



***United States Attorney
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**MEMBER OF BRONX HOME INVASION ROBBERY CREW
SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that ALBERTO CASTELLANO, a member of a violent home invasion robbery crew, was sentenced yesterday to life plus 105 years' imprisonment. United States District Judge ROBERT L. CARTER imposed the sentence in Manhattan federal court. In fall 2006, CASTELLANO was found guilty by a jury of murder, racketeering, robbery, drug distribution, and weapons offenses. According to the evidence at trial:

CASTELLANO was a member of the Freeman Street Robbery Crew ("the Robbery Crew"), which for years committed coordinated, carefully planned home invasion robberies, primarily of narcotics traffickers, in the New York metropolitan area. During the robberies, members of the Robbery Crew carried guns, and restrained, shot, beat and sometimes killed their victims. In particular, CASTELLANO was convicted at trial of the May 1, 2001, murder of RAUL FERREIRA during a robbery on East Tremont Avenue in the Bronx.

Members of the Robbery Crew conducted surveillance of targeted robbery locations in advance, made arrangements for equipment and personnel necessary to gain entry, and coordinated their efforts in order to maximize their chances of success. Members of the Robbery Crew, in all, robbed their victims of hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and many kilograms of cocaine.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the New York City Police Department, the New York State Police, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Assistant United States Attorneys JOAN LOUGHNANE, ALEXANDER J. WILLSCHER, DAVID S. LEIBOWITZ, and LAURIE A. KORENBAUM are in charge of the prosecution.