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Simpson lawyer makes closing arguments

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) — In a powerful finale, O.J. Simpson's lawyer urged jurors Monday to risk being politically incorrect, embrace Simpson as an innocent man and "give him his life back."

"O.J. Simpson simply is innocent," attorney Robert Baker said in his final remarks of the wrongful death trial. "He didn't do it."

Speaking in a near whisper during a two-hour speech, Baker said there was neither motive nor time for Simpson to slash Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman to death on June 12, 1994.

He urged jurors to reject appeals of sympathy for the victims' families and consider instead the plight of Simpson, who is being sued for po-

tentially millions of dollars though he was acquitted of murder.

"He has been vilified and ridiculed," Baker said. "You can give him his life back and render a verdict like was done before and give Justin and Sydney their dad back."

Baker's closing was followed by rebuttal arguments from attorneys Daniel Petrocelli and Tom Lambert, and the jury was not likely to get the case until Tuesday.

At least nine of the 12 jurors must agree to find Simpson responsible for the deaths and award damages to the victims' families.

Petrocelli asked jurors what a guilty man does when faced with overwhelming evidence.

"What does he do? What does

this guy do? He hires an army of lawyers, experts, investigators, consultants ... They sit down and they figure out what to say about all this evidence," he said.

"What you have heard in this courtroom, ladies and gentlemen, for the last four months, is what a guilty man has to say in response to all this evidence: 'It's all



Simpson

planted. It's all contaminated. The photos are fake. ... Every-
ness is lying or mistaken. The
conspiracy the likes of which
er before has been witnessed
to get me.' ... That's what a
man does," Petrocelli said.

Mindful of recent polls
ing growing doubts about
son's acquittal, Baker asked
unsequestered panel to dis-
the idea that the public
Simpson to be held respon-
for the murders.

"The media has told the
is politically correct to be
Simpson, and you, ladies and
tlemen, are the buffers," he
"You have to weigh the evi-
through your common sense

Arlington may test prom-goers for drinking

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — She is picture-
perfect in her taffeta gown and wrist corsage.
He's wearing a rented tux for the first time. The
limousine delivers them to the front door of the
hotel.

It's prom night in the suburbs. But this year,
the music might not play until the happy cou-
ple go through the same breath test that the
police give to suspected drunken drivers.

The school board in this city of almost 300,000
residents is scheduled to vote Feb. 6 on whether
all prom-goers must pass a test to ensure they
have not been drinking alcohol.

"Our goal is not to take away from the festivi-
ties, but to allow the students to participate in an
alcohol-free prom," Steve Jacoby said, executive
director of student services for the 53,141-student
district.

The proposal would require all participants to
pass breath or saliva tests before they will be ad-
mitted to the dance.

Jacoby said the recommendation was the idea
of a 22-member committee of parent-teacher or-
ganizations, principals and student representa-
tives from the district's five high schools, along
with senior-class sponsors and police.

"We have a responsibility and an obligation
provide a safe environment for students. Al-
though it is illegal, at least for high school students,
we must do all we can to uphold the law," he said.

Lamar High School senior Trevor Ham-
and his friends scoffed at the notion that
breath test would ensure that kids do not
on prom night.

"Haven't any of the people who make
rules ever gone to prom?" Hamilton said
day while walking to class. "You don't get
before the prom and go drunk ... You get
after the prom is over. Silly adults."

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By JED

Senate passes anti-stalking legislation

AUSTIN (AP) — Texans soon
have another way to fight stalk-
after the state Senate on Monday
unanimously passed a bill to
make such action a crime.

The bill was expected to be
Gov. George W. Bush's desk Tuesday.
He made the issue an emergency
item in the opening days of the
session and is expected to sign
the bill before the end of the week.
The bill would become effective as soon
as he signs it.

The Texas Court of Criminal
peals ruled the state's old anti-stalk-
law unconstitutional last September.

The bill defines stalking as sim-
ilar action on more than one oc-
sion that is directed specifically
at another person.

The person committing the
would have to know or reason-
ably should know the targeted per-
son would regard the actions as har-
assing. The acts also must cause
target or the target's family mem-
bers to fear bodily injury, death,
property damage and must cause
a reasonable person also to
such injuries.

The first offense is a misdemeanor
that carries up to a year in
jail. Subsequent stalking con-
victions would be felon crimes
with possible prison sentences
to 10 years.

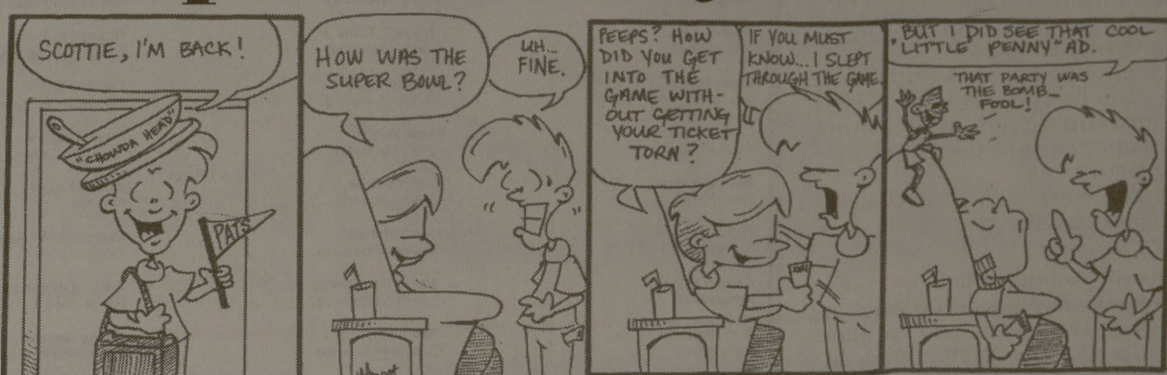
The House last week added
provision so that non-family mem-
bers of the target's household
would be considered.

Lawmakers supporting the
change said that stalking victims
often move in with friends or
neighbors, subjecting those peo-
ple to the threats and dangers
posed by stalkers.

Sen. Mike Moncrief, D-
Worth and sponsor of the bill,
the House change strengthened
the bill.

"With the additional language
think we are able to protect
potential victims," Moncrief said.
"I look forward to the govern-
ment signature getting on there
quickly as possible."

Peeps



By Michael

Sketch



By Quatro



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