MOREHEAD, EX-NKU HEAD DISCUSS POST REGENTS INTERVIEW A.D. ALBRIGHT AS POSSIBLE INTERIM PRESIDENT

A Morehead State University regents committee yesterday interviewed retired Northern Kentucky University president A.D. Albright as a potential candidate for the interim presidency at Morehead.

Albright said he was not interested in being the school's permanent president, and he declined to say if he would accept an interim appointment. He was interviewed at the regents’ request during an open meeting at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Lexington.

Regent Walter Carr, a member of the committee looking for a temporary replacement for departing president Herb F. Reinhard, called the presidency a “thankless, hard job.”

The meeting, which lasted about an hour and a half, concluded with a brief closed-door session after Albright's departure.

The committee began searching for an interim president early this month after Reinhard said he would resign when his two-year contract expires June 30.

Former Gov. Louie B. Nunn, the chairman of the university board of regents, appointed committees to search for interim and permanent replacements.

Albright, 73, of Lexington, told the committee he would not be interested in "just a caretaker job" at the school, where enrollment dropped nearly 9 percent this year.

Albright said in a 1983 report commissioned by Morehead that the school must make substantial changes to cope with such problems as loss of enrollment, reduction in state General Fund appropriations and possible decline in program quality.

Among other things, Albright suggested in the report that Morehead downgrade its football program from Division I-AA to Division II or Division III, that the school cut the number of master's degree programs and that it set an enrollment limit of 5,500.

Albright yesterday outlined goals for an interim president, citing a need for a symbiotic relationship between
Morehead and school principals and superintendents in the eastern region of the state.

"We have to get the confidence of superintendents and principals in Morehead again," committee member Carr agreed.

The search for an interim replacement should be conducted "without going through the application-type of thing such as a nationwide search," Nunn said.

It was a nationwide search that brought Reinhard to Morehead two years ago.

Sweeping changes that Reinhard implemented in Morehead's academic and administrative structure sparked a revolt by some former board members, leading Gov. Martha Layne Collins to ask all eight appointed regents to resign in January after they refused to extend Reinhard's contract.

Collins, citing a "growing lack of confidence in Morehead's leadership," also asked Reinhard to take a sabbatical until his contract expired.

All regents resigned except Carr, who refused.

Since Reinhard's resignation, the interim selection committee has interviewed only Albright.

After the interview yesterday, four committee members unanimously approved a motion authorizing chairman Calvin Aker to discuss the interim post further with Albright. Aker had asked Albright to attend the meeting.

The motion also established May 7 as the last day for the interim selection process. Aker said that when the full board of regents meets May 16, an interim replacement could be approved.

"My feeling is we could hunt the world over and not find anyone who is as qualified and familiar with the situation" as Albright, Aker said.

Nunn said in his search for a candidate for interim president, "the name of Dr. A.D. Albright came up more than once."

Albright, a former executive director of the state Council on Higher Education, is the educational liaison for Lexington Mayor Scotty Baesler.

He told the committee he would not be interested in becoming a permanent replacement for Reinhard.

"I'm getting too old for that," Albright said.
But the committee could not agree whether the interim president should be able to take the job permanently.

"I would like to have a clarification," Carr said. "We had a discussion at one time that the interim president would not be a candidate for the permanent job."

Aker said he had hoped the committee would recommend a candidate for the interim job "who would not be an applicant for permanent replacement."

Nunn said he knew of no board policy prohibiting the interim replacement from becoming a candidate for the permanent job.

"If we could get a qualified interim president who could go ahead and be a permanent president, that would solve the situation in a hurry," Carr said.

Nunn said he thought a "long, extended search" was needed to find a permanent replacement for Reinhard.

"We need somebody to get the situation settled before we bring somebody in on a permanent basis," Nunn said.

Committee members were uncertain how long an interim president would be needed at Morehead, but speculation centered on six to nine months.

The committee meeting ended after a brief closed session that drew objections from Nunn.

"There's been so much in the newspapers about Morehead and a feeling of behind-the-door activities that we intend to see the public is fully informed and does not get second-hand information," said Nunn, who did not stay for the closed session, which was called for discussion of unspecified personnel matters.

Caption: A.D. ALBRIGHT LOUIE B. NUNN

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