

## Paternos' media tour adds to debate

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -- On a day where he spent hours in TV and radio studios, Jay Paterno spoke many words about Louis Freeh, about his family's report and about his father, Joe Paterno. This was Monday, day two of their onslaught. After the release of the report they commissioned condemning the Freeh Report, the family engaged in a public relations strategy that might not have been entirely effective, and even offensive.

**Tom Kline, an attorney at Philadelphia's Kline & Specter, P.C. who represents Sandusky Victim Five, said their actions and words did nothing to help Sandusky's victims.**

**"The Paterno report is about the Paternos and trying to resurrect Joe Paterno's tarnished image," he said. "This report doesn't advance the ball one yard down the line for the victims. It picks an intramural fight, an unnecessary intramural fight with Penn State and Louie Freeh."**

Like the report Sunday, no revelations were made by the Paterno family Monday on a media tour. Jay Paterno was on three ESPN shows, along with one on CNN, and Sue Paterno appeared on Katie Couric's show. They spoke of how the Joe Paterno they knew couldn't have conspired to cover up sexual abuse crimes and that he legally did the right thing in 2001.

"Our lives have been about children and making them better, not hurting them," said Sue Paterno on "Katie."

Sue Paterno also said her husband couldn't have known the extent of Sandusky's actions given that professionals, such as those who worked in the adoption agencies who let him adopt kids, didn't even know. Couric did not press her further.

On the "Mike and Mike in the Morning" show on ESPN, Jay Paterno was asked if he thought enough was done in 2001 after the Sandusky shower incident relayed to Joe Paterno. Jay Paterno replied: "I don't want to evaluate what they did. So for me to say Tim Curley or Joe Paterno should have done this. I don't know enough to tell you all that."

Howard Janet, attorney for Sandusky Victim Six, declined to comment, but as Kline said, he thought the past two days shined the light on Joe Paterno rather than doing something beneficial for the victims of Sandusky.

And will this tactic be effective in changing anyone's thoughts about Joe Paterno?

Marc Jampole, president of Pittsburgh's Jampole Communications, wouldn't advise it. His group has done crisis communications and related public relations matters for several companies. He said the strategy was well-implemented in that the family said positive things, but the strategy itself, of bringing everything up at this stage, was wrong.

"This story right now is not the kind of the thing that changes people's minds," he said. "People begin on both sides so it brings it up again. If they had done this within a couple of days of the Freeh Report, then it would have been helpful."

He said the only way this attempt likely could be successful would be if they brought closure to the situation. By only critiquing and opining on something released several months ago, it only served to resurrect a fading story. If the Paterno family wanted to try to shape Joe Paterno's legacy, he would have recommended waiting a couple of years for more of the tension to pass.

"In terms of his future legacy, Paterno has a lot in his favor, mainly all the victories, that stellar reputation," Jampole said. "So the longer this goes you know the more it's going to help him. But not if the family keeps dragging stuff up."

Jay Paterno said multiple times throughout his appearances that the point of the entire Paterno Report was to find the truth. Sue Paterno told the story of how they found a notebook from Paterno containing a passage about wanting to find the truth. She also said she prayed for Sandusky's victims every day.

Rather than commission the report they did and talk about Joe Paterno on TV and radio, Kline said he would rather see the Paterno family fight for those victims, maybe even try to use their capital to try to convince the NCAA to let some of the money from the Penn State fine support Sandusky's victims directly.

"That debate is over," he said of the reports, "and they should focus on the victims."