

Blount Issues Debate Challenge to Isen



CHALLENGER WILLYS BLOUNT

Chance to Compare Stands Offered Incumbent Mayor

The two principal candidates for the top elective post in the city may face each other on the public rostrum if a challenge hurled by one of the contenders yesterday is picked up.

Mayorality candidate Willys Blount today challenged the incumbent mayor, Albert Isen, to debate the issues facing Torrance and the future of the city and its residents "sometime prior to the April 10 election."

Blount charged Isen with "running the city like a dictator, refusing to let citizens talk at council meetings and building a political machine."

POINT OUT ISSUES
He pointed out that the

debate would bring the issues to a head and give voters a chance to know the mayorality candidates better.

"I am convinced that the voters want a return to mature, sober government principles," Blount said, "and this debate will give our residents a chance to compare the issues and platforms of Mr. Isen and myself. I hope the incumbent mayor accepts my challenge."

Four possible dates and locations were suggested for the proposed debate: a "Meet the Candidates" session, sponsored by the Victor Women's Club at Victor School tomorrow; a meeting sponsored by a North Torrance Organiza-

tion at Higgins Brick Yard on Monday; a session sponsored by the Torrance Women's Club at the downtown clubhouse next Wednesday; and the Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsored meeting in the Torrance High School auditorium on April 6.

SUBMIT LIST

Blount suggested that each candidate submit a list of three current city problems for discussion with the debate moderator, with each speaker to have 30 minutes for his presentation and each to have 15 minutes for his rebuttal.

Proponents of the plan to acquaint Torrance voters with the real issues at stake in the election

pointed out that the national debate between two front-running candidates for the U. S. presidency brought concerted attention to the issues in that campaign and a record turnout at the polls.

Several non-partisan figures in Torrance are available to serve as moderator of the debate, it was reported.

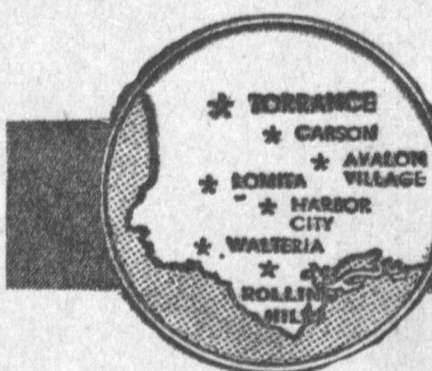
It was noted that several members of educational and ministerial circles have already indicated their willingness to serve in this capacity.

Blount said that Torrance High's auditorium or some similarly large meeting place was indicated because he felt that "the turnout would be tremendous!"



INCUMBENT ALBERT ISEN

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EDUCATORS CONFER — Ross Sciarrotta, candidate for city council and instructor at Long Beach State and Long Beach City College; Dr. Stuart Marsee, president of El Camino College, and Dr. Leo Cain, newly appointed president of proposed South Bay State College, confer following yesterday morning's Chamber of Commerce meeting. Dr. Cain, guest speaker at the session, told the packed audience of plans for the college, which is expected to have an enrollment of 20,000 within 10 years. (Press Photo)

VANDALS BURN SCHOOL

Damages Set At \$100,000; Seek Suspects

A group of young vandals set fires at Torrance's Carl Steele elementary school, 19300 S. Inglewood Ave., yesterday morning, totally destroying one building and causing damage estimated in excess of \$100,000.

Police and fire department arson investigators and juvenile officers are searching for the suspects, believed to be a teenage gang that has been raising havoc in the neighborhood.

Officers reported that they have picked up several sets of fingerprints at the scene and are checking them out.

Vandals broke into the building through a window after which they smashed typewriters, broke open cabinets and scrawled obscene words on the walls.

FLOODED

Books and papers were torn up, ink was poured on walls and floors and office areas were flooded with water.

Officers and school officials who surveyed the scene after the fire was extinguished were horrified at the extent of the damage.

