

*Phonetic Entry*

**THE CHARTER GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE:**

**A study of  
Issueless Politics**

**Suzanne Gaines  
Marc Underwood**

**December 2, 1975**

Charter Government Committee  
1975 Officers

The Committee

Berl Campbell, Treasurer  
Don Charles, Finance Chairman  
A. Lee Moore  
John A. Murphy, Campaign Chairman  
Marion Scoville  
John F. Sullivan, Selection Chairman  
Dell Traylor, Chairman

Advisory Board

Richard C. Allen  
Ross D. Blakely  
Rhes Cornelius  
Lyman Davidson  
Gary Driggs  
Gary K. Herberger  
Len Huck  
Jarret Jarvis  
Don Kaufman  
Howard Kraft  
John F. Long  
Sam Mardian  
E.V. O'Malley Jr.  
Newton Rosenzweig  
Milton G. Sanders  
Dorothy Thielkas  
Tracy Thomas

Other Chairmen

John Arthur  
Tom Cavanaugh  
Michael Curtis  
Herb Lindner (Angora Brewing)  
Bill Long  
Gordon Marshall  
Allen Rosenberg  
Steve Shadegg (Campaign Strategist)  
Tracy Thomas

Nominating Committee

Henry Broderson  
Edna Ellis  
John P. Franks  
James Frazier  
Mrs. John Haldiman  
Jarret Jarvis  
Mike Kennelly  
John F. Long  
Dr. Ray Paisano  
Glen Quick Jr.  
Gene Rice  
John F. Sullivan  
Dell Traylor  
Bill G. Was

Almost three decades of Phoenix elections have seen mayor and council candidates nominated by the Charter Government Committee, with election being virtually assured (only two candidates in the past twenty-six years have broken this pattern). Thus the CGC has functioned even more successfully than some of the major political machines of the east. Since this group essentially selects the city leadership, we were interested in knowing how representative its membership was of the larger population; therefore we analyzed these men's <sup>1</sup> *Their* positions in business, government, and policy-influencing groups, as well as their social and residential patterns. This research into the power structure was followed by an attempted analysis of issues presented as part of the political campaign process. Hopefully, we would uncover both who the CGC members were and what their interests were, as evinced in policy statements, press releases, and campaign speeches.

Of the 42 names we were able to obtain from CGC and from other sources, we were unable to obtain occupational or other data on seven individuals. Although this is advertised as readily available information, a total membership list had not been published by the press, nor was it available at campaign headquarters. CGC claims to have about 200 members, most of whom are just "citizens". Our list is comprised of people who hold what may be thought of as significant duties within the organization (from the chairman of CGC itself to chairmen of operative campaign groups, such as speech coordinator or poll signs); from the results we are going to report it would seem that the

1. Although three of our 42 subjects are women, this paper will use the masculine pronouns and, indeed, will follow reality in treating these women as their husbands' chattel; we feel this has enabled us to acquire the maximum relevant data for our purposes.

"common people" - if there are any - must play comparatively insignificant roles.

A number of industries were highly over-represented on CGC. Furthermore, the statistics available understate this relationship, for we are comparing CGC members holding high-level positions (board of directors, owners, executive officers; or in law firms, lawyers) with total employment at all levels (clerical, operative, etc., as well as management). Despite this damping effect, for those members whose business connections we could trace, we found:

<u>Industry</u>	<u>% of Phoenix population employed at all levels</u>	<u>% of CGC members at high-levels</u>	<u>CGC members</u>
finance, insurance, & realty	6.1	26.2	finance: Driggs, Haldiman, Huck, O'Malley, Rice, Rosenberg, Rosenzweig insurance: Charles, Haldiman, Sanders realty: Allen
law	0.2	16.7	G.P.A.: Davidson Blakely, Cornelius, Curtis, Frank, Jarvis, Murphy, Sullivan
construction	5.9	16.7	Cavanaugh, Kennelly, Kraft, J.F. Long, Mardian, O'Malley, Trailor

Perhaps as important as the striking numerical disparity, however, is the fact that these industries, which are logically very important in a rapid-growth area such as Phoenix, are the industries and indeed many of the particular companies shown to be most central in the Phoenix power structure <sup>2</sup>.

2. Edmund M. McLaughlin, "The Power Network in Phoenix: An application of Smallest Space Analysis," in The Insurgent Sociologist, Spring, 1975.

Below is McLaughlin's visual representation of the Phoenix power structure, using the Guttman-Lingoes smallest space analysis technique for the area's 92 largest enterprises (in terms of net worth, sales, and minimum number of employees) plus certain other public, semi-public, or charitable organizations. The numbers superimposed on the chart represent CGC members connected to those businesses or organizations (47% of CGC-affiliated are represented in this power structure).

