

*Brent Wilkes' Statement, from attorney Mark Geragos' office
4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2007*

I am glad this day is finally here.

Over the last 18 months my life has been made a living hell. The 'investigation and its accompanying deliberate leaks of false rumors, has destroyed my reputation and inflicted critical wounds on all of my business interests. And that's been the easy part.

It's most devastating impact has been on innocent bystanders--my family, employees, friends, and colleagues -- caught in the crossfire of a relentless and vicious attack. My family--immeasurably and irreversibly wounded by an 18 month Lam-led vendetta-- has been the source of my strength , but nothing in life prepares you for the helpless feeling of trying to comfort a child who cries in anger or fear resulting from a false 'news' story or a cruel comment from a classmate. The overwhelming nature of the attack robs you of the ability to do that which a father and husband put first, to care for and comfort his family.

And although newspaper accounts have treated the companies with which I am associated as my sole creations , many talented and dedicated people played a role in creating these business . It saddens me beyond words that their careers have been terminated and that they have suffered personal and financial losses as a result of an attack that had nothing to do with them and all of this before any of the allegations could be demonstrated to be false and reckless. Given the personal and financial trauma that many of them have endured I am moved beyond words at the many expressions of gratitude, support and loyalty that I have received from them.

My best friend since childhood, a man as close to me as a brother, has been dragged into this sordid 'investigation' solely because we are friends. One of the most dedicated and honest public servants I have ever known, he would never do anything to tarnish the reputation of the organization he helped lead or to embarrass or endanger his colleagues around the world. And I would never do anything to put him, his family or his career at risk. The allegations concerning him are as cowardly as they are false.

Let me also say loud and clear: I never bribed Duke Cunningham or anyone else. He never "demanded" or asked for a bribe from me, and neither he nor anyone else in Congress ever helped my companies with projects for any reason other than their merits. From his recent letters to the press, I can sense the pain he has endured and deeply regret that this vendetta has re-opened his wounds and those of his family.

So 18 months later, I am battered but not broken. Because I refused to plead guilty 18 months ago, and to say I did something *I did not do*, they amped up the pressure on my employees, my family members and me. They intimidated and coerced people to say things that were not true and hid the truth from the grand jury. The indictments themselves reflect the tawdry nature of the so-called 'investigation,' partly phony tabloid journalism, partly the handiwork of prosecutors more interested in forcing me to plead

guilty to something I did not do than in learning the truth. There's no need to remind the San Diego community that these are the same prosecutors routinely accused of prosecutorial misconduct. The office has been led by a dismissed U.S. Attorney who has shown bad judgment, has previously pursued vendettas, and has set the tone at the top of an organization accused of witness tampering and manufacturing evidence. It is no accident, nor is it a surprise, that the indictments were rushed to the press 48 hours before her forced departure.

So why am I glad this day has come? Because we move to the courtroom where lies and leaks don't count; where the prosecutors who have staged this witch hunt will be exposed; and where the truth, finally, will emerge.

I guarantee you, I will be vindicated.

Brent R. Wilkes

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