Hoodlums had apparently attempted to start fires other than the one that destroyed the kindergarten wing of the school. Torn papers and books had been piled up and set afire in other parts of the buildings.

Fires had apparently burned themselves out with out setting the building on fire.

VOLUNTEERS

Homeowners in the neighborhood yesterday volunteered to help clean up the mess and to salvage equipment that had not been irreparably damaged.

School officials and teachers hurriedly set up makeshift classes for the youngsters and school continued yesterday as usual.

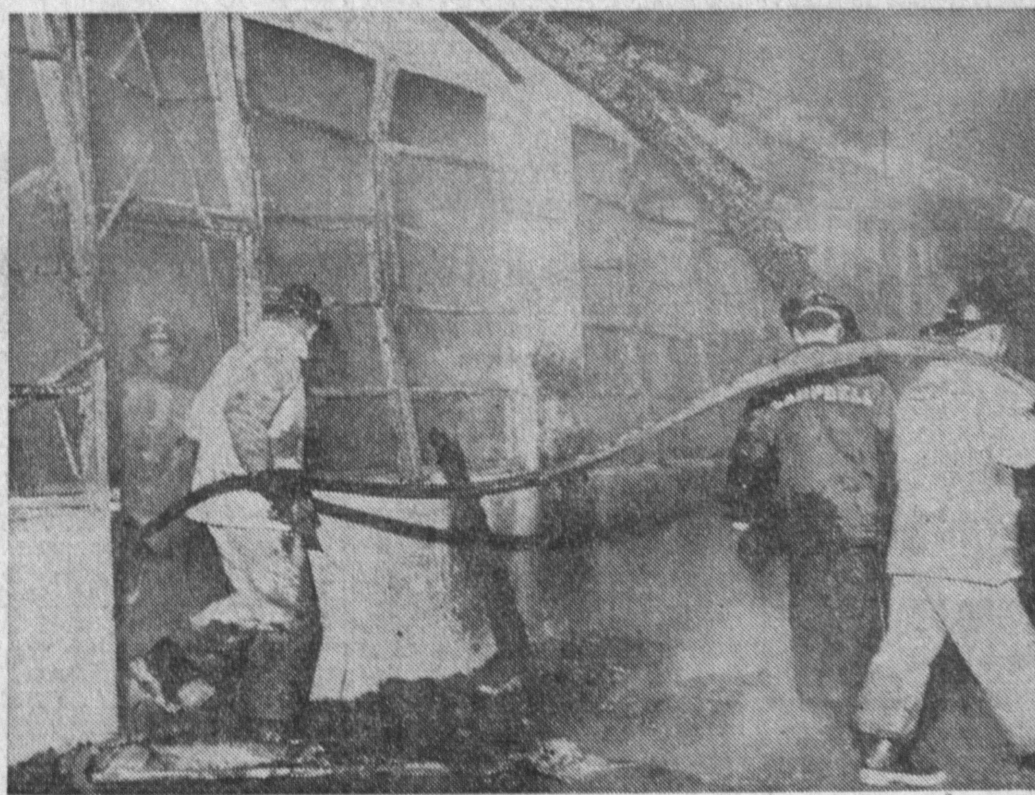
Property owners in the neighborhood last night appeared at the city council meeting and demanded more police protection for their area.

Spokesmen for the group pointed out that the entire area has been beset by vandalism, homes have been broken into and furnishings destroyed, and that public property at nearby La Brea Park has been wantonly defaced.

A Torrance area kidnaper was sentenced to life imprisonment last weekend after a jury of seven women and five men found him guilty on charges of kidnapping, attempted kidnapping and robbery.

Twenty-one year old Billy Smith, 21927 Harvard Ave., was arrested Jan. 7 after forcing two women, at gunpoint, to leave a laundromat in Harbor City.

Smith's attorney will appear in Superior Court April 16 on a motion requesting a new trial.