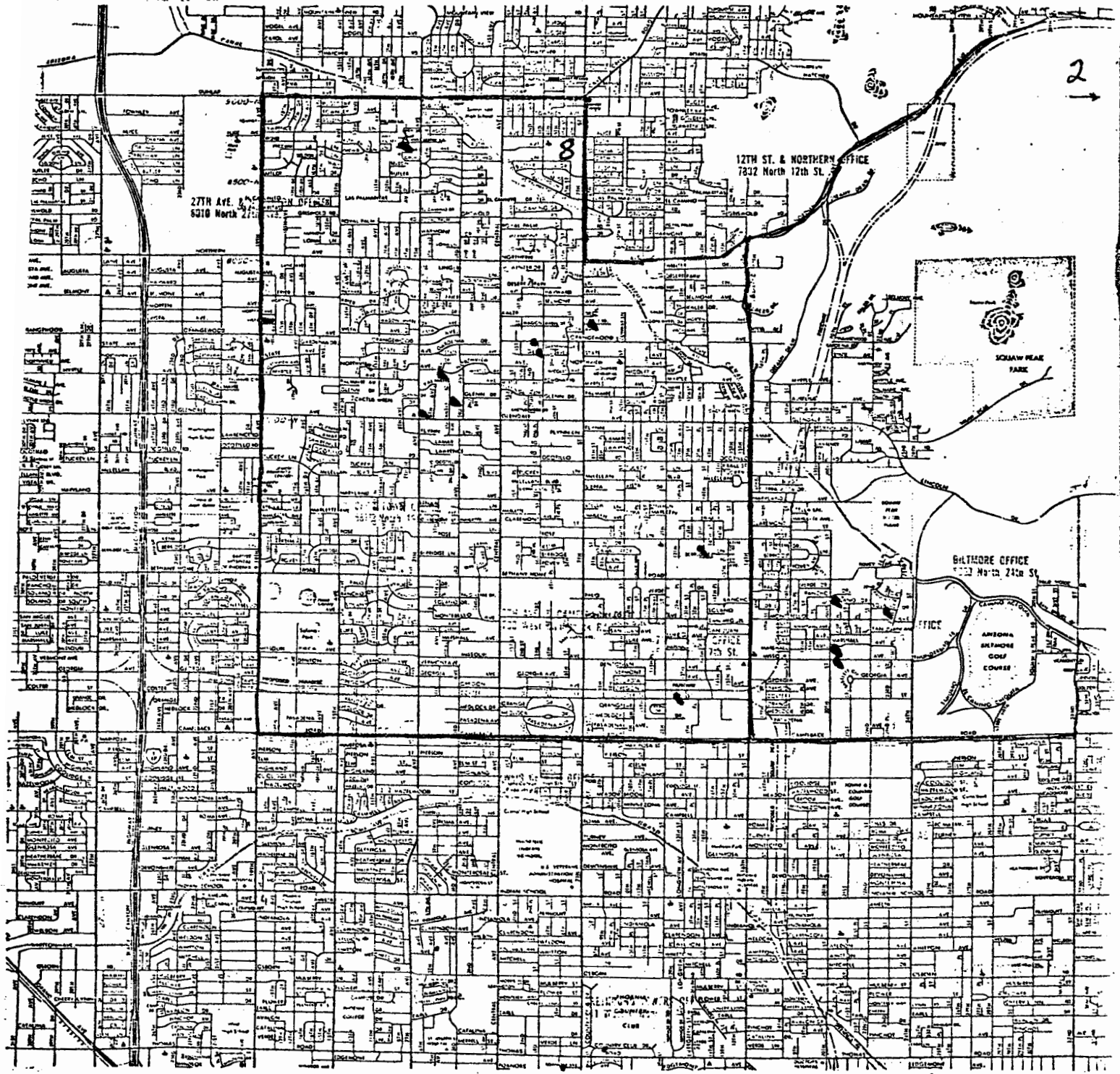


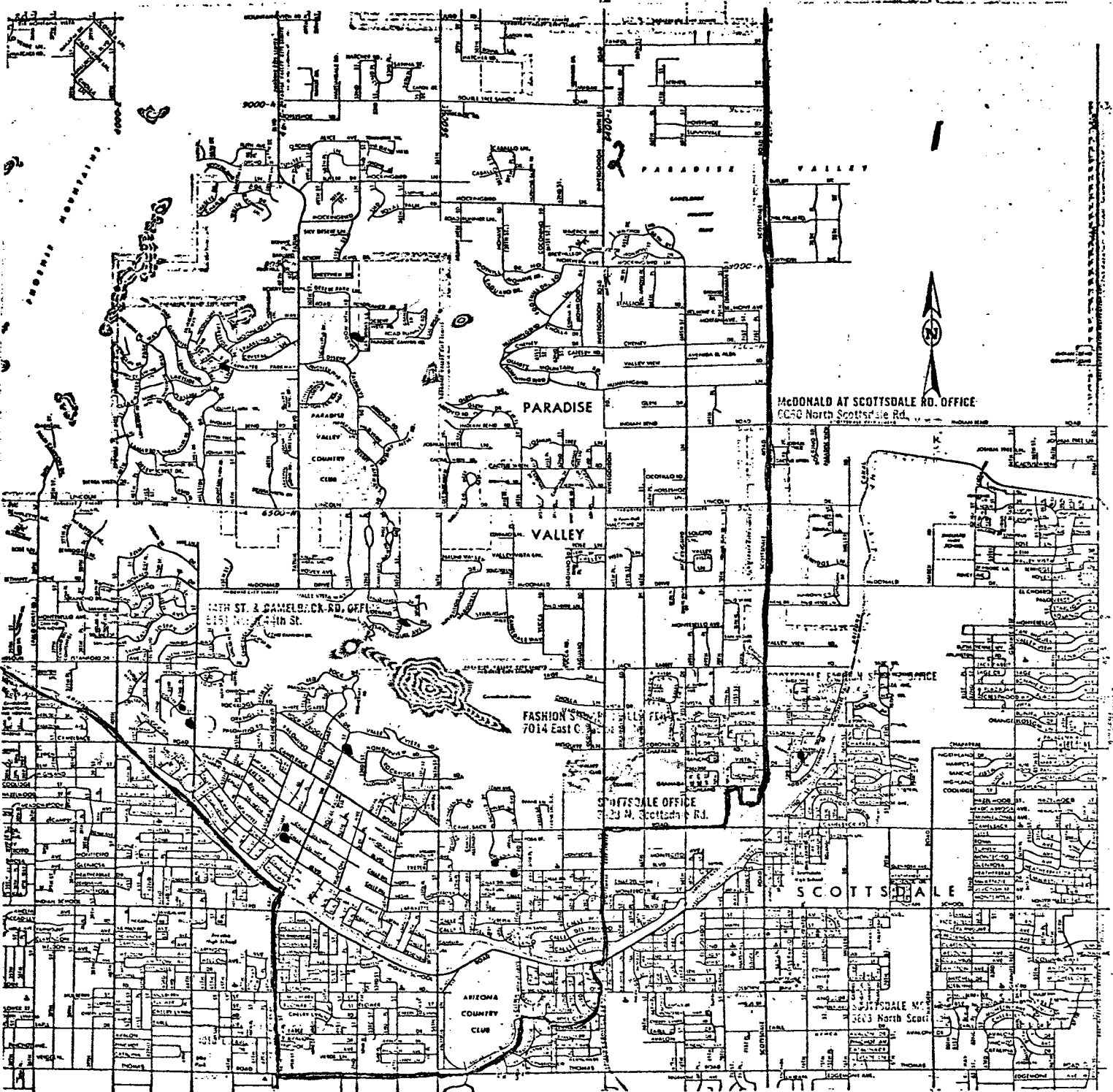
In addition to their capacity to select city government officials, CGC members are themselves heavily represented in state and city government. City involvement is through previous and incumbent councilmen, a former mayor, and numerous direct vendor relationships. CGC members are also currently serving on the State Board of Accountancy, the Agricultural Employment Relations Board, the Civil Rights Advisory Board, the Compensation Fund Board of Directors, and the State Parks Board.

Although the "Phoenix 40", established in February 1975 to fight organized crime and to pursue other civic vigilante endeavors, is essentially composed of the presidents and other high-level executives of a more national group of corporations (several public utilities, the Catholic Diocese, Del Webb Corp., Sperry Rand, Motorola, Greyhound), there are also representatives from many of the local power structure companies. Three of these companies' representatives are also CGC members: Sam Mardian Jr. of Mardian Construction, Newton Rosenzweig of Rosenzweig Jewelers, and Jarrett Jarvis, lawyer.

Another organization which provides both interaction opportunities and a certain amount of policy influence is the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce. Although we could not get a list of all members, 38% of the CGC members do belong to the social arm of the Chamber (the Phoenix Thunderbirds).

