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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**TWO FACE HATE CRIME CHARGES IN ST. ALBANS BIAS ATTACK**

*Allegedly Threw Rocks And Beer Bottles At Transgender Female While Shouting Anti-Gay Slurs*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that two men have been charged with second-degree assault as a hate crime and other charges relating to an alleged attack last night on a transgender female who was walking near the intersection of 199<sup>th</sup> Street and 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue in St. Albans when the defendants threw rocks and beer bottles at her while repeatedly calling her anti-gay slurs.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendants' alleged actions 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, those responsible will be brought to justice."

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Nathaniel Mims, 25, of 2198 Palmer Avenue in the Bronx, and Rasheed Thomas, 22, of 88-15 168<sup>th</sup> Street in Queens. They are presently being held pending arraignment in Queens Criminal Court on charges of second-degree assault as a hate crime, third-degree assault as a hate crime, second-degree assault, third-degree assault, second-degree menacing as a hate crime, second-degree menacing, second-degree aggravated harassment and second-degree harassment. If convicted, they face up to 15 years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, Carmella Etienne, who is a transgender female, was walking near the intersection of 199<sup>th</sup> Street and 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue last night between 8:30 p.m. and 9:22 p.m. when she was struck on the foot with a rock. When the victim turned around she allegedly saw the defendants, Nathaniel Mims and Rasheed Thomas, throwing rocks in her direction, while they yelled slurs at her and shouted "Don't ever walk that block anymore or we will slash your throat."

The victim said that when she warned the defendants that she was going to call the police, they allegedly said "The police don't care about you, they won't do anything to us." The victim said that as she called the police the defendants began throwing empty beer bottles at her while continuing to shout slurs and threatened to kill her. One of the beer bottles struck the victim's leg and she sustained a three-inch laceration.

Defendant Thomas, while being questioned by the police, allegedly stated, "I didn't know you could get locked up for calling somebody names. I called her a bunch of names, I called her a (expletive deleted), but she didn't see me throw anything."

The case was investigated by Police Officer Aaron Lohman of the NYPD's 113<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

The case is being prosecuted by the 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 Attorneys for Trials John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusatory instrument and a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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