SMOKING RUINS — Charred remains of the kindergarten wing of the Carl Steele Elementary School, 19300 Inglewood Ave., tells mute story of vandalism and destruction. Firemen battled blaze for hour before fire was

controlled. Arson investigators and juvenile officers are seeking vandals who set fires and destroyed other school property. Damage is estimated at more than \$100,000.

(Press Photo)

Councilman Files for Assembly Post

Torrance Councilman Nicholas Drale, reported last week as taking out nominating papers for the 67th Assembly District Democratic primaries, officially filed Monday.



NICKOLAS DRALE
... Hat in Ring

Drale will oppose incumbent Assemblyman Clayton Dills of Gardena on the June 5 ballot.

The councilman had previously been rumored as a candidate for Lieutenant Governor of California.

Drale, a realtor, has been active in Democratic circles in the Torrance area for many years.

Council Reverses Decision in M-1 Rezoning Case

Torrance city council last night reversed itself and voted to turn down a previously approved change of zone in the Victor Tract.

Builder Dan Butcher, who was represented at the hearing by Attorney Charlton A. Newborn, had requested a change of zone from industrial to R-3 on a 5-acre parcel. After being tabled for 90 days two weeks ago, matter was brought back to the floor last week and passed.

More than 300 persons were in the audience to hear the decision.

Following the reversal it was decided to hold up rezoning in the Victor area until a planning director could be appointed by the city and a study of the area made.

In another action by the council it was decided to hold up all rezoning of M-classification property in the city for a six months period.



TROPHY WINNER — Mike Jones, 15, a student at North High School, won Optimist Club sponsored speak off in Inglewood Monday evening. Eight schools in the district were represented. Youth will speak next in Palm Springs, where he will be opposed by 12 speakers from California, Nevada and Arizona. His speech topic is "Creative Force of Optimism."

Clerk Candidate Reports Attempt To 'Buy Me Off'

Charges that another candidate for the same post had offered to "buy him off," were brought before the city council last night by a candidate for city clerk.

Candidate James Shidler appeared before the council to ask that the matter be turned over to the city attorney.

He said that he had received a letter, signed by the candidate, offering a stipulated sum if he would "back out" of the race and throw support to the candidate.

City attorney Stanley Remelmeier said that he would check the law to see if a violation had occurred.

Chamber Hosts

Torrance Chamber of Commerce officials yesterday morning heard Dr. Leo Cain, president of the new South Bay College, as he addressed them at a breakfast held at the International House of Pancakes, Torrance.

In the audience of civic officials and chamber members was Councilman Nicholas Drale who pioneered efforts to obtain the new facility for the Torrance area.

Parents of Vandals Face Ruinous Suits

The \$100,000 fire deliberately started at the Carl Steele elementary school early Tuesday morning, is the climax in a long series of school vandalism cases.

In one case, only a month ago, youngsters broke into another school in the area and tore up furnishings and equipment valued at several hundred dollars.

Windows have been deliberately broken and school equipment defaced.

Equipment destroyed or damaged by young vandals is, in almost every case, bought and paid for by the taxpayers of Torrance.

The local school board has been fighting a grimly uphill battle to curb this type of destructiveness. In some cases, when an individual child is found to be responsible for the destruction, bills for the damages have been presented to the parents. Collection of damages has even been successfully defended in court actions.

RESPONSIBLE

There is no doubt that parents of minor children are responsible, financially, for their actions. There is doubt, however, that the parents of the youngsters responsible for yesterday's holocaust will be able to indemnify the district and the taxpayers for the full extent of the loss.

But repaying only a portion of the damages could jeopardize their homes, their savings and their futures.

It is most certainly the responsibility of parents to know the whereabouts of their own children, at least until they are old enough to be held responsible for their own actions. It is the responsibility of parents to curb destructive tendencies in their children.

It is not the responsibility of the parent and taxpayer, who carefully guides and trains his own youngster, to foot the bills for another who does not.