For all their claims to openness, we found it rather difficult to find information about CGC members - especially their private lives. Yet, as we suspected we were dealing with an elite, we wished to know something about their income level and other class indicators. A somewhat obvious index of income in any city is the type and area







of housing. As our map indicates, CGC homes are concentrated almost exclusively (87.5%) in sections 8 and 2 of the city. This concentration is especially significant when contrasted with the fact that only .08% of Phoenicians live in these large and beautiful districts. Not only are these subjectively among the most desirable areas, however; they are also the areas of highest education, residential property cost, and median income: \$15,375 and \$24,000, compared to Phoenix's median household income of \$11,956. Perhaps more significant is that 61.5% of the households in the combined areas have incomes above \$15,000 and 36% have incomes above \$25,000.

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Indicators of social elites are not readily obtained in Phoenix, which is one of the many cities without Social Register, "gentlemen's clubs", or other measures used by Baltzell and Domhoff. However, there are three local country clubs of locally high status, with limited memberships, expensive entry (\$4000) and yearly fees, and admission only by reference from present members. These are: the Arizona Country Club (812 members), the Phoenix Country Club (195), and Paradise Valley Country Club (987). Assuming that there is no overlap in membership lists, this would mean that .17% of Phoenix families hold membership in these three clubs. The membership lists were obtained for Arizona and Paradise Valley Country Clubs; comparison showed twelve of the CGC members belonged (28.6%). Half of these club/CGC members were also members of the Phoenix Thunderbirds, a club for the Chamber of Commerce. Another 10 CGC members were Thunderbird members also but were not listed for either of the two elite clubs.

An attempt was made to analyze the issues which CGC supports in its campaign efforts. This was planned to involve four approaches: interviews of current CGC members; interviews of previous CGC candidates who are now independent incumbents (and regarded as renegades); review of newspaper coverage of CGC activities for the three months prior to the primary election of November 1975; and a review of the campaign literature.

(1) Four CGC members were contacted. Although their responses could be subjectively rated as varying from helpful and friendly to hostile and suspicious, the sum of every conversation was: "Contact Dell Trailor (this year's General Chairman) - I really can't discuss any of this with you." Several attempts to contact Trailor of course were made, but they were successfully parried at the secretarial level. Therefore, there is no substantive information which can be reported from these attempts.

(2) Interviews were secured from two politicians who had formerly been backed by CGC but are now independent: Rosendo Gutierrez and Gary Peter Klahr. Their statements dealt with the candidate selection process as "amorphous and incestuous", with the main requirements being political experience, quietness, scandal-clean, and the "right background". Klahr in particular saw this background homogeneity as responsible for candidates who, once elected, would not need orders or directions from any particular group, but would "instinctively" make the decisions which would be right for that group. Klahr also saw this process as yielding city council members and mayors who are malleable by the ongoing non-elective city bureaucracies. Therefore, the goal of CGC is to merely not disturb the equilibrium established over the last 26 years in how the city is actually run. To maintain this balance, CGC attempts to depoliticize the political selection process, by keeping it issue free. The public is only

to be presented with an aura of honesty, efficiency, and competency; no issues are to be presented which might either polarize the electorate or require post-election action.

(3) A review of newspapers (the Arizona Republic and the Phoenix Gazette, both published by the Pulliam Press) for the three months before the primary election found an abundance (approximately one per day, between the two sources) of both editorials and articles referencing the CGC or their candidates. The newspapers have long had a decided pro-Charter Government and pro-Charter Government Committee slant; therefore it was expected that most of these would continue to show that bias, which they did. However, they said little (or, to be more exact: nothing) about what political issues the candidates were concerned with. The only article other than those extolling CGC's record of efficiency and incorruptibility was one which dealt with the desirability of making 30-day jail sentences mandatory for convicted prostitutes. (Since the primary, one of the candidates has courageously taken a public stand against "Smut for Children", as the Arizona Republic of November 26 has succinctly phrased it.)

(4) A visit to CGC headquarters garnered only one piece of campaign literature: a section with photos and experience qualifications of the candidates, and another section to sell the CGC itself. The only issue statement made is: "We are committed to total support of the City Charter as adopted in 1948... This will be our order of priorities:

## THE FACTS ABOUT THE CHARTER GOVERNMENT

*It do you mean, Charter Government?*

In 1948 a 40-member citizens committee was organized to write a new Charter for the City of Phoenix — one which would eliminate politics in city affairs, provide professional city management, absolute authority for establishing city policy, and elect a Mayor and six Council members, and place administrative authority in the hands of a professional city manager and staff.

*What is the new City Charter produce the reforms?*

No. Because the then City Council refused to adopt the Charter.

