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**FOUR DEFENDANTS CONVICTED ON FEDERAL MURDER CHARGES
IN CONNECTION WITH MARIJUANA OPERATION**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that DAMIAN BROWN, a/k/a "Bossy," SHAWN PETERKIN, a/k/a "Shawn James," FRANZ GOLDING, a/k/a "Frank," and DWAYNE PALMER, a/k/a "Leon," a/k/a "Kay-Pas," were found guilty this afternoon of murder, firearms charges, and participating in a conspiracy to distribute marijuana, following a two-week jury trial before United States District Judge JED S. RAKOFF. The defendants were convicted of murder in connection with the April 16, 2005 shooting of KEINO SIMPSON in the Bronx in furtherance of their marijuana operation, for conspiring to distribute marijuana in the Bronx, for using firearms in connection with their marijuana business, and for illegally possessing firearms and ammunition. According to the evidence at trial:

From November 2003 until March 2005, the defendants owned and operated a large-scale marijuana distribution business in the Bronx. They received supplies of marijuana, among other ways, in multi-pound packages through Federal Express and United Parcel Service at various commercial mailbox locations throughout Manhattan and Westchester County. The defendants then sold the marijuana in pound quantities to smaller marijuana dealers in the Bronx.

In early April 2005, the defendants engaged in a series of violent confrontations with SIMPSON and another individual, OMAR KEN, which began with SIMPSON and KEN carrying out a home invasion robbery of PETERKIN. During the course of the robbery, SIMPSON and KEN took approximately twenty-five pounds of marijuana and approximately \$50,000 in marijuana proceeds from PETERKIN's home. In the early morning hours of April 16, 2005, PETERKIN, BROWN, GOLDING, and PALMER encountered SIMPSON and KEN in the area of 219th Street and White Plains Road, in the Bronx. At that time, the defendants, who were all in one car, started firing at SIMPSON and KEN, who were in two separate cars, with five firearms, including four handguns and an AK-47 assault rifle. The defendants pursued SIMPSON in a high-speed car chase

for more than a mile through the streets of the Bronx, until they reached the area of Gun Hill Road and Gates Place. There, with bullets from the confrontation entering parked cars and a nearby apartment building, SIMPSON crashed his car, and the defendants shot and killed him.

PETERKIN, GOLDING, and PALMER were arrested approximately twenty-four hours later at the Courtesy Motel, in Fort Lee, New Jersey, where they had fled after the murder. BROWN was arrested approximately two weeks later in Newark, New Jersey. Before being charged with murder, all four defendants were initially charged in federal court with illegally possessing firearms or ammunition on April 16, 2005, because of their status as illegal aliens (BROWN, GOLDING, and PALMER) or a convicted felon (PETERKIN). Subsequently, OMAR KEN was charged with and pleaded guilty to the home invasion robbery of PETERKIN.

BROWN, PETERKIN, GOLDING, and PALMER were convicted of one count of murder in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; one count of using a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, and participating in a conspiracy to distribute marijuana. In addition, BROWN, GOLDING, and PALMER were convicted of illegally possessing firearms or ammunition while being illegal aliens, and PETERKIN was convicted of illegally possessing a firearm as a convicted felon. The murder count carries a maximum sentence of life in prison. For using a firearm in connection with a drug trafficking crime, each defendant faces a mandatory minimum of ten years in prison.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the New York Office of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and the New York City Police Department.

Associated United States Attorneys MICHAEL Q. ENGLISH and JESSICA A. MASELLA are in charge of the prosecution.

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