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July 6, 2012

*Letter to the Editor*

Dear Editor,

**Fair and Simple: Justice Bernette Johnson has the Seniority and should be Installed Chief Justice**

Why does everything have to be a fight? I write this letter to express the grave disappointment surrounding the questioning of the challenging Associate Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson's seniority. Is this naiveté or just hypocrisy? There are certain antics that keep African Americans and other minorities from ascending into the highest positions in their fields, and I hope this is not happening, now. These actions tend to come in many forms, but more commonly disguised as policy or procedures but with such levels of ambiguity, it can go one way or the other depending on who and what "the situation".

So as we know it, Justice Johnson was elected to fill the vacated seat held by Justice Revius Ortique in 1994, under what is termed by some as an "unusual agreement", where Justice Johnson's spot on the court in the 1990's as we here it now was technically a judgeship on the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeal. Here, it seems in lies the query and so-called existing quandary. We find it continually appalling that this very qualified Justice who sat in the seat, fulfilled the position with the utmost of dignity, integrity and respect, not to mention the right skill sets to perform the daily tasks, now, her seniority is comes into question.

When she was going about fulfilling her daily tasks at hand, it was not as a 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Judge, but as a sitting Justice. Surely an esteemed court would see the wisdom in having this rightfully woman rise into the position of Chief Justice when she has executed admirably as an Associate Justice. **Why on earth is she put into the position of having to file a lawsuit to prove what everyone sees? She is the senior party in this equation.**

Questioning seniority when Justice Johnson sat in and performed the duties is just a bit suspect and leaves many concerned about what they are reading and hearing. I sometimes wonder if there will ever be a day when someone of African American descent will be assured in knowing that their hard work, dedication and having been in a position will allow them a fair and unfettered opportunity to fill a position without what could be construed as the typical and time tested actions to place someone else in said position(s). In the words of Norman Vincent Peale "Never talk defeat. Use words like hope, belief, faith, victory." It is my hope that Justice Johnson's conundrum ends fairly and our hope, belief, faith and victory would be realized, **"fair and simple."**

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