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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Date: June 3, 2003
Re: Peterson case

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MODESTO, CALIFORNIA – Stanislaus County District Attorney James C. Brazelton responded today to media reports that a brown van sought by the defense in the Peterson case has been located and is in police custody.

Late Friday afternoon, at the request of the defense, members of law enforcement located a brown van the defense claimed was possibly involved in the disappearance of Laci Peterson. The occupants of the van consented to having the vehicle towed and examined by criminalists from the Department of Justice crime lab in Ripon, California. On Monday afternoon, the defense was notified that the van was in police custody. This notification occurred because the defense claims they have an ownership interest in the vehicle.

Several people associated with the van were investigated, interviewed and excluded as not having any involvement in the disappearance of Laci Peterson. None of these persons has been arrested. This is the second time they have been contacted and cooperated with police during this investigation. The only reason they were contacted a second time was as a result of the prosecution's obligation to investigate possible defenses to a charged crime in order to insure that justice is achieved.

On Tuesday afternoon, members of the defense team were provided an opportunity to view the vehicle.   Shortly thereafter, this office began receiving calls from the media reporting claims that various items were found inside the van. Despite these claims, it remains the position of the District Attorney that this van was not in any way involved in the disappearance of Laci Peterson.

No further information is being released on this investigation and no press conferences are planned on this issue.

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