

Opinion: No one else should pay price for parole system's failure

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We should all hope that Thursday's plea deal in Placerville, that will put Phillip Garrido and his wife, Nancy, behind bars for the rest of their lives finally will allow Jaycee Dugard and her family to begin healing from their decades-long ordeal.

In a crime that gained nationwide attention, the Garridos kidnapped Dugard, then just 11 years old, from a South Lake Tahoe street and held her captive in a backyard shanty for nearly 20 years. Phillip Garrido, 60 now, fathered two children by the kidnapped girl.

His surprise guilty plea to 14 charges of kidnapping and sexual assault can send him to prison for a maximum 431 years. Nancy Garrido, who pleaded guilty to one count of kidnapping and one of rape, faces 36 years to life. Neither should ever be released back into society.

The guilty pleas are welcome because it means that Dugard and her children will not have to testify against her captors and can try to heal from the long trauma.

But the case should serve as a warning to law enforcement and, equally important, those who create budgets for police, corrections facilities, and parole and probation departments.

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