

Edmisten apologizes

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Tatum and Southeast Ward Alderman Larry Womble, an Edmisten campaign coordinator.

Edmisten extended his hand to Pitt as the meeting opened and told him, "I ask you to accept my apology."

Edmisten said miscommunication between him and members of his staff caused the problems and that he had taken care of the matter.

Edmisten also said he respects the *Chronicle* and the state's black press.

Pitt said the apology shows Edmisten's respect for the black vote as well.

"His apology shows that he values his image in the black community and that he realizes how important the black vote is and how important the black press is," said Pitt. "Should he win, the margin of victory will come from the black community and the black press speaks to and represents the black community."

Said Johnson: "I think it (the meeting) was fruitful and I don't think what happened between Edmisten and the North Carolina Black Press Association will ever happen again."

After Edmisten declined to attend the meeting with the black press, he organized his own meeting with black editors and publishers at North Carolina State University on Oct. 12. But, of the state's 11 black

newspapers, only representatives from three attended.

"That indicated that the majority of the publishers felt the same way I did," said Pitt, who didn't attend the meeting. "Most white officeholders have ignored the black press. But I don't think they can afford to because there is a definite surge in the state's and the nation's black press. There's new leadership in the black press -- a new commitment to address the needs of the black community..."

Edmisten's visit to Winston-Salem on Tuesday was his 21st, most of which, he said, have included stops in the black community -- something he said he has been criticized for...

The Baptist Ministers Conference and Associates announced Tuesday that it would endorse the straight Democratic ticket in the Nov. 6 general election.

Dr. Jerry Drayton, chairman of the conference's political action committee, said it decided to go with an all-Democratic slate as a matter of convenience.

"We are expecting the largest turnout of blacks in the history of the state," Drayton said. "Hundreds of blacks will be voting for the first time and, for them, selective voting would cause confusion. The ballot is too long."

"But this doesn't mean there won't be blacks who have the sophistication to be selective. Selective voting takes time and

we don't have the time to really educate the people."

But the endorsement won't mean a financial boost for the candidates, Drayton said.

"We don't give financial help as an organization," said Drayton. "But the individual members are free to make donations, which many of us have."

Drayton said the ministers' contributions are more "in kind," with individual churches offering their vans for use on Election Day to help carry people to the polls as well as "publicly advocating support for a candidate..."

Three students at North Carolina Central University have mailed letters to the press, in a Jim Martin envelope, urging the state's voters to vote a split ticket and support Martin.

"I seriously hope that blacks do not vote the straight Democratic ticket as in the past years but take time to look for the best candidate to address black needs," wrote Kevin L. Dennis, a senior political science major at Central. "Jim Martin deserves your consideration; more than that, he deserves your vote."

Charles Wright wrote, "My concern for the welfare of the black community and complaints from blacks about promises that were never kept prompted me to look elsewhere (other than the Democratic party) for solutions."

Other speakers included Republican gubernatorial candidate Jim Martin, N.C. Rep. Kenneth Spaulding and William Pollard, director of the AFL-CIO's department of civil rights.



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State NAACP

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chairman of the national board of directors for the NAACP in January.

The election took three times as long as expected. Alexander and Frazier were the only declared candidates to lead the 35,000-member-state organization. Other candidates who may have been nominated from the floor were not disclosed. Alexander received the endorsement of the state's executive board on Friday night.

At a press conference held after the balloting, Frazier and Alexander embraced and shook hands warmly, with Frazier promising to give whole-hearted support to his former rival.

"We have spent a lot of time today debating the future of the NAACP in North Carolina," Alexander said. "We're through debating. Now let's get to work."

Alexander is vice president of Alexander's Funeral Home of Charlotte, N.C.

Among the highlights of the four-day conference were enthusiastic receptions for Gov. James Hunt, Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate seat held by incumbent Jesse Helms, and state Atty. General Rufus Edmisten, Democratic candidate for governor.

On Friday, Hunt told the convention he would fight for more jobs, better education and civil rights if elected. "My opponent

has been trying to tell you that you don't know where I stand," Hunt said. "I've been governor for eight years. You know where I stand and you know where Jesse Helms stands."

Addressing the convention Saturday morning, Edmisten said, "I've been climbing up the rough side of the mountain. I've been out there battling to make sure that each individual is treated equally and decently and I want that to continue."


Benjamin Hooks, the NAACP's executive director, was the featured speaker at the convention's \$25-per-plate Freedom Fund banquet on Saturday night. About 250 persons attended the event.

Hooks said the N.C. organization is "without qualification the greatest conference in the NAACP."

Referring to the Hunt-Helms senate race, Hooks came down squarely on the side of Gov. Hunt.

"If God gives us a vote, we ought to go out and use it," Hooks said. "Pray on Nov. 5. Go out and vote on Nov. 6."

The convention voted by an overwhelming voice vote to hold next year's state conference in Winston-Salem from Oct. 10 through 13. Goldsboro was selected as the site of the 1986 convention.



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