*What happened?*

The first Charter Government Committee was organized by concerned citizens determined to obtain efficient, non-political management of city affairs. They said, "It is the sole purpose of this committee to support and elect a City Council which thoroughly understands the new City Charter, and will direct the management of the City of Phoenix in accordance with the Charter. "On election day this Charter Government Committee will have completed its work and will be disbanded."

*Note:* Two years later a new group of concerned citizens gathered together and re-formed the new Charter Government Committee to support candidates pledged to enforce and abide by the Charter.

The first Charter Government Council took office in January of 1950. Under Nicholas Udall Mayor, the Council, composed of Hohen Foster, Harry Goldwater, Margaret Kober, Frank Murphy, Harry Rosenzweig and Charlie Walters, implemented the reforms called for in the Charter. A professional City Manager was employed. A waste and inefficient administration, which always accompanies purely political administration,

disappeared. The benefits of this stable, uncorruptible city administration, divorced from politics, was apparent to all citizens, and two years later a new Charter Government Committee was formed to support candidates pledged to continue the reforms and abide by the Charter.

Since that beginning there have been 14 Charter Government Committees, organized by concerned community-minded citizens, to find and support able candidates pledged to following the Charter.

*Is the Charter Government Committee always made up of the same people?*

No. Each new committee has new faces, new people, joining with some of the older hands to insure the continuity of Charter Government.

*Have the efforts of the Charter Government Committees proved beneficial for the citizens of Phoenix?*

Answer that question for yourself. We have had 26 years of no corruption, no political mismanagement, no scandals. We have had 26 years of a stable tax rate, 26 years of unprecedented growth. The city has met the challenge of that growth, providing adequate sewers, streets, traffic control, libraries, recreational services, city water, fire and police protection, and answered every other legitimate municipal need.

We have had a stable fiscal policy. Our city enjoys an extremely high credit rating in the financial markets. Phoenix is recognized for many of the innovative policies of Charter Government Councils such as the rebirth of downtown Phoenix, the establishment of the Convention Center, the increase in library services, the Central Corridor, the additions to the city park system, and programs for the disadvantaged.

Most of the great cities in the U.S. are now overwhelmed with financial problems — increased taxes and the loss of municipal credit. Phoenix is truly a stand-out city because here the people have cared enough to participate in public affairs, to provide citizen input, to prevent political corruption, and to protect the mechanism they chose

to accomplish these benefits — which is a strong City Charter which clearly separates policy making from administration.

*What is the Charter Government Selection Committee?*

A group of representative citizens with a demonstrated interest in the future of Phoenix.

*What does the Charter Government Selection Committee do?*

The committee enlists men and women of competence and community interest who are dedicated to carrying out the provisions of the City Charter, and willing to serve on City Council or as Mayor.

*Is the Charter Government Selection Committee always made up of the same people?*

No. Each year a new group of citizens serves on the Selection Committee. Continuity is preserved by the participation of some people who have served in the past. This year's Selection Committee had a majority of new members.

*What is the reason for the tradition that Council members and Mayors are asked to serve only two full terms by the Charter Government Selection Committees?*

The citizens asked to serve on Council or as Mayor are not selected because of their political ambition. It is believed that a longer tenure in office promotes personal ego and supports personal political power. Remember, we passed a Constitutional Amendment to prevent the President of the United States serving more than two terms. The convention of limited service tends to thwart those who might desire to become political bosses.

*Are Councilmen and members elected with the support of the Charter Government Committee always asked to serve two full terms?*

No. Some have found personal reasons for refusing to accept the second term; others who failed to give their full attention to their duties

or departed from their commitment to support the provisions of Charter have not been asked to run for a second term.

*Has any Charter Government-sponsored candidate ever served more than two terms?*

Yes. Mrs. Margaret Kober was asked to serve a third term on Council, and Mayor Milton Gramham was asked to serve a third term in that post. When he wasn't asked to run for a fourth term he ran anyway and lost.

Over the years thousands of community-minded citizens have served on the Charter Government Committees and on the Charter Government Selection Committees, but each year when the task is finished they voluntarily disband — no single person, no single group has established a position of continuing control or continuing influence.

## We are committed to total support of the City Charter as adopted in 1948.

*This will be our order of Priorities:*

### PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Protection  
Fire Protection

### PUBLIC SERVICES

Water  
Sewers  
Streets  
Sanitation

### CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL and SOCIAL SERVICES

1978 Charter Government Committee  
Dell Taylor, Co-Chairman  
John A. Murphy Sr. — Campaign Chairman  
Don Charles — Finance Chairman

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Police Protection  
Fire Protection

**PUBLIC SERVICES**

Water  
Sewers  
Streets  
Sanitation

**CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL, and SOCIAL SERVICES"**

While these issues are not designed to galvanize the electorate, they are provenly successful in ensuring a continuity in Phoenix's elected officials, to match the stable system of city manager and city bureaucracies. Although many of the fine links have not yet been illuminated, we have seen that there is a group which can classify as a local social and business elite, which effectively is the political group in control of these issueless politics.

