

Manny Mayí, présenté! Murdered 30 years ago by racist mob in NYC

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Altagracia Mayí and Martha Laureano Perez.

SLL photo: Stephen Millies

People gathered outside the office of Queens County District Attorney Melinda Katz on April 2 to demand justice for Manuel Mayí. The 18-year old Dominican man, known as Manny, was murdered 30 years before on March 30, 1991, by a white racist mob in the Corona neighborhood of Queens, New York City.

Altagracia Mayí, Manny's mother, spoke to supporters and the media. She movingly described her decades-long struggle to bring her son's murderers to trial.

A son of Dominican immigrants, Manny was an honor student who wanted to become an engineer. He was chased almost 20 blocks through the streets of Corona.

The racists caught up to Mayí at the corner of 36th Avenue and 108th Street (two blocks away from the home of the late Louis Armstrong). The mob used baseball bats, pipes and a fire extinguisher to beat Manny to death.

New York City was later forced to name the corner after Mayí. But the power structure refused to conduct any real prosecution or even investigation of those who lynched him.

Police protected the perpetrators. Cops refused to let witnesses ride in police cars to find the killers.

One alleged killer was allowed to join the police department. The late Queens District Attorney Richard Brown postponed court proceedings 47 times.

Justice Committee founder Richie Perez, who died in 2004, fought tirelessly to secure justice for Manny Mayí. Martha Laureano Perez, a leader of the Justice Committee and wife of Richie Perez, told the media how the Queens County DA's office has refused to even include Manuel Mayí on its "cold case" webpage.

It took over 30 years to convict the assassin of Mississippi NAACP leader Medgar Evers. The power of the people — seen in the 26 million people who declared “Black Lives Matter” following the murder of George Floyd — will secure justice for Manny Mayí.

