

Substantial Disruption



My Cup Runneth Over with Idiocy

By Mike Tully

The Cup is empty and that emptiness serves as cautionary tale for Donald Trump supporters and the country, a coal mine canary wheezing one final warning: following the President courts disaster.

Christopher Smith and Jay Warren were two of the three owners of “Cup It Up American Grill,” a fairly successful food and drink establishment in the shadow of the University of Arizona in mid-town Tucson. For those unfamiliar with Arizona politics, Tucson is a blue island in the political Red Sea of Arizona that voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 and Hillary Clinton in 2016. The mid-town neighborhood housing the University is the bluest of the blue. But Chris and Jay are Trumpkins and decided to let the world – and their bright blue market area – know just how they felt about things in what the [Arizona Daily Star](#) referred to as “a lengthy, politically charged *Facebook* post.” Then, all hell broke loose.

“Cup It Up,” like thousands of U. S. bars and restaurants, showed National Football League games -- until some NFL players, mostly African-American, elected to kneel, instead of stand, for the national anthem. After Trump called for the participants to be fired, many NFL teams expanded the protests. Even conservative owners, like those of the Arizona Cardinals and New England Patriots, supported their players with on-field demonstrations of unity, such as kneeling and locking arms before the anthem was played. They understood the players’ intent was not to disrespect the American flag or the national anthem or the ideals they stand for – it was to protest what they believe is the country’s failure to uphold those ideals. That’s not inappropriate for a nation born as a protest.

That was lost on Chris and Jay, who decided to stop showing NFL games, which is their right as business owners, as is their decision to comment on other political issues. They stated their support for “OUR President Donald J. Trump,” and “always standing for the National Anthem,” and denounced what they do *not* believe in, such as “kneeling for the National Anthem,” and “political correctness.” Apparently, it did not occur to them that forcing American citizens to stand for the national anthem, whether they wanted to or not, is “political correctness” run amuck. The U. S. Supreme Court said as much in 1943 in [West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette](#), discussing whether public school children should be compelled to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The Court upheld the students’ right to refuse to stand:

"If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein. If there are any circumstances which permit an exception, they do not now occur to us."

From George III to Trump, that's how America works. But Chris and Jay apparently don't get it, and supported Trump's demand that the NFL, at the direction of the President, "prescribe what shall be orthodox" and "force (the players) to confess by word of act their faith therein." Swimming upstream against that powerful and uniquely American current is not without risk, as Chris and Jay found out. Besides denouncing the NFL protesters, they widened their aim to express their support for drug-testing welfare recipients, repealing the Affordable Care Act, and rejecting global warming. They defiantly stood by their *Facebook* outburst for a full three hours before taking the down the post. A few days later [the Cup was empty](#).

Chris and Jay made serious mistakes, including misreading their clientele, who declared their refusal ever again to set foot in the establishment. Some reacted by threatening violence against the business. More importantly, Chris and Jay neglected to give a heads-up to the one person who definitely needed one: their chef and primary owner/partner, Julian Alarcon. "It's not worth it," Alarcon told the *Arizona Daily Star*, citing the widespread condemnation that followed the *Facebook* post. Earlier, Chris and Jay apologized for bringing their "personal political beliefs into a business forum," adding – unconvincingly – they had not intended to "strike a nerve," which raises the question: how intoxicated were they when they decided to take a stand that ruined their business?

Intoxication does not necessarily infer consumption of alcohol and Chris and Jay have not indicated whether their ardor was enhanced by ethanol. Many Americans are drunk on Trump, intoxicated by his grand promises, expansive boasting, and pseudo-macho posturing, and perhaps that's what fueled the infamous *Facebook* post. But people frequently act against their own interests when they are drunk and reap the consequences afterward. Losing a successful business is one hell of a hangover. So is losing one's country.

Republican Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee [said Trump "concerns" him](#). "He would have to concern anyone who cares about our nation," he added. The reason: Trump's recklessness may place the nation "on the path to World War III." That's a catastrophic hangover, and we are all in that Cup.