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D.A. BROWN: TWO YOUTHS CHARGED IN HATE CRIME IN DOUGLASTON

Allegedly Beat Two Victims and Uttered Racial Slurs; Two Police Officers Also Injured In Arrest

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Flushing teenager and a 20-year-old male from Little Neck have been charged with assault as a hate crime in an alleged bias-related attack in Douglaston yesterday in which four Asian youths were terrorized and subjected to racial slurs. During the incident, two of the victims are alleged to have been severely beaten, one with an automobile steering wheel lock known as "The Club," resulting in a possible fractured skull. The Flushing teenager is also charged with resisting arrest and assaulting two police officers – one of whom suffered severe injuries when the defendant put his car in drive and the door closed on the officer's head and arm.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendants' alleged actions are a throwback to a dark time and place in American history and are an affront to civilized society. Queens County is the most culturally diverse county in the nation and crimes of hate will never be tolerated here. They are to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. When they do, regrettably, occur, they will be vigorously prosecuted and severely punished."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Kevin M. Brown, 19, of 196-40 45th Avenue in Flushing, and Paul A. Heavey, 20, of 43-35 247th Street in Little Neck. Both defendants are being held pending arraignment on charges of Assault in the Second and Third Degrees as a Hate Crime, Reckless Endangerment in the Second Degree as a Hate Crime, Criminal Mischief in the Fourth Degree as a Hate Crime and Harassment in the Second Degree. The defendant Brown is also charged with Assault in the Second Degree and Resisting Arrest. If convicted, each defendant faces a determinate sentence of between eight and 15 years in state prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal charges, four Asian males – Reynold Liang, 19, John Lu, 19, David Wu, 19, and Wing Chung Poon – were in a white Lexus at approximately 2:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 12, 2006, when the defendants Brown and Heavey pulled up alongside of them in a 1998 Toyota and began cursing and shouting racial slurs. At one point, the defendants allegedly drove behind Liang's Lexus and intentionally rammed it. Fearful, Liang drove away in an attempt to escape from the two defendants. Believing he had eluded the defendants, he pulled over at the intersection of 44th Avenue and Douglaston Parkway, where victim Lu got out of the car to inspect the damage to the rear of the Lexus. As he did so, the defendants reappeared. Exiting their vehicle and approaching Lu, the defendants allegedly punched him about the head and body, causing him to suffer lacerations requiring multiple stitches and substantial pain, including several loose teeth. During the attack the defendants are alleged to have uttered more racial slurs. In coming to his friend's aid, victim Liang was also allegedly punched and kicked about the head and body by the defendants. Crawling back to his car, Liang picked up "The Club" which was then allegedly grabbed from him by the defendants who used it to hit him numerous times about the head and body, causing him to sustain a possible fractured skull and substantial pain to his chest.

The District Attorney said that police officers assigned to the NYPD's 111th Precinct pulled the defendant Brown's Toyota over approximately twenty minutes after the incident in Bayside, at the intersection of Cloverdale Boulevard and 46th Avenue. As Police Officer Graziano Cillo attempted to arrest Brown, the defendant allegedly put the Toyota into drive, causing it to crash into Officer Cillo's police vehicle and the door of the Toyota to close on his head and arm. When Officers Anthony Panetta and Scott Lutz then attempted to handcuff Brown, the defendant allegedly flailed his arms, causing injuries to Officer Lutz's hand.

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The investigation was conducted by the New York City Police Department's Hate Crimes Unit.

The case will be prosecuted by the District Attorney's District Attorney's Gang Violence and Hate Crimes Bureau under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mariela Palomino Herring, Bureau Chief, and Michelle E. Goldstein, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials James C. Quinn and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials John H. Larsen.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at www.queensda.org.