk on the Alexanders' state slate will be none other than Linda Crite-Gaines, who replaced David Howard as local chapter treasurer in June when Howard resigned. Crite-Gaines will run for treasurer, Fly hears. She was the paid bookkeeper under Kelly Alexander's tenure at state president and during the time he allegedly misspent so much of the people's moolah. Talk about reloading.

• Word has it the long-anticipated take over the faltering McDonald's Cafeteria could come by the end of the month. Seems like the godfather, Harvey Gantt, heads a team of investors buying the restaurant and hotel complex.



Gantt

Floyd Young of FDY Catering will run the restaurant and reportedly will not keep any of the 30 or so staffers. Gantt beat out a proposal that would have put Ron Goodwin of the uptown Renaissance Place in command of the westside landmark built by John McDonald. Goodwin, by the way, is going to fix up the Renaissance since his McDonald's bid came up short. Fly's spies heard the Gantt cartel was about \$700,000 shy of what the big money boys wanted for the whole ball of wax.

• Speakin' o Gantt, Harvey's daughter Sonja is coming back to town as a teevee anchor. You go, girl. WCNC, which is perpetually dead last in Charlotte's three-station news derby, hired Sonja to boost sagging ratings. A.H. Belo, WCNC's parental guidance unit, doled out some long green to get girlfriend back from WGN in the Windy City, so she'll make some major ends. Whether that's enough to make WCNC respectable, now that's another question. Fly has a suggestion: Get more air time for your best

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Senate field gets color

Continued from page 1A

he said. "D.G. is in to stay and D.G. is in to win. Our position is that D.G. is the strongest candidate with the ethics and the integrity and the vision and the values it takes to win. D.G. is a candidate all Democrats who would have to run in 1998 statewide would be proud to have at the top of the ticket. That's something voters will be focusing on."

"It is going to be an exciting campaign. And we are very much looking forward to it."

Davis said most local blacks thought Scarborough would someday run for mayor of Charlotte. "All of us had speculated that she would be the first black female mayoral candidate," Davis said.

Some political analysts wonder if Scarborough's entry into the race will create a replay of the Democrats failed Gantt vs. Helms races.

"Ella and D.G. can commiserate after primary night, after the moderate to liberal wing of the party loses," quipped one veteran analyst who requested anonymity.

State Democratic leaders recruited Martin, 56, to attract moderate and minority support, the analyst said. Conventional thinking is a moderate white male, aged 50 or so, is needed to attract the white male voters required to win a Senate race in North Carolina.

"Ella will eliminate that as the plan," the analyst said. "Assuming D.G. stays, they split the moderate-to-liberal part of the party and a more conservative candidate is likely to be able to be the nominee. Harvey got the moderate-to-liberal wing. If there is a split in the moderate-to-liberal

al wing, no moderate is going to win."

Gantt proved moderates and liberal support could win primaries, but failed twice to beat Helms.

"You've still got to pull votes from white men," the analyst said. "The Democrats tried that twice with Harvey and it didn't work. There's a strong move in the party to look for another candidate. The impetus in the party is away from her toward a white male in his mid-50s."

"But voters may not go for that," the analyst admitted, adding that Scarborough has some strengths and could win enough black and female votes to get through a crowded primary field.

"Ella certainly brings a lot of strength to the Democratic Party," Bibbs said. "From what I know of her record on City Council of Charlotte, she has been a strong voice on a lot of different issues."

"As to her viability as a candidate, I don't know. We'll have to wait and see in the primary."

Assuming a moderate voter turnout, 35 percent of voters will be black and she could easily win 65 percent or more of the black vote and a sizable amount of the women's vote.

Scarborough has as good a chance as anyone right now to pull out a primary victory, but the analyst predicted, "little or no shot in the general election."

The analyst compared the Democratic dilemma to that of the Republicans in the 1996 presidential race. "Do you reward a longtime faithful candidate or go with a new face. The Republicans chose to reward Dole and lost. Ella is a new face."

