



JOINT PRESS RELEASE FBI & HUNTINGTON PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT



For Immediate Release: May 20, 2013

THREE CHARGED WITH BANK ROBBERY IN CONNECTION WITH 2012 HOAX BOMB SCENARIO IN EAST LOS ANGELES REWARD OFFERED BY BANK AS INVESTIGATION CONTINUES

Los Angeles – Three Los Angeles men have been charged federally for their roles in a bank robbery that occurred in Los Angeles, California, on September 5, 2012 in which a bank employee was outfitted with a hoax explosive device, announced United States Attorney in Los Angeles, André Birotte Jr., FBI Assistant Director in Charge, Bill Lewis, and Huntington Park Police Chief, Jorge Cisneros .

On April 25, 2013, a federal grand jury in Los Angeles returned an indictment filed under seal charging Reyes “Ray” Vega, Richard Menchaca and Bryan Perez with conspiracy to commit bank robbery, bank robbery and aiding and abetting each other by force, violence and intimidation. The indictment was unsealed this morning.

The three defendants were arrested during the evening on Friday, May 17. Ray Vega, 34, was taken into custody by FBI Agents in Atlanta, Georgia and was held in federal custody over the weekend. Richard Menchaca, 36, was arrested in Fontana, California, by members of the FBI’s Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT). Bryan Perez, 27, was arrested following a vehicle stop in Los Angeles by detectives with the Huntington Park Police Department. Menchaca and Perez were held at the Huntington Park Police Department over the weekend and were transferred to federal custody this morning. All three are scheduled to have an appearance today in United States District Court. Menchaca and Perez will appear in Los Angeles and Vega, in Atlanta.

The indictment alleges that Ray Vega planned and made arrangements to rob the Bank of America located at 941 South Atlantic Avenue in Los Angeles, where one of his girlfriends worked as an assistant branch manager. The girlfriend is identified in the indictment only by the initials of “A.B.”

The indictment alleges that defendants Perez and Menchaca traveled to examine the bank and surrounding area prior to the actual robbery, and that defendant Vega secured vehicles registered to a family member for use during the robbery. The

indictment further alleges that, on the morning of the robbery and during it, Vega arranged for A.B. to wear a device resembling an explosive on her person so that she would appear to be a hostage. The device was rendered safe by explosives experts who responded to the bank robbery and later determined that the device was a hoax. According to the indictment, the purported device was used so it would appear that explosives would be detonated unless an employee of the bank assisted A.B. by accessing the bank's vault.

The indictment alleges that defendant Menchaca picked up the cash placed outside of the bank by A.B. The defendants later met at a hotel to split the proceeds of the bank robbery, according to the indictment. The stolen money has not been recovered.

If convicted of the charges in the indictment, the defendants face a statutory maximum sentence of 25 years in federal prison.

Law enforcement investigators believe there is a strong possibility that additional individual/s have knowledge of the bank robbery and/or the whereabouts of the stolen cash. This investigation, therefore, remains active.

Anyone with information about the planning and execution of the September 5 bank robbery or the whereabouts of the money stolen during the bank robbery, is urged to contact the joint investigative team at 1 888 CANT HIDE (or 1 888 226-8443). Bank of America officials are offering a reward of up to \$10,000 in exchange for information leading to the arrest and conviction of additional person/s responsible for this crime.

This matter is the subject of a continuing investigation by detectives with the Huntington Park Police Department and agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Explosives experts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department assisted during the response to the bank robbery. The defendants will be prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office in Los Angeles.

MEDIA CONTACT:

FBI Press Relations: 310 996-3343

Huntington Park Press Relations: Lt. Neal Mongan: 323 826-6691

Assistant United States Attorney, Justin Rhoades: 213 894-3380