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PAROLE BOARD

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Josh Wall
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DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

LADALE STRANGE

W46659

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: May 10, 2011

DATE OF DECISION: May 4, 2012

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Cesar Archilla, John Bocon, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Ina Howard-Hogan, Roger Michel, Lucy Soto-Abbe, Josh Wall

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Parole is denied with a review in five years. The decision is unanimous.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

LaDale Strange, at age 17, committed three sexual assaults on young boys in Holyoke during a four-week period in 1988. For each crime, Strange followed an eight or nine year old boy whom he did not know, and attacked the boy with the intent of forcing sexual activity. Each crime included an extraordinary amount of violence and harm. The facts of the cases are terrifying.

On March 13, 1988, Strange sexually assaulted an eight year-old boy. He used a knife to force the boy to remove his clothes, anally raped the child, and slashed him with the knife in the arm and the leg. In a 2011 interview with parole staff, Strange provided this description of the crime. "I tricked [the victim] into accompanying me to the basement of a vacant apartment building where I produced a knife and forced him to disrobe. I gagged him with items of clothing and anally raped him. While I did so [the boy] broke free and ran toward the door. I grabbed the knife and chased him. When I

caught him I angrily cut him in the shin with the knife and again on his arm telling him I would kill him if he ran from me again in order to make him comply."

On April 6, 1988 Strange lured an eight year-old boy into an alley and tied him to a fence to prevent him from fleeing while Strange broke into a storage area. Once he gained access Strange moved the boy to the storage area. He told the boy he had a gun and made him remove his clothes. A noise from nearby drew Strange's attention and the victim was able to run away. The victim, partially clothed, ran home and immediately reported the assault to his mother. In a 2011 interview with parole staff, the inmate gave his description crime. "I tricked [the victim] into coming with me to an enclosed courtyard behind a bank that I had knowledge of. I took him to the bank's stairs and told him to remove his clothing. When he started crying and refused, I lied telling him I had a gun and would shoot him if he didn't. As [the boy] began removing his sweater a noise erupted from the back door of the bank, scaring me, and I ran home."

In the late afternoon of April 11, 1988, a maintenance man discovered a seven year-old boy in a basement. The child was naked, badly beaten, bleeding, and unconscious. A brick covered with blood was next to the child. At the hospital, a piece of wood, 10 inches long, was removed from the victim's rectum. The child received severe brain injury from being beaten with the brick; the damage extended to the central nervous system; he sustained permanent injuries affecting every facet of mental and physical functioning. The anal rape with the piece of wood caused permanent injuries that require use of a colostomy bag.

In a 2011 interview with parole staff, the inmate gave his description of the April 11, 1998 crime. "I tricked [the victim] into coming with me to the basement of an apartment building where I forced him to disrobe but he refused. Becoming angry I hit him in the head with my fist ordering him to disrobe again. [The boy] began crying very loudly. I told him to shut up but he continued crying. Afraid of being caught, I picked up half of a brick and hit [the boy] in the side of his head with it, telling him to shut up and take his clothes off. [The boy] began to quickly undress but continues to cry loudly. Once he had undressed, he suddenly ran toward the door seeming to cry even louder. I choked him still holding the half brick in my hand. He suddenly stumbled and fell. By now I was standing over him and hit him about three times with the brick to quiet him. When [the boy] became quiet I felt relieved but angry. To get revenge on him I forced a piece of window molding into his rectum wanting him to find it there when he woke up."

Strange was arrested on April 14, 1988. Strange pleaded guilty on June 1, 1989 to two counts of rape of a child with force, and received two concurrent life sentences. He also pleaded guilty to two counts of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, and three counts of kidnapping. He received the same sentence, 8 to 10 years concurrent, for each of those five crimes; those sentences have expired.

Strange has two prior DYS commitments. At 14, Strange attempted to rape a seven year-old boy which resulted in a delinquency for indecent assault and battery on a

child. He was also found delinquent on assault and battery with a dangerous weapon for beating a boy with a brick.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 10, 2011

LaDale Strange stated that he was not seeking parole at this time. He said that "I may never be suitable for parole." He recognized that he still has "the potential to be dangerous." He described that the third victim, on April 11, he beat with a brick because the victim was "crying loudly and I did not want to get caught; then I rolled him over and inserted a stick [in his anus]; I was angry that I could not do what I wanted to do." Board members interpreted this description as meaning that the inmate beat the victim to unconsciousness before he could complete the sodomy he intended; as an alternative, he punished the victim by sodomizing him with a stick.

The inmate has 16 disciplinary reports during his incarceration. Four reports are for sexual activity with another inmate. Two reports are for fighting, including an incident in which Strange put a pillowcase over an inmate's head and held him down so other inmates could beat him. Strange has participated in some sex offender treatment. He was terminated from treatment, however, in 2008 for lack of progress; the termination report stated that "he struggles with the ability to connect and understand his emotions." As Board members pointed out in the hearing, the inmate had no empathy for his victims and it is unclear that he has or can develop empathy.

There were no supporters of parole.

The third victim, who was beaten with a brick, appeared with family members in opposition to parole. The victim still has serious physical and mental difficulties due to the devastating brain injury the inmate inflicted. The victim's sister described that he was in a coma for three months, in the hospital for one year, and had casts on all four limbs. The treating physician even offered the family the option of removing life support. The victim requires constant supervision and assistance with the basic tasks of daily life. The victim made an extraordinary effort to attend the hearing and confront the man whose sadistic acts had so dramatically changed the victim's life.

Hampden Assistant District Attorney Jane Mulqueen opposed parole. She pointed out that the inmate "hunted his victims, used weapons to subdue and punish his victims when they did not comply, bound them with their own clothing, and returned to work and daily activity after committing the assaults."

III. DECISION

LaDale Strange is an extraordinarily dangerous person. He committed brutal crimes against three young boys. The violence and sadism is impossible to understand and the harm caused is beyond description. He was terminated from sex offender treatment because of lack of progress and lack of empathy. He acknowledged that "I may never be suitable for parole." If released, LaDale Strange would be highly likely to

re-offend with sexual violence. His parole is, therefore, denied. The law requires a review in five years and there is no reason to reduce that time period.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing.

Josh Wall
Josh Wall, Chairman

May 4, 2012
Date