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# the pretentious idea

Vol. 5 No. 1 Spring 1976

a review of Arizona journalism

it's just a job — page 12

opening the door — page 15

drama makes news — page 16

*File Phoenix forty*



Go away, kid... Y'bother me !!

# Phoenix 40: pulling the media strings

Be fair. Be objective. Be detached.

It goes back to the rules every journalist picks up on Day One. Conflict of interest is anathema to a good newsperson. It is to be avoided.

In Phoenix, a number of major media executives rub shoulders with other influential figures in a group known as "Phoenix 40," which professes to work for the betterment of the community.

Whether it works to create an atmosphere for the betterment of a free press is open to question.

The organization was formed in February 1975 under the guidance of the late publisher of the Arizona Republic and the Phoenix Gazette, Eugene C. Pulliam. Its elite membership includes:

—top executives from the state's five largest banks (combined assets of more than \$6.7 billion).

—top executives from the state's largest employers (including Motorola, Inc., Greyhound Corp., Mountain Bell, the Salt River Project and Arizona Public Service).

Also sharing membership in the 40 are: L. D. "Pat" Murphy, Republic editorial page editor; Loyal Meek, Gazette editor; William R. Shover, Phoenix Newspapers public relations director; Tom Chauncey, president of KOOL Radio and TV (CBS); and Karl Eller, president of Combined Communications, Inc., which owns KTAR Radio and TV (NBC).

According to Murphy, the 40 has no minority members or women among its ranks. He said at least six women in the Phoenix area were asked to join the group, but all declined because of other commitments.

"We don't have any one-legged blacks on the 40 just so we can have a minority member," Murphy said. "That would be tokenism."

Murphy said the 40 wanted people who could "pick up the phone and get things done."

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**"In less than 60 days (after the group's formation) we got three major pieces of legislation passed."**

**— Murphy**

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With nearly all power bases covered — banks, utilities, big business and the media-- the 40 has the potential for wielding a lot of clout.

Murphy, one of the group's organizers, said citizen inactivity in the community prompted its formation.

He said the crime situation in Phoenix was the main priority because no one was doing anything about it. The 40's goal was to bring the "movers and shakers" into

action, he said, adding:

"In less than 60 days (after the group's formation) we got three major pieces of legislation passed."

Murphy, as top man in the editorial department of the state's largest newspaper, editorialized in favor of the legislation but denied that the 40 influenced his position.

The question that arises is whether the media can remain objective news disseminators or analysts while top executives are involved in a group with the power and influence of the Phoenix 40. They insist they can.

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**'It probably does damage our credibility somewhat. And our independence.'**

**— Meek**

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Walsh maintains that Phoenix Newspapers, Inc. speaks for itself and is not influenced by Phoenix 40 activities. He says he is an objective newsman.

"I have never utilized my news position to try to promote something I was personally involved in," he said.

But Gazette Editor Meek, while insisting his position on the 40 doesn't color what his paper prints, had this to say: "I'm a member of the Phoenix 40 only because I am editor of the Gazette and not because I'm me. If I were to be replaced as editor, I would no longer be on the Phoenix 40."

Meek denied any collusion between the group and its media members to present Phoenix 40 issues and proposals in a favorable light.

"They're not a pressure group in the sense that they would attempt to sway our editorial judgment," he said. "So far as the Phoenix 40 affecting what the Gazette may say editorially, there's been no problem with that at all and I don't anticipate any."

Meek said the 40 has never discussed the possibility that the public might misinterpret the relationship between the media men and the rest of their group. But he admitted that relationship may have hurt the papers' credibility.

Meek said he thought people might conclude that there is some collusion between the two, but suggested the public has a different image of the Phoenix 40 than the group has of itself.

"It probably does damage our credibility somewhat. And our independence," he said.

However, as an editor, Meek said it is helpful to him to hear the views on community problems of men who

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page four

## Phoenix 40 continued

are "responsible community leaders." If the Phoenix 40 has no control over the media, why do the papers consistently agree with Phoenix 40 statements and positions?

Meek told the PI that if the Gazette ever took a stand opposite to that of the group, "we'd probably have to disassociate ourselves from the Phoenix 40." But, according to Meek, there is a slim chance of that ever occurring.

