

Edmisten defeats Knox in democratic runoff

From staff and wire reports

RALEIGH—Attorney General Rufus Edmisten defeated former Charlotte Mayor Eddie Knox in a tight runoff election Tuesday for the Democratic nomination for governor, according to unofficial results.

With 2,346 of 2,352 precincts or 99.7 percent reporting, Edmisten had 352,108 votes or almost 52 percent compared to Knox' 326,442 votes or 48 percent.

"We did it," said Edmisten, after supporters released a flood of red, white and blue balloons at the Raleigh hotel where they had gathered to watch the results come in. "... We are going to continue our efforts to eradicate ignorance, to provide jobs for people who need them."

He sought immediately to repair relations with Knox, saying he was "reaching out his hands of friendship."

"A sizable number of people in

North Carolina felt that he (Knox) was the best candidate," Edmisten said, "I respect and congratulate him for that. We harbor no bitterness. We harbor no malice."

Knox said he would support the democratic ticket, but added that Edmisten faces a tough race against Republican nominee Congressman Jim Martin in the fall.

"If it is a united party then the democrats can win in the fall," Knox said.

Knox scored big wins in his home county of Mecklenburg and in ur-

ban areas including Durham, Guilford, Wake and Orange Counties. He led in about two dozen counties.

Knox lost some of the counties around Mecklenburg that he had won in the May primary because, he said, "We changed our focus. We tried to rehabilitate the East and maybe we didn't spend enough time around Mecklenburg."

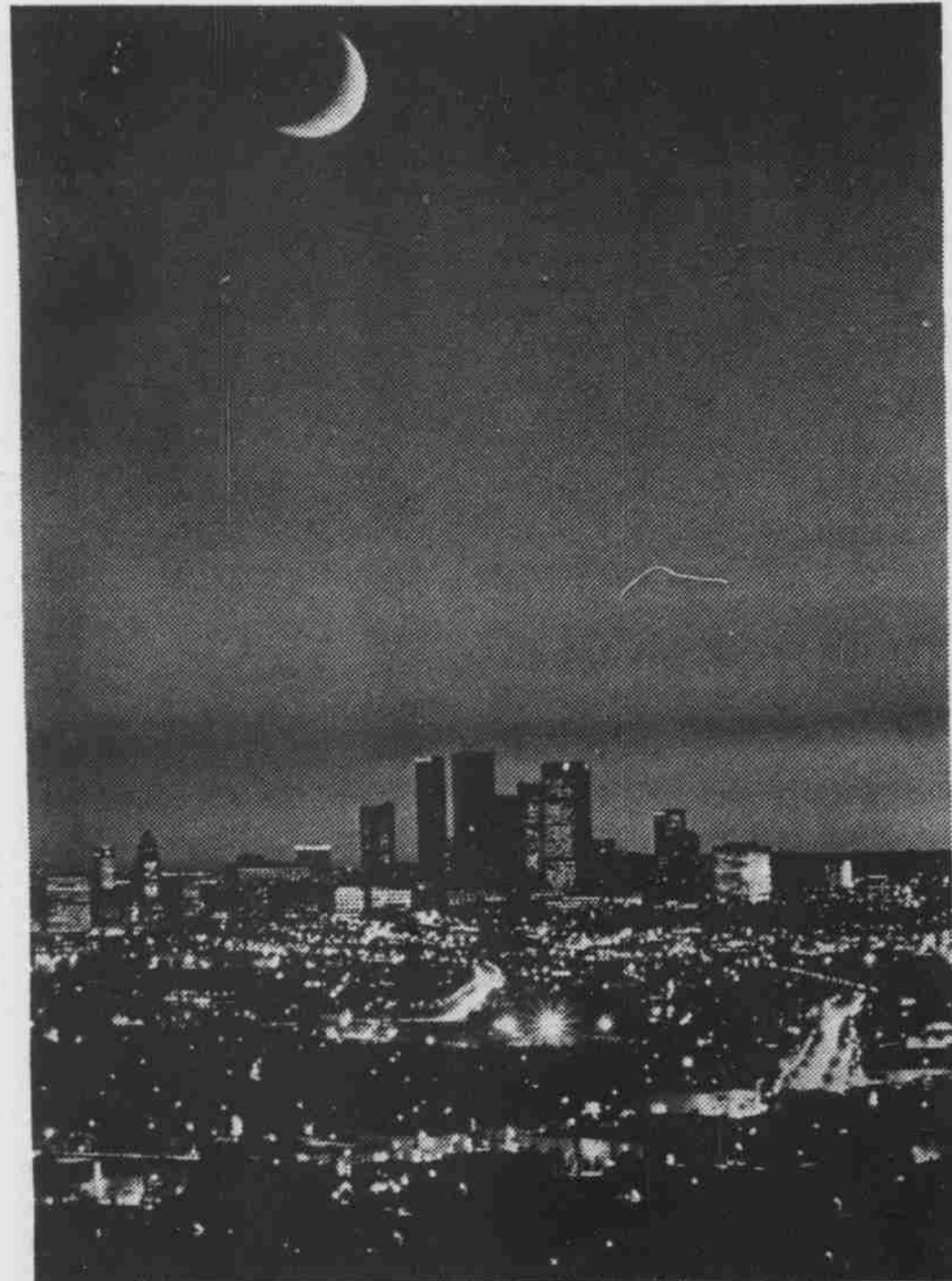
Edmisten took his strength from rural areas in the East and West but totals for the two men in many places were as close as 20 votes.

Edmisten and Knox led a field of

10 candidates in the May primary but neither was able to win more than 50 percent of the vote to avoid a runoff.

State Elections Director Alex Brock was expecting a lower turnout than the 45 percent turnout of the May 8 primary, in which 960,5857 Democrats voted.

"Second primaries tend to drop off a minimum of one third," Brock said. "If tradition holds — and I see no reason why it should not — turnout would be around 600,000 at most."



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