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PRESS RELEASE

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Gang Member Sentenced for Halloween Stabbing of Innocent Victims.

A 18-year-old gang member known as “Troubles” was sentenced today to nine years in state prison for stabbing two Halloween revelers that he mistook for rival gang members during the early morning hours of November 1, 2009, which resulted in serious injury to both victims.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey announced today that Israel Cuevas Garcia, a.k.a. “Troubles,” of Chico, was convicted on the charge of assault with a deadly weapon in furtherance of a criminal street gang. Ramsey said Garcia argued for probation, but was sentenced to the upper term sentence to which five years were added because of the criminal street gang enhancement. Prior to this offense, Garcia had been adjudicated as a minor of being involved in two fights motivated by gang associations. Garcia committed this crime when he was 17-years-old, but the court found him unfit to be treated as a juvenile and he was prosecuted as an adult. Garcia will face enhanced punishment if he commits a future felony as he has now been convicted of one strike under California’s Three Strikes Law.

Garcia along with Alexander Sanchez, 20, a.k.a. “Creeper” of Chico, approached one of the victims who was wearing a prison jumpsuit costume for Halloween while standing outside an apartment complex on West 2nd Avenue, Chico. Garcia and Sanchez began asking the 23-year-old victim where he had served time and where he was from. When the victim shrugged, Garcia and Sanchez became more agitated, made statements and gestures that caused the victim to fear they had weapons and that indicated their allegiance to a criminal street gang. When the victim saw a roommate, he yelled out to have the roommate get help from the victim’s 20-year-old brother. At that time Garcia struck the victim in the back of the head. The victim reacted by tackling Garcia to the ground, where Garcia then pulled a knife and stabbed the victim three times. The victim’s brother ran to assist and saw that three individuals were assaulting his brother on the ground. The brother then interceded and pulled the victim away from the assault. At that point Garcia slashed the brother across the face with the knife and stabbed him an additional time in the shoulder. The two victims then fled into an apartment, but not before Jose Jesus Delgado, Jr., 22, a.k.a. “Pepe” of Chico, struck the brother with a fist. Fortunately, the Chico Police Department was in the area, saw the melee in progress, heard gang slogans being yelled by individuals involved, and responded causing the perpetrators to disband allowing the victims to escape within the residence. Both victims were treated for serious injuries at Enloe Medical

Center.

On August 19, 2010, Sanchez was sentenced for his role in the assault to two years in state prison after being convicted of a battery committed in furtherance of a criminal street gang. On March 10, 2010, Delgado was sentenced to formal felony probation after being convicted of a battery committed in furtherance of a criminal street gang.

Ramsey said, “The foolishness that fuels rivalries between gang members cannot be understood. Here we have the perfect example of someone who was targeted by terrorist violence because he chose a Halloween costume that caught the attention of the wrong people.”