"They're relying on Mr. Pulliam's judgment in having hired me in the first place," he said.

"From this they assume I will have a contribution to make to whatever objective the Phoenix 40 might undertake."

Phoenix Newspapers PR Director Shover said, "Our newspaper has never been dictated to by any group." Most newsmen, he said, are too independent to let anyone tell them what to do.

"We try to keep our papers independent," Shover said. "My side of the Phoenix 40 is what goes on in the community — not trying to get the Phoenix 40 news into the paper."

KTAR President Eller said the 40 has never asked him to slant news in its favor and that his stations have "handled it like any other news story and I wouldn't ask them to handle it any other way."

"Our broadcast policy is not to take sides," he said. "We do not editorialize on Phoenix 40 policies and we go out of our way to be objective and fair."

Maricopa County Atty. Moise Berger claims he is a victim of a concerted attack by both the Phoenix 40 and the Republic and Gazette. Berger ran afoul of the group because he failed to prosecute land-fraud figure Ned Warren on charges of improperly

influencing public officials when a key witness's testimony was found to be unreliable.

On Sept. 9, 1975, the Phoenix 40 issued a report blasting Berger's handling of the county attorney's office, charging him with incompetency and lackadaisical prosecution of organized crime.

In a Sept. 11, 1975, news release Berger said: "We have a monopolistic newspaper that is a member of the Phoenix 40 that has been trying to control the people of this town. It does not speak for the people. It speaks for its own interests and the interests of the groups it favors, like the Phoenix 40, of which it is a member."

## **'If I were to be replaced as editor, I would no longer be on the Phoenix 40.'**

— Meek

Berger also accused Phoenix Newspapers and the 40 of suppressing news about "friends of the newspapers." He alleged that the papers had underplayed stories concerning his prosecution of U.S. Sen. Paul J. Fannin, a Phoenix Republican, on drunken driving charges and about a multi-million dollar bank loan default involving fallen San Diego financier C. Arnholt Smith and the Phoenix-based Valley National Bank.

After the news release there were at least 38 articles and three editorials in the Republic and Gazette concerning Berger's handling of the county attorney's office. A red ink headline on page one of the Sept. 8 Gazette said: "Survey Shows 45% Disapprove of Way Berger Handles Job." The survey was commissioned by the Greyhound

Corp., whose president, Raymond Shaffer, is a 40 member.

On Sept. 14, a Republic editorial titled "Mr. Berger is confused," written by Murphy, called for the controversial county attorney's resignation. The Gazette followed suit the next day with an editorial headlined "Berger Should Resign."

In October, Berger yielded, announcing that he would not seek reelection.

Immediately the volume of articles about him dropped off, and in November the Republic and Gazette editorially praised Berger's decision. From October 1975 until February 1976, a check of both papers showed only two articles on Berger.

In response to Berger's claims of conspiracy between the media and the 40 to force him from office, Eller said, "Anyone who was not doing his job and had been singled out for not doing his job might say the same thing."

Walsh flatly denied any collusion between the 40 and the newspapers to force Berger out of office. He also denied that news stories were slanted against the county attorney.

"I think you're wrong in simply saying that the papers were going after Berger in news stories," Walsh said. "I would categorically say that that is wrong."

Nonetheless, where Berger is concerned, the record shows at least 38 articles published in September preceding his decision not to seek reelection.

Republic Managing Editor Harold K. Milks denied any effort to slant news stories against Berger. Milks said he was not a member of the 40 and declined comment about the group. And, he said he received no publisher's directives concerning Berger.

But does a publisher have to hand a written order to his editors about policy decisions?

"When you've been in the business as long as I have, you just know," said Pat Murphy. "When you sit with a publisher day after day or just get a five-minute exposure on this subject or that subject... You just have a feel of what is good judgment, what is common sense, what the institution or what the publisher feels without having to write it down."

The PI talked to other state newspaper editors about the potential for conflict of interest when journalists get involved in groups such as the Phoenix 40.

Scottsdale Progress Editor-Publisher Jonathan Marshall was not asked to join the 40 and said he wouldn't anyway because "I don't agree with their ideals."

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The front page of the Tucson Daily Citizen's Sept. 3, 1975, issue reported that a straw ballot of its readers showed that:

- Vivian Arnold was the "overwhelming favorite" for the Democratic nomination in Ward 4 for a city council seat, over Margot Garcia. The tabulations showed Arnold backed by 308 votes (81.5 per cent of those who voted for a Democrat), while Garcia was supported by 70 votes (18.5 per cent).

