

WHAT'S IN A NAME? WHEN YOU STILL 'OWN' YOUR BUSINESS BUT THE GOVERNMENT RUNS IT — THAT'S FASCISM

VIN SUPRYNOWICZ



When carefully used, words can help us figure out where we are, and where we're headed.

Take "fascism". Most folks know Hitler and Mussolini were fascists. They were bad people who started wars and persecuted racial minorities. Therefore, if we hear an agency of the U.S. government accused of "fascist" behavior, since we're cognizant of no death camps, the tendency is to assume we're just listening to some ingrate.

But "fascism", as it turns out, means that form of collectivism which differs from Communism in that private economic enterprise is allowed to continue, but under government control. While Communists actually shoot or deport business owners, under a fascist system a private business owner is generally allowed to keep title to his property — and even some of his profits — while his operations are micromanaged by bureaucrats.



Political Notes No. 149

ISSN 0267-7059 ISBN 1 85637 424 6

An occasional publication of the Libertarian Alliance,
25 Chapter Chambers, Esterbrooke Street, London SW1P 4NN
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This piece is a reprint of one of "Vin's Columns", first published on the Internet on August 16, 1998 by Vin Suprynowicz, who is the assistant editorial page editor of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, and to whom we are grateful for permission to reprint, and to add a subtitle and subheadings, of which we trust he approves. Readers may contact Vin Suprynowicz via e-mail at vin@lvrij.com. The web site for the Suprynowicz column is at <http://www.nguworld.com/vindex/>. The column is syndicated in the United States and Canada via Mountain Media Syndications, P.O. Box 4422, Las Vegas Nev. 89127.

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FOR LIFE, LIBERTY AND PROPERTY

THE COURT WILL REVIEW ANY HIRING DECISION

Let us now examine the case of Joe's Stone Crab, the well-known seafood restaurant in Miami, Florida.

On Aug. 12, Joe's Stone Crab was ordered to pay \$150,000 in "lost wages to four women who — according to the Associated Press — "accused the landmark restaurant of sex discrimination".

In addition, U.S. District Judge Daniel T. K. Hurley ruled that for the next three years, the court will review and OK any hiring decision at the 84-year-old crab house — including the busboys.

But the four women who were never hired as waitresses by the crab house — part of the proprietors' successful marketing formula since 1914 has been to offer food-servers who were all men in tuxedos — were not really the instigators of the Joe's Stone Crab court case, of course.

No, the instigator here would be our old friends at the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, who were last seen crawling out of sight to public jeers of derision after the "Hooters" chain of restaurants ridiculed their demand that half of those hired to wear the Hooters T-shirts henceforth be "Hooters Guys".

Nor does it matter if the business owner in question hires women as chefs or managers, actually paying them more than the waiters. Nope. The goal here is to set an example, to force the defiant to grovel, self-criticize, and promise to embrace the new faith of diversity, as federally defined. If Joe's Stone Crab is eventually driven out of business, throwing all its employees on the dole — including female greeters and cooks — what's that to the EEOC?

"The Old World notion that it is 'classier' to have only male food servers is, at best, a quaint anachronism," Judge Hurley duly ruled, blithely accepting the federal assertion of some mysterious constitutional authority to review restaurant business marketing plans. "It is not a defense to the charge of sex discrimination."

Judge Hurley calculated the four women lost between \$15,000 and \$71,000 each because they were not hired at Joe's. In some cases — get this — the judge even calculated the "lost wages" starting years before the women ever interviewed for a job, on the theory that they *might* have ap-

plied there earlier, were it not for Joe's reputation for hiring only men.

(Are there not thousands of other Miami women who *might* have applied? Where does the line form?)

"THERE IS NO BASIS FOR THE COURT'S OPINION"

And how did that old misogynist, Joe, respond to the court ruling?

Joe's long gone, of course. The owner of Joe's Stone Crab, the sexist who will now have to operate the business under close court supervision like some recalcitrant local school district ordered to enforce racial busing, is — you saw this coming, didn't you? — the granddaughter of the restaurant's founder, Ms. JoAnn Bass.

The woman-hating Ms. Bass said she would be meeting with her attorneys to discuss an appeal.

"There is no basis for the court's opinion that Joe's ever engaged in any discrimination," Ms. Bass said in a statement. "Joe's has always been an equal opportunity employer and has been a proud leader in diversity in this community."

They just wanted the "look" and style that come with male waiters ... something Hooters and the Playboy Club could probably understand.

But that's not the way the EEOC wanted to see this business managed, was it?

PRIVATE ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE UNDER CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT CONTROL

Of course it's wrong to systematically bar women from medical schools, from law schools, from any other profession where their physical differences are irrelevant. But those battles have almost all been won. Neither Miami nor any other American city has any shortage of female waitpersons. Instead, the EEOC today looks for all the world like a frustrated soldier who misses the old campaigns, who vents his frustration and seeks to prove his "manliness" by picking fights in a barroom.

What was that word again, the one the dictionary defines as "Private economic enterprise under centralized government control"? I know I had it written down here, somewhere ...