



Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on May 25, 2010

## Arizona Bircher Puts the “T” in Controversy

When Jim Clark bought a pair of tickets to a recent Phoenix Suns playoff basketball game, he expected to see a pretty exciting contest. After all, the Suns were still in contention for a national championship.

What happened that night created a lot more excitement than Jim, CEO of Phoenix-based Republic Monetary Exchange, a precious-metals brokerage, ever anticipated.

Earlier in the day, the Suns’ owner, Robert Sarver, proudly announced that the team’s uniform would be changed for that night’s game. Instead of the Suns, the jerseys would say, “Los Suns.” Since Sarver had previously marched with Al Sharpton and others in opposition to Arizona’s new anti-illegal immigration law, Sarver left no doubt what he meant by the change.



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This was too much for Jim. He promptly had some orange (“LOS SUNS” team color) T-shirts made that said “VIVA LOS 1070” — the number of the legislation that was causing all the uproar. He and a buddy put them on before entering the sold-out arena.

Turns out that Jim’s seats were in the front row, directly behind the San Antonio Spurs bench. So every time TNT, broadcasting game nationwide, scanned ball movement at that end of the court, Jim and his buddy (and their T-shirts) were clearly visible on national TV. Same thing when the junbo-tron showed the team’s bench.

Before too long, however, a couple of security agents showed up. First they asked Jim and his friend to remove their shirts. They refused. Then they asked them to turn them inside out. Again, they said no.

Turns out their third choice was to be tossed out of the game. When ordered to leave, they complied. But once outside the arena, they asked to speak with someone with more authority — say, the director of security. After much back and forth and some private phone calls, Jim and his friends were allowed to reenter the arena. The crowd around them applauded enthusiastically when they took their seats again — proudly wearing their “VIVA LOS 1070” shirts.

So there the story ends, right? Not on your life. First, Jim and his shirt became a cause célèbre in the local media. He was interviewed on several local radio talk shows and TV programs. Then Fox News picked up the story nationally. Glenn Beck talked about it on his program. Jim was asked to be a guest (by phone) on numerous local, out of state and national radio shows, including Lars Larson and Mike Gallagher. Jim was also featured on virtually every local TV station and numerous blogs.

And, this being America, orders for that T-shirt started pouring into Phoenix. Jim responded as would any good entrepreneur — he created a website. Now you too can go to [www.vivalos1070.com](http://www.vivalos1070.com) and



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support Arizona by wearing your own personal “VIVA LOS 1070” T-shirt.

I can't promise front-row seats to a Suns game when you do. But turn on your TV and you just might see Jim again. Seems Rick Welts, the president of the Suns, called Jim up to apologize personally for what happened. And he offered him four courtside tickets to each of the next 10 Suns' home game, including the playoffs.

This lifetime member of The John Birch Society isn't afraid to make waves. To stand up proudly for his beliefs. Or, in this case, to sit quietly in the front row of a basketball game and let his T-shirt do the talking.

*Photo: Jim Clark at the game*

*W.W. “Chip” Wood was the first news editor of The Review of the News and also wrote for American Opinion, our two predecessor publications. He now writes a weekly column called “Straight Talk,” which is free for the asking at [www.straighttalkletter.com](http://www.straighttalkletter.com).*



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