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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: September 19, 2024
Re: George Ruiz Palomar, Jr.
Convicted Killer Denied Parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Jeff Laugero announced today that George Ruiz Palomar, Jr., age 66, of Modesto was found unsuitable for parole during a September 5, 2024 hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at the California State Prison, Sacramento. Deputy District Attorney Amy Elliott Neumann appeared at the hearing on behalf of the People.

On December 17, 1980, Palomar pointed a gun at his girlfriend's parents when they came to pick up his girlfriend from his house. The parents left and reported the crime to Modesto Police.

Two weeks later, at a New Year's Eve party on the evening of December 31, 1980, in the early morning hours of January 1, 1981, Palomar argued with the same girlfriend over the clothing she was wearing, tore her clothes, and demanded that she leave the party with him. When the other partygoers forced him to leave, Palomar's best friend David Perez, and friend Michael Rosales tried to calm Palomar down while walking him to his car. Once he got to his car, Palomar pulled out a gun and shot both Mr. Perez and Mr. Rosales. Mr. Perez was killed when Palomar shot him four times. Mr. Rosales was shot three times but survived his wounds.

At trial, Palomar testified in his own defense claiming he had been smoking marijuana and drinking heavily. His stated reason for bringing a gun to the party was to fire it off at midnight. He claimed Mr. Perez had a knife, which he admitted at his parole hearing was a lie, and he shot Mr. Perez in self-defense. Palomar testified he shot Mr. Rosales in self-defense.

On June 5, 1981, a Stanislaus County Superior Court jury convicted Palomar of first-degree murder for the killing of David Perez, attempted murder for the shooting of Michael Rosales and brandishing a firearm for the previous incident two weeks earlier involving his girlfriend's parents. Palomar was sentenced to serve a total of 27 years to life in state prison.

On May 26, 1983, after a Fifth District Court of Appeal found the trial evidence insufficient to support first degree premeditated murder and reduced his conviction to second degree, Palomar was resentenced to a total of 17 years to life.

Palomar has had 14 parole hearings and each time he is instructed on what he needs to do to be paroled. Palomar ignored the Board's instruction and insisted in recent court filings that his continued incarceration is the fault of the prison. Since being incarcerated, Palomar has repeatedly violated prison rules including disobeying orders, manipulating staff, having scissors in his cell, attempting to defraud the state, threatening female custodial staff and being out of bounds. His last violation occurred in 2006.

During the hearing, Palomar continued to blame his victims for his crimes and minimize his role in the murder. Prosecutor Neumann argued for Palomar's continued confinement because he failed to follow the Board's instruction, lacks insight, and has failed to internalize programming and understand history of domestic violence. At the conclusion of the hearing one of the victim's family members gave an impact statement and asked the Board to deny parole.

Although eligible for both youthful (Palomar was 22 at the time of his offense) and elder parole (he is now 66), the Board found inmate Palomar still posed an unreasonable risk to public safety and denied parole for three years. Palomar has been in prison for over 43 years. Although he will be scheduled for another hearing in three years, he may also petition to advance that date if he can show a change in circumstances.

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