

CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT

No. 11

**Report from the Candidate Review
Committee on candidates running for
public office**

April 1953



REPORT OF CANDIDATE REVIEW COMMITTEE
to the
CITIZENS LEAGUE OF GREATER MINNEAPOLIS

The undersigned co-chairmen respectfully report that the work of the Committee has been substantially completed, that all the candidates who have been willing to do so have appeared before our group for interviews and have signed and delivered answers to the written questionnaires. On the basis of these interviews and questionnaires the professional staff of the Citizens League are in the process of writing up the reports to be published. We will make such check of these reports being prepared by the staff as we consider necessary, and when we have completed our check, these reports will have our approval, or we will, if necessary, amend the same. We may not have the time to check each evaluation made by the staff, but we will make what we deem to be an adequate spot check, as the time and energy necessary to do anything beyond may not be available.

A substantial number of the members of our committee had our final meeting yesterday evening, and adopted the following report:

The work of the committee has been arduous; the members of the committee have been loyal and diligent, and their opinions of the candidates as expressed in the reports, represent the honest opinion of a cross-section of competent citizens in the community, representing all shades of political opinion. Considering the time available and the limited experience of the members of the group, the reports are of good quality and should be of substantial help to the voters in determining who are the best candidates for each office.

The committee was gratified to find a substantial number of young men and women seeking public office, and believes they should be encouraged to participate further in public life. Many of the men experienced in office clearly demonstrated the great value of their experience. On the other hand, the committee found that a substantial number of candidates, both young and mature, were wholly unqualified for the positions they sought, by reason of lack of understanding of the duties of the office they were seeking, and lack of skill and experience in performing the functions of such an office.

It is the committee's opinion that even where they indicated that a candidate's understanding of the problems or duties involved are not adequate, that that does not mean that such a candidate could not within a reasonable time, acquire competence if such candidate had the personal characteristics and willingness so to do. On the other hand, the committee believes that a candidate with excellent understanding of the problems and duties of the office he seeks may, nevertheless, be undesirable because of lack of integrity, and that as to such defects the survey has not been effective, and that the voters will be required to exercise independent judgment upon the basis of other information available to them, to determine whether or not integrity is present or absent in a given case.

The committee recommended that the foregoing statement be published as part of their report.

The committee further recommends that the Citizens League consider the idea of furthering a plan for assisting in the training of candidates for the offices they seek, with the assistance of the University of Minnesota, and that prospective candidates be encouraged to supplement their knowledge with such training for the specific job they are interested in. The committee further recommends that the Citizens League continue this or a similar committee in existence between elections, for the purpose of meeting at such reasonable intervals and may be indicated, to perfect their techniques and increase their knowledge of the work to be done, and that as an aid to them, steps be taken to carefully observe the work of elected officials, and reports be made in writing concerning the same, for use by the committee in evaluating candidates in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSIAH E. BRILL

HARRY E. LEONARD

Co-Chairmen

April 24, 1953