The City of SAN DIEGO
Police Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Arrest in Cold Case Homicide

San Diego – On December 31, 1975, 28 year-old Alvaro Espeleta was found deceased in his home in the 3200 block of Reynard Way. Espeleta was a dental technician in the United States Navy and was assigned to the Marine Corp Recruit Depot. Two of Espeleta's co-workers went to his home to check on him after he did not show up for work and discovered his body.

The San Diego Police Homicide Unit investigated the case, but eventually all investigative leads at that time were exhausted. Investigators from the San Diego Police Cold Case Unit, San Diego County District Attorney's Office Cold Case Unit, the Federal Bureau of Investigations San Diego Field Office, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service Southwest Field Office have continued looking at this case and comparing the evidence against emerging forensic sciences and technology. Their collaborative efforts along with the work of the San Diego Police Department's Crime Lab have led to the identification of a suspect in this case.

On January 24, 2020, 62 year-old Dennis Lepage was arrested in Troy, New York for the murder of Alvaro Espeleta. Lepage remains in New York, pending extradition back to San Diego.

The San Diego Police Department would like to thank the following agencies for their assistance in this investigation and the arrest of Lepage. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the San Diego District Attorney's Office, the San Diego Sheriff's Department, the New York State Safe Streets Task Force, the New York State Police, the Albany County Sheriff's Department, and the Federal Bureau of Investigations Albany, New York Field Office. Charges have been filed by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office, charging Lepage with the murder of Alvaro Espeleta. All media inquiries should be directed to the District Attorney's Office.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the Homicide Unit at (619) 531-2293 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.

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