

The School Election

(Continued from Page 1) that anything was "set up" prior to the November, 1963, meeting at which Dr. Hull's contract was renewed.

The question put to Lynn Wednesday brought to the surface an issue that has, at least by implication, been present throughout the campaign. Dr. Hull's contract was renewed for a four-year term at the Nov. 4, 1963, meeting of the board by a 3-2 vote. Dr. Kurt Shery voted with Lynn against renewing the contract. Trustees Albert W. Charles and Mrs. Kenneth E. Watts joined Hanson in voting to renew the contract.

Several times in the campaign Hanson has told groups he voted to renew the pact "because he (Dr. Hull) effectively carried out every formal instruction given to him by the board. I don't believe in firing a person who does well everything his boss asks him to do."

Since November, 1963, the board's position has been reversed, the Press-Herald has learned. Trustees have met on at least two occasions to discuss the contract and did, in fact, vote to ask for Dr. Hull's resignation.

Dr. Kurt Shery, president of the board, told the Press-Herald he acted on behalf of the board and asked the superintendent to resign. The decision to ask for the resignation was reached during personnel meetings by a 3-2 vote, with Charles joining Lynn and Dr. Shery to vote in favor of the action.

The superintendent, however, refused to resign. His contract does not expire until June 30, 1968.

TRUSTEES sought legal advice and were told the con-

tract could not be terminated. Dr. Shery said seven court decisions and interpretations of the State Education Code support Dr. Hull's contention that he is entitled to the job.

But what brought about the change?

During the meeting 17 months ago, Lynn and Dr. Shery voted to terminate the contract. Charles, Hanson, and Mrs. Watts voted for the superintendent. The entire matter was discussed at an unprecedented public meeting.

Both Hanson and Mrs. Watts voted against seeking any resignation during the recent personnel meetings. Both have defended Dr. Hull and say he has carried out all the board's directives. They also add that Dr. Hull has refused to act on requests of individual board members without first taking the matter to the full board.

CHARLES WAS the pivot man. What, then, prompted Charles to change his vote?

He told the Press-Herald last year's tax increase "was the straw that broke my back." Charles also said recommendations which Dr. Hull made to the board—recommendations which he believes were designed to thwart the work of a board-established committee on a merit pay plan—figured in the switch.

The tax increase triggered a verbal war between the board and Dr. Hull last September. School taxes jumped 41 cents—17 cents was due to an increase in state loan payments over which local boards have no control.

ANNOUNCEMENT of the increase prompted board members to say they would not have voted for the 13-

cent general fund hike had they known the loan rates would jump so sharply. Trustees charged the administration had not given the board all the data during debate on the school budget.

Charles said he is "still not convinced" that Dr. Hull and his staff did not have some indication of the state loan hike.

Subsequent to the tax increase, Charles said, Dr. Hull made recommendations to the board on employee evaluation which were designed to render worthless work done by a committee studying merit pay plans. Charles had worked with the committee for about 18 months and succeeded in getting the board to table the policy statements.

Dr. Hull had asked the board to adopt the policy statements. He told the board, "You can always change it (the policy)."

Charles told the board an evaluation procedure was being considered by the committee.

"IT'S BETTER not to do anything until it is good," he said.

Regardless of the current situation, the question may be purely an academic one. Dr. Hull has refused to resign, although he presently does not have the support of the majority of the board. When his contract is again up for renewal, he will be eligible for retirement.

Nevertheless, Dr. Hull—or at least his personality—remains an issue. Three seats are being contested in the current election and Charles, whose vote switched the board's position, is not among the 12 candidates.

Mrs. Watts and Dr. Shery,

who have divided on the question of Dr. Hull's contract, will have to face the voters in 1967 if they expect to remain on the board.

LYNN IN HIS campaign, has hit the issue of taxes and "administrative domination" of the board while avoiding any mention of the superintendent's contract. That, Lynn says, "is a personnel matter, not an issue of the campaign." He nevertheless has called for the election of a "strong lay board," and more than once declared there is "no place for a professional educator on the board."

