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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Date: April 21, 2008

Re: Trice, Dean, Nichols sentencing

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**Modesto, California** . Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Jermaine Dean, Tommy Nichols and Kevin Trice, of Pasadena California, were sentenced today to life in prison without parole. It has been over one year since they were convicted on Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007 of Murder in the First Degree, as well as gang and gun charges after a fifty-two day jury trial that began November of 2006 in Department 7 of the Stanislaus County Superior Court . Deputy District Attorney Doug Maner prosecuted the case on behalf of the People.

On March 2, 2002, JoJo Ruiz was shot and killed during a robbery at his residence in Modesto. Evidence presented during trial suggested that Ruiz was targeted due to a large amount of money and illegal drugs that he kept in his home. During the robbery, Ruiz was able to obtain a weapon and shoot at one of his attackers. Defendant Trice was found in Atwater shortly after the crime with a gunshot wound to his abdomen. Trice claimed to be the victim of a random drive by shooting.

After almost four months of testimony, the jury took less than five hours to reach a guilty verdict. All three defendants were convicted of Murder with the special circumstance of committing murder in the course of a robbery, two counts each of robbery and false imprisonment.

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