

NEWS RELEASE

09/27/2001

MODESTO, CALIFORNIA –

District Attorney James C. Brazelton announced today that admitted Norteno gang member Robert Garcia, Jr., age 20, of Newman, was convicted by a Stanislaus County Superior Court jury on September 19, 2001, of committing the felony crimes of burglary, arson and threatening to commit a crime which would result in death or great bodily injury. He was also convicted of several enhancements which had alleged that these crimes were committed for the benefit of and as an active participant of a criminal street gang.

On April 15, 2001, Jimmy Hernandez, another admitted Norteno street gang member, was stabbed when he assaulted a member of a family living in the City of Newman. Fearing retaliation by other members of Hernandez' gang, the family left the residence. While they were gone, on April 16, 2001, Garcia broke into the residence and set a fire which extensively burned part of the home. When he was arrested for the burglary and arson crimes, Garcia threatened to kill Newman Police Officer Richard Hawes and Hawes' family.

Deputy District Attorney Mark Sullivan prosecuted the case. Sentencing is scheduled for October 17, 2001, when Garcia faces up to twenty-one years in state prison.