

Doug Richards:

We recently had a client who had been charged in Santa Barbara, California with some environmental crimes stemming from an oil spill. It made worldwide news. The state Attorney General and the local District Attorney's office initiated an investigation, it was more of a witch hunt than anything else because they knew the result that they wanted to get at the end of the day.

And that's what's really dangerous about some investigations, especially if you end up in the cross hairs of that investigations, is if the prosecutor's know the result that they want and try to back into it with a grand jury investigation.

I was identified as a attorney who was aggressive and who had a lot of experience handling difficult prosecutors. And we went in there and litigated for about two years. Our client was charged with three different environmental crimes. And we got one charge dismissed for lack of probable cause. We got one charge dismissed based upon prosecutorial misconduct, there was misconduct that we identified within the grand jury, having experience and understanding what is supposed to be done and what's not supposed to be done in a grand jury, we identified what was not supposed to be done. And the judge agreed with us and dismissed one of the other counts because of that violation. And then on the eve of trial, with their case dismantled, the prosecutors decided to dismiss the last count against our client. And it was the right result because our client did nothing wrong.

This case was a high publicity case. And so whatever we did on this case required a lot of strategy. We needed to really consider every single step that we were making along the way because I was defending my client obviously, but there was a co-defendant in this case. And the co-defendant happened to be a Fortune 70 company. And so whatever we were doing on the case would necessarily reflect on our co-defendant. And so there were a lot of dynamics and strategy to consider.