

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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the Louisiana trip and actually engaged in dialogue with my recruiters in several states. The basic belief, shared by Mr. Williams and others, that we can find teachers of color only at universities which produce high numbers of students of color is both erroneous and narrow-minded.

Finally, the recruitment budget enjoys no relationship to the budget established by the state for textbooks. Since Mr.

Williams is the chairman of the Education Committee I was rather surprised to see him publicly mixing "apples and oranges" since he should be acutely aware of all funding sources. The state allocation of \$3,385 per student mentioned includes monies for textbooks. By law I cannot, nor do I have any interest in taking textbook money from children at Matt Kelly or any other school. Any such suggestion can only be labeled as totally insidious, absolutely

ludicrous and grossly unfounded.

In closing, I must state that I will continue to wholeheartedly support Mr. Williams' commitment to parity in the schools. Those who know me are well aware of my commitment to all children, particularly children of color. My record in the recruitment of teachers of color for the past five years has been well documented and significantly surpasses that of my predecessors record for the previous 20

years. Furthermore, if Mr. Williams is truly interested in supporting minority recruitment, then I challenge him to invite me on his KCEP talk show to further articulate his perception and to discuss our roles and responsibilities regarding minority recruitment. In that public arena, I would welcome the opportunity to engage in meaningful, constructive dialogue of any issues related to this serious subject.

It truly saddens me that we continue to engage in dialogue

which clearly identifies the injustices of a society which is much too often "stacked" against the political, social and economic empowerment of African-Americans. The problems are well defined; the resolutions are well defined. But we continually fall short in engaging in meaningful dialogue which will serve as a mechanism to actually effect change.

Some of our agendas are not always honorable, nor do they always serve the best interest of the masses. This is quite unfortunate, but a true statement. We as a people must make personal sacrifices and learn to come to the table with a clear

and common agenda for our people. We as a people must stop battering other people of color through a medium called the "free press" which we all know is anything but "free." We cannot continually allow ourselves to be divided and conquered by our own devices and inability to look at the big picture for our people.

If we continue to ignore the occasional window of opportunity to advance what should be our common agenda, we may soon find those windows of opportunity have been boarded up.

Respectfully,
Yolanda McKinney-Arrington

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

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15th amendments to the Constitution, which were designed to confer full citizenship and equal rights upon freed slaves to try to end the voting rights districts which finally had given African Americans from the South representation in Congress. This decision established a dangerous precedent by recognizing the right of white voters to challenge majority African American congressional districts in North Carolina.

Now five lawsuits have been filed, asking federal judges to end these districts because they amount to unconstitutional seg-

regation of voters, despite the fact that 47 percent of the voters in the North Carolina district in question are white. The Supreme Court labeled these new districts as examples of "political apartheid."

The reality is that what black Southern voters had for nearly a century is apartheid and that these districts are less segregated than any Southern congressional district previously drawn. For example, in Louisiana, the most racially diverse districts are these so-called majority-minority districts.

The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law contends that the Supreme Court decision was based on myths about the redistricting process, myths which are unsupported by em-

pirical evidence or record. These include the myth that the election of Douglas Wilder in Virginia proves that African Americans can get elected in Southern states. But the reality is that only one African American has been elected.

Another myth on the Lawyers Committee list is that the courts have always disapproved of odd-looking districts. The reality is that there have been many odd-looking districts which were designed to keep one party or one powerful politician in power. The Lawyers Committee argues that until this recent Supreme Court decision, it had never recognized any federal right to challenge a district solely on the grounds that it was unusually shaped.

It is likely that the Supreme Court will rule on voting rights districts again. Its Shaw vs. Reno decision was one with a 5-4 split, with Clarence Thomas, a native Georgian, voting with the majority.

With such a split and with a new justice on the Court this fall, some African-American politicians are unsure of their future.

Congresspersons are not the only ones whose futures are in jeopardy. The hundreds of African American state, county and city legislators and judges elected as a result of the redistricting are also threatened. Ultimately, so is justice and so is democracy. Not only does the African American community lose, all Americans lose without fair representative government.

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TO BE EQUAL

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Before allowing the nation to be stamped back into recession, we'd better stop chasing inflationary phantoms and get down to the business of fostering jobs and growth, and solving the social problems rooted in unemployment and inequality.

The fact is our economy is not operating anywhere near its capacity.

If we educated and trained all of our people, we'd produce, consume, and export a lot more than we do now. If we made the long-neglected investments in our infrastructure, the payoff would be more non-inflationary growth in the future.

I have long advocated a Marshall Plan for America to do that, and to end the terrible poverty and unemployment that afflicts African Americans and other citizens.

The strange obsession with non-existent inflation must not be allowed to choke off the economic growth, that's our only hope of solving the social and human problems we face.

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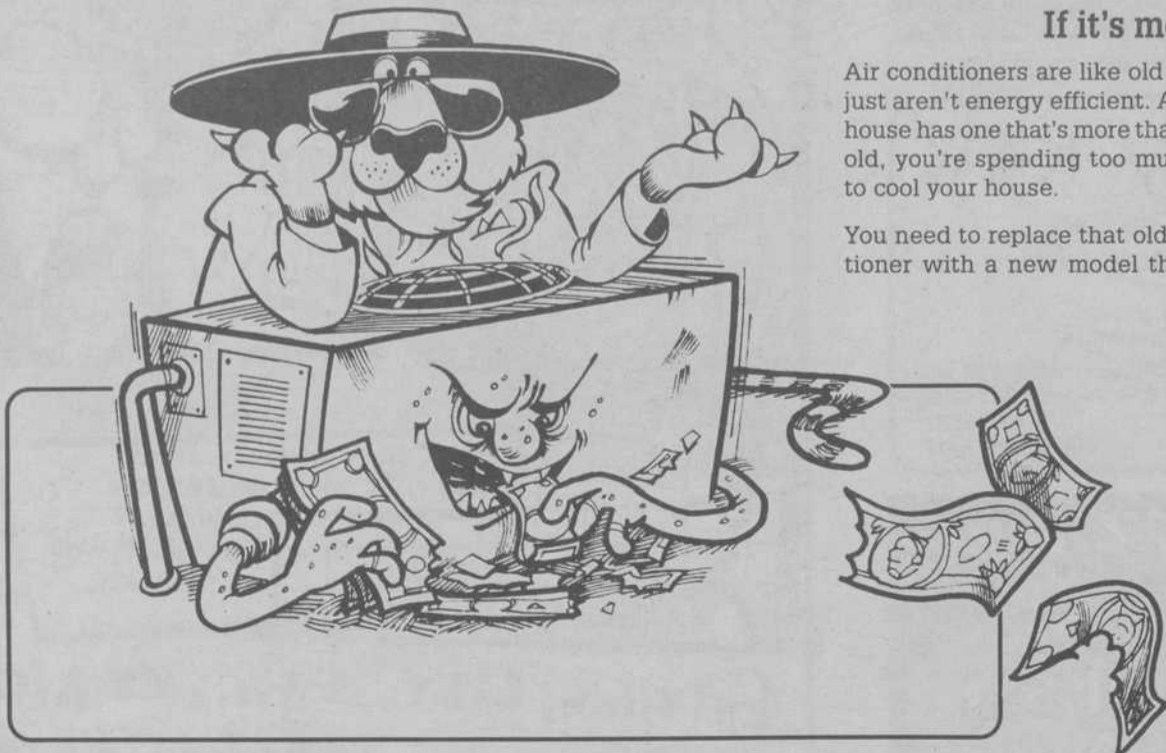
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