- Incumbent Richard J. Kennedy received more votes in the Democratic Ward 2 council race than his two opponents combined. Kennedy received 270 votes

## *a vote against the straw poll*

(65 per cent), while Priscilla Kuhn got 78 votes (18.5 per cent) and Douglas C. Kennedy drew only 69 votes (16.5 per cent).

After the ballots had been counted for the Sept. 6 city primary, the Citizen reported that:

- Garcia was the Ward 4 winner, receiving 2,193 votes (58.1 per cent). Arnold received 1,588 votes (41.7 per cent).

- Douglas Kennedy was the Ward 2 winner with 1,457 votes (34.5 per cent). Kuhn received 1,405 votes (33.3 per cent) and Richard Kennedy received 1,355 votes (32.1 per cent).

How could the results be so different?

One reason was noted in the last paragraph of the straw ballot report:

"Because the primary election for the council candidates is strictly within each ward, the results of the at-large straw balloting could prove far different from what actually occurs."

But the most basic reason for the disparity was the Citizen's failure to follow the most basic rule of polling: Be sure that every segment of the population is properly represented.

According to Dr. Raymond V. Bowers, who has conducted survey research off and on for 30 years, one straw ballot — which asked the Feb. 4, 1976, reader to vote on the fate of University of Arizona surgery professor Dr. Erle E. Peacock — was "... fraught with so many biases as to make the results meaningless."

In a Feb. 6 letter to Citizen Editor Paul A. McKalip, Bowers cited four biases and posed two questions on the purpose of the poll.

Bowers contended that the Citizen:

- Cannot know how representative its readers are of the Tucson public.

- Cannot know how representative the respondents are of all Citizen readers.

- Does not know how much the readers know about the issue or how useful their opinions are and

- Has no way of preventing the ballot box from being "stuffed."

Bowers' letter was never printed in full, but McKalip did reply to selected portions of it in his "Letters from the editor" column of Feb. 11.

In an interview, Bowers said that the "many" represented "an unknown one per cent of an unknown segment of the population. We don't know who they are or what part of society they represent."

Citizen Associate Editor Tony Tselentis told the PI that the straw ballots "make interesting copy."

"... they are fairly accurate. I think there is no better

or wider group of people than our readers in the community."

"Just because they're unscientific doesn't mean they're not valid," Tselentis added.

The front-page results of the Peacock poll on Feb. 13 appeared to take Bowers' criticisms into account. The headlining and copy both emphasized that the authority for the conclusions came from readers responding to a straw ballot.

The headline on page one read:

"By 2-1, straw ballots say Peacock should leave UA".

Headlines announcing the results of an April 12, 1974, busing straw ballot were less circumspect.

In a page one corner the headline read:

"Busing reaction: Fighting mad".

The copy said it was "the clear conclusion gained from results of the Tucson Daily Citizen's straw ballot on the forced busing issue."

The Citizen did admit that its "one-day" ballot "... was not designed as a scientific public opinion poll."

The results of the poll, carried on the op-ed page, were headlined:

"Tucsonans angered, frustrated by threat of busing".

This ballot, which ran April 1, was also different in that it appeared along with an editorial stating:

"Nor does the Citizen believe that ordering children bused out of their neighborhoods is in any way desirable, as the Citizen has stated in several editorials."

Grover Banks, president of the Tucson chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, questioned whether "forced busing" was the issue facing Tucsonans.

He said he saw the issue as being how the schools will be desegregated.

Banks said the Citizen's use of "emotionally loaded" words, such as, "disrupted," "forced busing," "federal government's threat" and "fighting" in explaining the

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### **' an unknown one per cent of an unknown segment of the population '**

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issue "tend to inflame the public, rather than help solve the kinds of educational and constitutional problems that exist in our society."

Banks said the straw ballot set the stage "... not for rational, community decision-making, but a stage to bring about turmoil in the community."

He added, "I think that's irresponsible."

The two questions raised in the letter by Bowers, a sociology professor emeritus at the University of Arizona, concerned the purpose of the Peacock poll.

He asked why the surgery professor and "not the other main actors in this unfortunate academic drama" had been singled out as the issue.

Bowers warned that people tend to take public opinion polls "too seriously."

Like a national poll, the straw ballot cannot, except in an election, be publicly checked. The accuracy of the Peacock and busing polls will probably never be determined.

But the Citizen reader ought to heed the advice of Harwood L. Childs, a political scientist who wrote on the nature and role of polls.

"Even if every precaution has been taken to eliminate the possibility of error, the results must be accepted, not as one accepts scientific truth, but with a certain degree of skeptical confidence appreciating how difficult it is to measure, much less interpret, public opinion scientifically."