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Parole Denied to Convicted Infant Murder Perfecto Cervantes
CDC#K62241; Court Case number SC068166A

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced that the California Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) denied release to convicted murderer Perfecto Cervantes. On March 6, 2024, BPH found that Cervantes continues to pose a current and unreasonable risk to public safety. Representing the District Attorney's Office was Deputy District Attorney Kevin P. Cook.

On July 13, 1996, Kern County Sheriff's deputies responded to a residence involving a seven-month-old infant with serious injuries to his face and head. The baby was transported to Kern Medical Center and was pronounced deceased on July 14, 1996.

The doctor at the autopsy determined the cause of death was intercranial hemorrhage due to blunt force trauma. The baby had suffered multiple blows to the head, which caused a large skull fracture to the right side of his head. The infant also had bruising on both ears, the left side of his face, his eye, the bridge of his nose, and his chest. Additional bruising was seen on the right side of the face and head.

On the date of the incident, the mother found the baby lying in bed with Cervantes and both appeared asleep. Later she checked on the baby and saw him lying on his back and left side on the floor. She initially believed he had fallen out of bed. She saw obvious injuries and slight bleeding from his nose. Cervantes, her live-in boyfriend, admitted playing rough with the baby and stated the baby had fallen and hit his head. The examining doctor stated the evidence was not consistent with Cervantes's story about how the baby was injured. The evidence showed the baby had been struck multiple times in the head.

On June 4, 1997, a Kern County Jury found Cervantes guilty of one count of murder in the second degree. On June 27, 1997, a Kern County Judge sentenced Cervantes to 15 years to life.

On March 6, 2024, the BPH focused on Cervantes' lack of sufficient participation in programming, institutional misconduct, and lack of insight into his life crime. The BPH found Cervantes needed to engage in significant programming, accept responsibility for his crime, disengage from negative contacts, and develop a detailed parole plan prior to any potential of release on parole.

The Kern County District Attorney's Office asked the BPH to deny parole. The BPH has the option of denying an inmate parole for a period of 15, 10, 7, 5 or 3 years. Cervante's commissioners issued a five-year denial.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; "Child murders are among the most heinous crimes we see, and it's crucial that we advocate for these innocent victims. Cervantes robbed a child of his life, and now must continue to serve the time."

Perfecto Cervantes:

