

Submitted on July 17, 2006

To the editor,

The recent US Supreme Court decision striking down Vermont's political campaign contribution limits has less to do with first amendment free speech rights or the impact of the contribution limits passed by Akron voters in 1998 than with the current make up of the Court and of the institution itself.

The fact that the likes of Thomas, Scalia, Alito, Roberts and Kennedy ruled that reasonable political campaign contribution limits should be ditched should not be surprising given their political and social backgrounds.

The real problem, however, goes well beyond the current make up of the Supreme Court to the institution itself. The Supremes are appointed for life by a President who is not directly elected by the people and confirmed by a Senate composed of millionaires/multimillionaires -- hardly reflective of the diversity of our citizenry. Second, the Supremes possess final authority on an ever-increasing number of important decisions affecting our lives -- which is different from other nations. Finally, the Supremes, once in place, are accountable to no other institution or even to citizens.

It all adds up to tyranny of a minority against the majority.

The Supremes are wrong on the Vermont decision for the same reason that in the past they were wrong on slaves being property, women not being allowed to vote, and separate being equal -- to protect and expand the interests of a dominant few over the rest of the population. The Supremes are just doing their defined job.

It took social movements in the past to drive the rights of people of color and of women into the Constitution. It took underground railroads, women defying laws and voting anyway, and people of color forcing their way into schools and onto buses and lunch counters to create progressive laws and/or encourage amendments that expanded human rights that were not guaranteed in the original Constitution.

A social movement is needed again to protect the political rights of people without money from those with. More importantly, citizens must come together to question, challenge and change the Supreme Court itself toward protecting the rights of people above those of property.

Respectfully,

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