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This article was [originally written in Spanish](#), the below is it's translation (11/2009/MR)

## Dennis and Julio

**Por Matthew Archambeault**

Columnista invitado



The story of Dennis Calderón and Julio Maldeando, published in “Al Dia” during the past two weeks, illustrates many failures. These failures include the system of criminal justice, the Philadelphia police department, and I believe that the most impacting is that of the Latino community leaders.

The evidence presented at trial of the cousins clearly illustrates the racial nature of the initial attacks on these two men. This incident occurred in a fully Caucasian neighborhood where young white people were screaming such things as “Return to Puerto Rico! You dam Hispanics! You Nigger! (Derogatory term for African Americans)

These young sub-humans attacked a neighbor who was different from them. First they launched bottles against them and then they assaulted Dennis as they beat him with punches and kicks and apparently with a knife. Julio removed "The Club" (an auto lock device) to help Dennis.

The District Attorney's Office would have to believe that Julio, who sees all the assailants beating his cousin, decides to attack one innocent observer instead of attacking those that were beating his cousin down. This conclusion is absurd.

When the fight finished, this group continued shouting obscenities to Dennis' wife Marisol and his children. The group threatened that they were going to burn down her house and kill them. After hearing the brutality of this group, she did not take any risks and left her home with her children in the middle of the night to a safe place.

What punishment did this group receive for hitting a Latino for being a Latino and for getting a Latino family out of an all white neighborhood? Dennis Calderón and Julio Maldonado were sentenced to two years and a half to ten years for protecting themselves against violent racists.

What is even more absurd than the conclusion of the Prosecutor and Judges was the reaction of the leaders of the Latino community before this event. Perhaps you can't

remember your reaction because there was none. Although this incident was covered in the Daily News and the Inquirer, as well as in Fox 29, no Latino leader or community organization came to assist Calderón.

The Latino community needs unity and activism. In short, the Latino community needs real leaders that will fight for the Latinos in this region.

A good first step would be for a leader in the Latino community to step up and demand a police investigation and an independent inquiry into civil rights regarding the events associated with this attack. How come the Philadelphia police department and the District Attorney's Office not investigate the beating against Dennis and the racist threats against his wife and children? Why did some of the cops at the scene hide the evidence of violence that was used against Denis and denied to have heard the threats that were made against his family?

This incident occurred in the section of Oxford Circle in the Northeast, which used to be a neighborhood only of Caucasians. Since the Calderón's were forced out by the white racists, the neighborhood has changed to a mixture of different colors. Times have changed, the neighborhood has changed and Latino leadership in this community needs to change. They need to rise be heard, and make a difference.

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