

An Attorney General Is Convicted

Raleigh, N.C.

North Carolina Attorney General-elect Rufus L. Edmisten was convicted yesterday of criminal failure to file his 1972 and 1973 state income tax returns on time.

The misdemeanor convictions, which Edmisten said he would appeal, do not disqualify him to serve as state attorney general. He said he still plans to take the oath on schedule next Tuesday.

He was ordered to pay court costs and drop any protests over back tax payments.

Edmisten, a 33-year-old Democrat, was deputy chief counsel for the Senate Watergate Committee. That post was the last of many he held while working for Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. from 1963 to 1973.

During that time, Edmisten paid state income taxes to Virginia, where he had an apartment. But he kept his legal residence, or domicile, in North Carolina.

During a campaign debate with Republican James Carson, Edmisten acknowledged that he had not paid state taxes, and the issue dominated the remaining weeks of the campaign. Edmisten nevertheless won more than 60 percent of the vote against Carson.

Edmisten maintained that his failure to file was due to a misunderstanding rather than a desire to evade taxes.

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