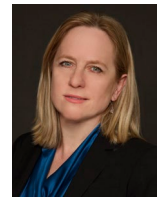




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QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH HATE CRIME
FOR PAINTING SWASTIKAS IN ELMHURST NEIGHBORHOOD

Defendant Faces Up to Four Years in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Kristoffer Bahamonde has been charged with criminal mischief as a hate crime, harassment and other charges for allegedly defacing several locations in Elmhurst, Queens, with swastikas and other graffiti in late May 2021.

District Attorney Katz said, “The defendant allegedly used symbols of hate to deface property and intimidate members of our shared community. In Queens County, we stand together against hatred directed toward any group. This defendant’s alleged actions do not reflect our values or who we are.”

Bahamonde, 41, of Justice Avenue in Elmhurst, was arraigned yesterday in Queens Criminal Court before Judge Elisa Koenderman on a complaint charging him with criminal mischief in the fourth degree as a hate crime, aggravated harassment in the first degree, making graffiti and possession of graffiti instruments. Bahamonde, who faces between 1 1/3 to 4 years in prison if convicted, was ordered to return to court on June 8, 2021.

District Attorney Katz said that between May 30th and May 31st, the defendant is accused of using red spray paint to tag three locations with swastikas and other graffiti:

- A green temporary fence surrounding a construction site on 54th Avenue was defaced with two swastikas in red alongside the numbers “110.”
- Just down the block, on 90th Street, another green temporary fence at a work site was tagged in red with two swastikas and the numbers “110” – also in red.
- The owner of a grocery store on Broadway, just off Queens Boulevard, in Elmhurst was also victimized with two swastikas and this time the numbers “110” was followed with the phrase “today I will never do time” painted in red on the side of the building.

According to the charges, the defendant was caught on surveillance video carrying a can of spray paint at one of the locations and spray painting a swastika at another.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Howard T. Kwok of the New York City Police Department’s Hate Crimes Task Force.

Assistant District Attorney Michael E. Brovner, Chief of the Hate Crimes Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of the Trial Division Pishoy Yacoub.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