"The big question is what does she bring to the table that Harvey

didn't," the analyst said. "In my opinion she brings less. Harvey had the ability to raise large sums of money."

The big question in the primary and the general election is money. Edwards is expected to have deep pockets and Martin raised large sums in a narrow loss in the 1984 congressional race against former 9th District Rep. Alex McMillan.

Faircloth, a millionaire hog farmer, already has raised more than \$800,000 and can be expected to spend millions to keep his seat. Analysts predict the cost of the Democratic primary alone will start at \$1 million and could soar higher.

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Apology splits nation

Continued from page 1A

we've got a long way to go."

In the weeks since Hall offered his one-sentence resolution suggesting that Congress apologize for slavery, it has become acutely evident that the notion of forgiveness is a powerful thing in America. Few may agree with the idea of offering up some kind of national repentance, but everyone has a strong reason why.

"An apology is a much more complex and powerful phenomenon than most people realize," said Susan Heitler, a clinical psychologist in Denver.

Hall's proposal has drawn strong reactions. Many whites say an apology needlessly dredges up a horrible but long-closed chapter of history, while ignoring the nation's vast racial progress. Many blacks, meanwhile, see an apology without some form of compensation as hollow symbolism.

"An apology by definition admits one's own responsibility for wrongdoing," said Susan T. Fiske, a psychologist at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. "An apology for slavery would say it may not have been me but it was my people or my government that did this and we now see that it was really a crime and a sin. It is potentially healing. It shares responsibility for ending racism and it acknowledges that slavery has some relevance to today."

Shortly after Hall's proposal, President Clinton expressed some interest in embracing the idea, saying that "an apology, under the right circumstances, those things can be quite important." Subsequently, Clinton has been noncommittal on the subject.

Yet the power of an apology has not been lost on Washington. In 1988, Congress apologized and paid reparations to Japanese Americans who were interned in the United States during World War II. Two years later, Congress apologized to uranium miners and those contaminated by nuclear tests in Nevada. And in 1993, Congress apologized to native Hawaiians for the U.S. role in overthrowing the Hawaiian government a century earlier.

Earlier this year, Clinton apologized to the victims of Cold War radiation treatments and to the black men who were left untreated for syphilis in the infamous Tuskegee experiment.

But an apology for slavery is different, some say, because it cuts so close to the nation's black-white divide. And indeed, public sentiment toward the idea varies sharply depending on one's race. A pair of recent Gallup polls found that two out of three whites oppose the idea of a congressional apology, while two out of three blacks support the proposal.

"It raises all sorts of emotions," said Andrew Hacker, a Queens College (N.Y.) political scientist. "Many white people don't want to hear any more about obligations that have not been fulfilled. People say, 'We have done everything we have to do. We had affirmative action. We supported civil rights. Don't call us anymore.' I sense a lot of that feeling out there."

While the idea has found grassroots support among African Americans, it has received little public backing from prominent African American leaders. Only three black members of Congress are among the resolution's 18 co-sponsors (although others are supportive), and many prominent civil rights leaders see the measure as a cheap political gesture.

"It is like you drive over somebody with a car, leave the body mangled, then you decide to come back later to apologize with no commitment to help them get on their feet," said Jesse L. Jackson. "There is something empty in that. It is just more race entertainment."

Indeed, many African Americans believe that the nation should pay monetary reparations to the descendants of slaves. For years, Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.), the dean of the Congressional Black Caucus, has sponsored legislation to establish a committee to study reparations. Also, the NAACP has passed resolutions in support of reparations, including one at its national convention last month. But the idea has never gotten anywhere.

Some Clinton advisers, wary of criticism from both the left and the right, think the country is not ready to apologize for slavery. "My view is that the moral force of an apology depends upon understanding. But people disagree sharply about the extent of racism today and the relationship of it to slavery," said Christopher Edley, a Harvard law professor who advises Clinton on racial matters.



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