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Fezell to sue Dallas TV station

WACO, Texas (UPI) — McLennan County District Attorney Vic Fezell plans to press a \$44 million libel suit against the Dallas television station that first broadcast allegations of alleged kickbacks of which he was found innocent.

A federal jury found Fezell innocent Monday of racketeering and bribery charges. Prosecutors said he received \$19,000 in cash from his former law partners, Don Hall and Dick Kettler, in exchange for dismissal of criminal charges, primarily drunken driving cases.

Fezell said Tuesday he now plans to press a \$44 million libel suit filed against WFAA-TV in Dallas, which first broadcast allegations of the alleged kickback scheme in the summer of 1985.

"We intend to go after Channel 8 with guns blazing," he said. "They've been in bed with the FBI and DPS (Department of Public Safety) since the beginning, and we think we can prove it to a jury."

WFAA had no comment Tuesday on Fezell's statement or his pending lawsuit.

Fezell described the charges against him as a vendetta stemming from his exposure of bogus confessions by Henry Lee Lucas. The one-eyed drifter admitted killing more than 300 people nationwide, then said he was pressured into making the confessions by the Texas Rangers.

Fezell borrowed an expression from some old foes — the Texas Rangers — to characterize his acquittal on federal bribery charges.

"The Rangers have a saying that you can't stop a man in the right who keeps on coming," Fezell told UPI on Tuesday. "I've proven their saying is true. I was right, I've kept coming and I haven't been stopped yet.

"And most people of average intelligence have accepted that Henry Lee Lucas is not a mass murderer. He was a hoax of the Texas Rangers," Fezell said.

Fezell, who has three years

remaining in his second term as district attorney, said he would be able to continue working as a prosecutor with the Waco Police Department but not with police Chief Larry Scott.

"I've won four elections and one jury trial in order to keep this job," Fezell said. "The people have spoken that I'm the man they want to be their chief law enforcement officer. If Scott can't handle that, he needs to bow out gracefully and be a man for a change."

Fezell, who is an ordained Baptist minister and a former Sunday school teacher, compared his fight with the Rangers to the biblical tussles between David and Goliath and Daniel and the lions.