His challenge has been echoed by several candidates and brought a reply from Wilson.

"Dr. Hull did not know I was a candidate until after I filed the nomination papers," Wilson said Wednesday. He also answered charges that educators have no place on the board by recalling that two educators, both incumbents, were re-elected to the Los Angeles City Board of Education last week.

Dr. Hull is convinced he is a primary campaign issue. Some candidates are running on a "Get Hull" platform, he says. The charges have been denied and, in return, some candidates have declared there are "puppets" in the race.

MEANWHILE, Dr. Hull's contract has slightly more than three years to run. There are two elections between now and the expiration of the contract and the entire complexion of the board could change.

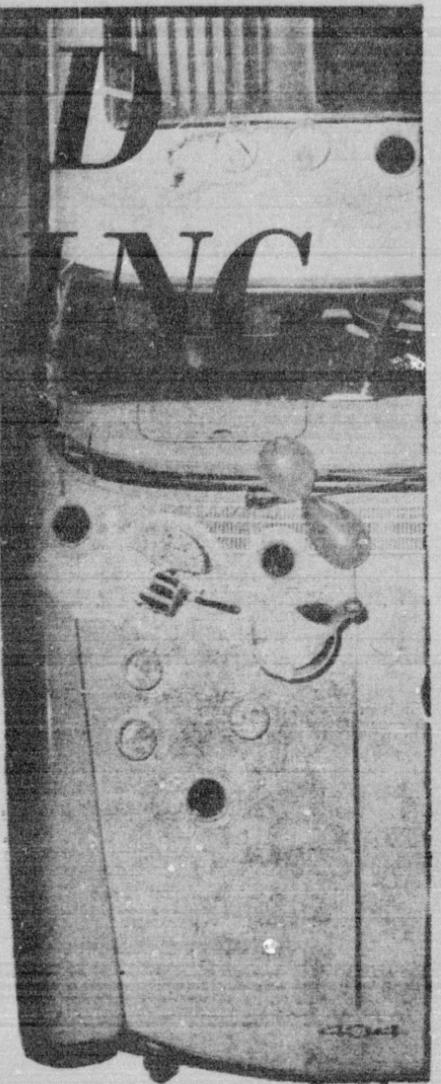
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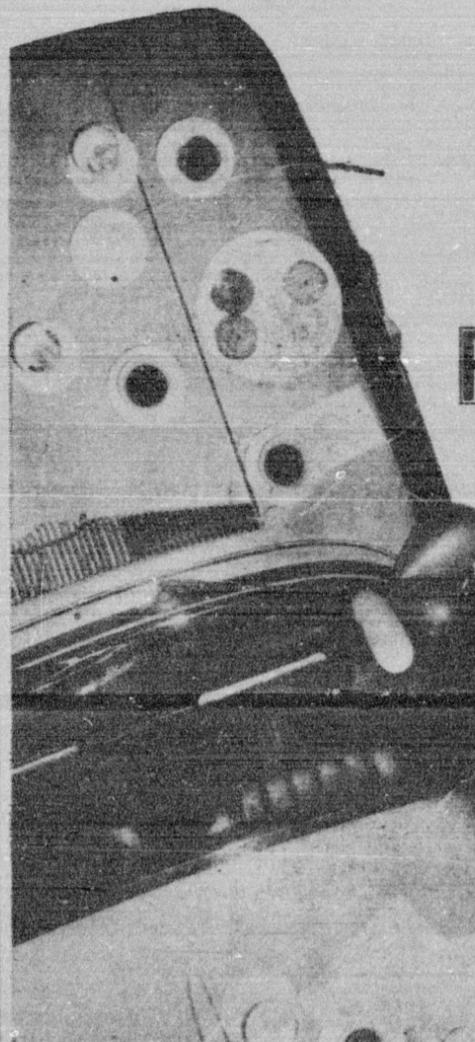


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TUES. APRIL 20th