



www.bronxda.nyc.gov
www.facebook.com/BronxDistrictAttorney
www.twitter.com/BronxDAClark

DARCEL D. CLARK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BRONX COUNTY

198 EAST 161ST STREET
BRONX, N.Y. 10451
(718) 590-2234

23-2022

For Immediate Release

March 24, 2022

**OPERATION CHOPPING BLOCK: TWO ALLEGED GANG MEMBERS INDICTED
FOR SELLING 33 FIREARMS TO UNDERCOVER OFFICER
Weapons Had Been in Circulation, At Least Two Were Used in Shootings;
Guns Sold Include Assault Rifles and Ghost Guns**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and New York City Police Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell today announced that two Bronx men have been indicted for selling 33 weapons and large capacity ammunition feeding devices to an undercover NYPD officer.

District Attorney Clark said, "The defendants allegedly sold these deadly weapons, many of them loaded, on the streets of the Bronx in broad daylight. All but a handful of these guns have been here for some time; at least two of the guns have been connected to shootings in the Bronx and Manhattan. While we focus on the Iron Pipeline bringing new guns from out of state, this is a case of stopping criminals from recycling weapons that are destroying our communities. I thank the courageous undercover officer for helping to make the Bronx safer."

Commissioner Sewell said, "The NYPD and our law enforcement partners are focused on anything or anyone threatening the safety of the people we serve and every gun we take off our streets is another realization of the public-safety promise we make every day, to every New Yorker. I want to commend and thank the NYPD's Firearms Suppression Section, the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau of the Bronx County DA's Office, the New York Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and all the investigators and prosecutors who worked on this important case."

Drug Enforcement Administration Acting Special Agent in Charge Tim Foley said, "Today's arrests put two gang members in jail and shut down access to a gun cache in our backyard. We have seen gun violence and drug trafficking become partners in crime; but law enforcement collaboration is tracking down those responsible in order to make our communities safer. I commend the Bronx District Attorney's Office, the New York City Police Department, and Homeland Security Investigations New York for their partnership and laudable efforts throughout this investigation."



www.bronxda.nyc.gov
www.facebook.com/BronxDistrictAttorney
www.twitter.com/BronxDAClark

DARCEL D. CLARK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BRONX COUNTY

198 EAST 161ST STREET
BRONX, N.Y. 10451
(718) 590-2234

Homeland Security Investigations New York Acting Special Agent in Charge Ricky J. Patel said, “Anytime an illegally owned gun is removed from the street, it undoubtedly makes our communities safer. HSI stands with our partners at the ATF, Bronx District Attorney’s Office, the NYPD and the DEA to do whatever it takes to combat gun violence and stem the flow of violent crime throughout New York City. HSI will continue to forge law enforcement partnerships and utilize every tool in its arsenal to vigorously pursue any individual involved in the trafficking of illegal weapons, a necessity in preserving public safety and stopping gun violence.”

District Attorney Clark said the defendants, Dereck Velasquez, 29, AKA “Chop,” and Eric Colvin, 26, both of the Bronx, were indicted on 242 counts, including Criminal Sale of a Firearm, Criminal Possession of a Weapon, Conspiracy, Criminal Possession of a Firearm, Possession of Ammunition, Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance In or Near School Grounds, and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance. The defendants were arrested today. They both were arraigned today before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Albert Lorenzo. The defendants were remanded and are due back in court on March 29, 2022.

The four-month investigation dubbed “Operation Chopping Block,” was conducted by the Bronx District Attorney’s Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau and the NYPD’s DEA Firearms Task Force of the NYPD’s Firearms Suppression Section, with U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration’s New York Division and Homeland Security Investigations New York.

The defendants, allegedly high-ranking members of the Forest Over Everything crew, affiliated with the Bloods, allegedly sold a total of 33 firearms—25 semi-automatic pistols, five revolvers and three assault weapons, as well as 15 large capacity ammunition feeding devices, and approximately 80 grams of cocaine—to the undercover for a total of \$63,460, between September 28, 2021 and February 1, 2022.

According to the investigation, the defendants sold most of the weapons in the Bronx on Jackson Avenue, East 163rd Street and other streets near the Forest Houses in the Morrisania section. Four of the transactions occurred in Harlem.

The weapons were transferred in broad daylight. In one incident, weapons were held in a laundry bag and pushed in a cart by the seller who then dumped them into the undercover officer’s vehicle.



www.bronxda.nyc.gov
www.facebook.com/BronxDistrictAttorney
www.twitter.com/BronxDAClark

DARCEL D. CLARK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BRONX COUNTY

198 EAST 161ST STREET
BRONX, N.Y. 10451
(718) 590-2234

Investigators traced two of the firearms to shootings in the Bronx and Manhattan through ballistics evidence found at the scenes, and the investigation continues into the origins of the guns and whether any others have been used in crimes. Two of the firearms are ghost guns, which have no serial numbers and may be composed of 3D printed parts.

The investigation was conducted by the NYPD's Firearms Suppression Section, Detective Harish Mansharamani, Sergeant Brian O'Hanlon, Captain Jeffrey Heilig, Inspector Brian Gill; and Assistant Chief Christopher McCormack and Chief of Detectives James Essig.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Edward Christian Uy and Joseph Russo of the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, under the supervision of Jonathan Abramovitz, Supervisor in the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau; Jose Arocho, Deputy Bureau Chief of the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, Ronald Sannicandro, Deputy Bureau Chief of the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, and Julie Trivedi, Bureau Chief of the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Denise Kodjo, Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division, and Wanda Perez-Maldonado, Chief of the Investigations Division.

District Attorney Clark thanked her Crime Strategies Bureau, Technical Investigation Bureau and Video Unit for their assistance in the case.

District Attorney Clark thanked the DEA's Group D-34, New York Division for their assistance in the investigation. Group D-34 comprises DEA, NYPD Firearms Investigations Unit, Amtrak Police and Port Authority Police. District Attorney Clark thanked HSI for its assistance in the investigation.

An indictment is an accusatory instrument and is not proof of a defendant's guilt.