

cause his daughter once worked for a law firm with ties to Siegelman. By this logic, it's conceivable that any lawyers with close kin in the legal profession would be overwhelmed with conflicts if they became judges. And if parties didn't want their cases heard by certain judges, they could simply hire relatives of the judges they wished to disqualify.

Likewise, the government contends that because Clemon was once investigated—but never charged—by a federal prosecutor in California, he is biased against Martin's office. By this logic, if prosecutors wished to disqualify certain judges from hearing criminal cases in their districts, they could launch, and subsequently drop, cursory criminal investigations against the judges.

The little-spoken truth is that everyone is biased about something. Prosecutors, whatever their political affiliation, know that some judges tend to be more sympathetic to prosecutors and others tend to be pro-defense. The same is true in civil cases, with certain judges generally considered more pro-plaintiff and others considered pro-defense.

Most lawyers would like to get a sympathetic judge on every case, but they can't use general suppositions about a judge's leanings to have him or her disqualified.

Actual conflicts of interest generally are defined as direct and specific connections between a judge and a party in a case.

It's hard to say what judge—Clemon or, as Martin has suggested, a judge from another state—will ultimately hear the charges against Siegelman and his two codefendants.

Based on some of the documents that have been filed in court in recent weeks, perhaps the simplest solution would be to proactively move the trial to Nebraska and

pick a judge, jury and maybe even a prosecutor from there—except that Siegelman once was a trustee of the University of Alabama, which during his term played football against the University of Oklahoma, which, of course, is in the same conference as the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Darn.