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STOCK TIPS, ANYONE?

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An observation from a reader prompts me to offer you something brief today.

My reader saw a March 28 Burbank Leader story reporting on the effectively anonymous hit-mail campaign literature that lambasted Burbank city council candidates Gary Bric and Anja Reinke. In that article, reporter Chrise Wiebe asked for comments from the only other candidates in that race, Carolyn and Philip Berlin. Because the Berlins have been running a joint campaign, they are essentially direct opponents to Bric and Reinke.

The relevant portion of the Leader article was published on-line as follows:

"The Berlins have no knowledge of the origin of the mailings, Carolyn Berlin said. But it is possible that the mailings came as a response from supporters to recent negative campaigning against the Berlins — such as the "No Married Couples on the Burbank Council" signs and T-shirts throughout Burbank, she said.

"We've heard a lot of complaints from a lot of different sources about the 'No Married Couples' signs that have been out there a long time," she said. "We have gotten calls inside and outside of the area who have been very offended and have felt that it was anywhere from illegal to discriminatory. Whether it was their campaigning that brought this on is possible, but we have no idea."

Reviewing these two paragraphs, my reader said she was reminded of two paragraphs she'd seen in my March 23 column about the same hit-mail, a section speculating on the Berlins' response to questions about the literature. [See "...Los Angelization of Burbank's Elections!"] In that column, written the week before the Leader article, I wrote the following:

"In the past, [the Berlins have] never had their names on the anonymous or misleading literature put out that serves their causes. Nor have they ever denounced this sort of literature, not when it helps them.

Instead, it's much more the Berlins' pattern to deny any knowledge, then sadly express their pained understanding as to why their valiant supporters have been forced to undertake such schemes, and then to offer a litany of the alleged wrongs done to them by opponents."

The reader who contacted me compared those two excerpts and wrote, "Either you have the Berlins completely figured out, and your writing about them has again proved to be 100% reliable, or the Berlins are just reading your columns and taking instructions from you."

I don't wish to be immodest, but it's highly unlikely the Berlins are taking directions from me.
