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Open Letter from Cory Briggs about the Last Two Days

Wealthy clients pay their lawyers large cash retainers in advance. Those funds are deposited into a trust account as security for payment of the lawyers' fees. There are bar association rules that govern this practice.

My clients aren't wealthy corporations. They are people who have to fight and need a lawyer to represent them but often can't pay right away. I still fight for them. When you represent clients like this you take other kinds of security, such as deeds of trust on property. There are bar association rules that govern this practice as well. I follow them.

When my clients win in court, sometimes the losers have to pay my fees. Occasionally a losing party cannot make immediate payment and wants to work out a payment arrangement. When that happens, I take a security interest to ensure my fees are eventually paid.

There isn't anything illegal, unethical, or even unusual about any of this. The big guys do it one way, and the little guys do it another way.

Similarly, spouses working in the same field is nothing new. My wife has a job, and I have a job. We don't talk about or share client confidences, and we take measures to avoid creating any conflicts.

There isn't anything illegal, unethical, or even unusual about this either.

Most entertaining of all is the bizarre suggestion that I was paid \$3 million to accomplish the removal of former Mayor Bob Filner. The punchline here is that the people paying me were apparently little guys with a business in Chino who couldn't pay in cash, so I took a lien on their homes so they could pay me off over time (with interest?).

I'm inclined to say, "You can't make this stuff up!" But they did.

Don't take my bemusement as being insensitive to the bigger issues here. Make no mistake: The behavior here is reckless, wrong, and harmful to the public as well as to innocent third parties.

