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Goldman offers to give up damages if O.J. confesses

“No matter how much money I am offered, I would never confess to a crime which I did not commit.”

O.J. SIMPSON

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—O.J. Simpson rejected a challenge from Fred Goldman on Wednesday that would have allowed the football great to avoid millions in damages if he signed a confession admitting he is a killer.

“No matter how much money I am offered, I would never confess to a crime which I did not commit,” Simpson said through attorney Phillip Baker.

Goldman earlier told The Associated Press in a telephone interview: “I don’t want to play games. But if he wanted to sign a confession with all the details of his crime and broadcast it all over the country and publish it all over the nation, I would drop the judgment.”

The aggrieved father, who never accepted Simpson’s murder acquittal and doggedly pursued him to civil court, added: “All I ever wanted is justice. It’s never been an issue about money.”

Goldman had acknowledged that the chance of Simpson taking him up

on the offer was slim to none.

“Easy to say, easy to do, never going to happen,” Goldman predicted when he first revealed the offer Tuesday on the Dallas-based Salem Radio Network. “This person hasn’t owned responsibility for any of his actions through his lifetime.”

Alan Dershowitz, who was on Simpson’s defense team at his criminal trial, said he was not surprised the offer was rejected. “He will go to his grave maintaining his innocence adamantly.”

Simpson swore on the witness stand it was “absolutely untrue” that

he slashed Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman to death on June 12, 1994.

A civil jury that didn’t believe him found him liable for the deaths and socked him with compensatory and punitive damages totaling \$33.5 million — more than double what even his accusers predicted he could ever pay.

Goldman stands to collect at least half of \$8.5 million in compensatory damages and \$12.5 million in punitive damages. He has to split both with his ex-wife, Sharon Rufo.

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North Korean official defects

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A close confidant of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il defected to South Korea today, becoming the highest-ranking North Korean official ever to seek asylum in Seoul.

Hwang Jang Yop, a member of the Central Committee of North Korea’s ruling Workers’ Party, defected at the South Korean Embassy in Beijing, according to South Korea’s foreign ministry.

He could be an invaluable source of information about the workings of North Korea’s secretive communist government, which rules one of the world’s most closed societies.

Hwang, 72, defected at around 10 a.m. with an aide, Kim Duk Hung, president of a North Korean trading company, according to South Korean Ambassador Chung Jong-wook in Beijing.

Chung would not characterize China’s reaction to Hwang’s defection, saying “it is a very sensitive issue.”

The Korean Peninsula was divided half a century ago into the communist North and the capitalist South. China once was the North’s closest ally, but relations have cooled since Beijing opened up its economy and established ties with the South.

Hwang left Tokyo’s Narita Airport on Tuesday for Beijing. His reported defection comes four days before the North Korean leader’s 55th birthday on Sunday.

One South Korean official said on condition of anonymity that Hwang’s defection could be an indication of a power struggle in the North’s hierarchy.

About 180 North Koreans have defected to South Korea in the past three years, including 30 so far this year.

South Korea called an emergency Cabinet meeting to discuss ways of bringing the two officials to Seoul. The men were on their way home via Beijing after attending a North Korean-sponsored international seminar in Japan.

A relative of late North Korean President Kim Il Sung, Hwang graduated from North Korea’s elite Kim Il Sung University and Moscow University in the late 1950s.

As a key member of the North’s ruling party, he serves as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the North’s parliament, the Supreme Peoples Assembly.

He is known to be a key theoretician behind jucheism, North Korea’s ideology of self-reliance.

Daily Nebraska

Questions? Comments? Ask for the appropriate section editor at 472-2588 or e-mail dn@unlinfo.unl.edu.

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FAX NUMBER: 472-1761

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