

COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

2022

IN THE SUPREME COURT

CRI/VBI/292/11

Criminal Division

Between

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

vs

SLADE SEYMOUR

BEFORE The Honourable Madam Justice Renae McKay

APPEARANCES: Mr. Timothy Bailey for the Prosecution
 Mr. Stanley Rolle for the Convict

HEARD ON: 19th August A.D. 2025

DECISION ON SENTENCING

McKay J

1. Slade Seymour Jr. was charged with murder contrary section 291(1)(b) of the Penal Code, Chapter 84, Statute Laws of The Bahamas. On the 26th May 2025 he pleaded guilty to the same. On the 19th August 2025 the Court heard evidence from Ms. Tabitha Hunt a Social Worker from the Department of Rehabilitative and Welfare Services and thereafter Counsel written submitted submissions for my consideration.

Summary of the Facts

2. On Monday 27th June, 2023 sometime around 1:45pm. Police received a call and were informed that a man with a number of stab wounds collapsed in the area of Little Feet Academy on Carmichael. Officers arrived and on speaking to a number of witnesses received information that there was an altercation between two men in the area of BJ's Convenient Store next to Little Caesar's Pizza. One of the men stabbed the other with a small knife and he was taken to hospital by ambulance.
3. Officers spoke to various persons namely Wendall Altidor Kadeem Saunders and Dievencia Petit who gave a statements concerning the incident.

4. On the 26th May, 2025, the Convict appeared in court and pleaded guilty to the offence of Murder of Carron Thompson.

The Law

5. **Section 290 (1) of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 2011 Chapter 84** provides:-

“Whoever intentionally causes the death of another person by any unlawful harm is guilty of murder, unless his crime is reduced to manslaughter by reason of such extreme provocation, or other matter of partial excuse, as in this Title hereafter mentioned.”

6. Section 291(1)(b) of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 2011, No. 34 of 2011 (“**the Act**”) provides the range of years considered appropriate where a person is convicted of Murder. It states as follows:

Section 291(1) (b) of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 2011, No. 34 of 2011 states as follows:

“Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary-

(a)

(b) Every person convicted of murder to whom paragraph (a) does not apply –

(i) shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life; or

(ii) shall be sentenced to such other term given the circumstances of the offence or the offender as the court considers appropriate being within the range of thirty to sixty years imprisonment....”

Sentencing Provisions

9. Section 185 of the Criminal Procedure Code, Chapter 91 (“**the CPC**”), provides as follows:

“The court may, before passing sentence, receive such evidence as it thinks fit in order to inform itself as to the sentence proper to be passed and may hear counsel on any mitigating or other circumstances which may be relevant.”

Medical and Probation Reports

7. As provided for in section 185 of the Criminal Procedure Code above, the Court has had regard to a Medical Report of Dr. John Dilleth dated the 10th February 2025 (“**Dr. Dilleth**”) (the “**Medical Report**”) and the Probation Report dated the 13th August 2025 which was prepared by Ms. Tabitha Hunt, from the Department of Rehabilitation and Welfare Services (“**Ms. Hunt**”) (the “**Report**”).

8. Dr. Dillett had provided the Medical Report to assist all of the parties during the course of their Plea Agreement discussions. Therein he noted that upon remand to Sandilands Rehabilitation Center the Convict was diagnosed with the following:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (history of)
- Panic Disorder (history of)
- Major Depressive Disorder (history of)
- Polysubstance Use Disorder (Marijuana, Alcohol, Nicotine, Ecstasy)
- Traits of Antisocial Personality Disorder

The Convict's treatment included:

- Psychoeducation
- IQ testing (Wechsler Scale of Intelligence test score 125 - above average range)
- Drug Counseling
- Insight Building
- Pharmacotherapy:

Concerta 54 mg PO OD

Seroquel 100 mg PO nocte

9. Dr. Dillett stated that at the time of his initial psychiatric evaluation the Convict reported symptoms of insomnia and visual hallucinations for which he was treated for and symptoms had since been resolved after treatment. The Doctor recommended that the Convict avoids the above-named substances and continue follow-up with an outpatient psychiatrist for further evaluation and management.

10. Ms. Hunt, the Probation Officer with the Department of Rehabilitative Welfare Services averred that the purpose of the report was to interview the Convict and the Deceased's family members. I have noted the contents of the Reports and have factored the contents therein in my decision.

Defence Submissions

13. Mr. Rolle in his submissions recounted the facts, noting that after a failed plea bargain, the Convict pleaded guilty, and a Probation Report was prepared. Counsel emphasized the sentencing judge's discretion, citing **AG v Claude Lawson Gray and Burton v R and Nurse v R**, as authorities for his submission that guidelines are not binding and that sentences should be tailored to the facts and the offender's circumstances. Departure he said from guidelines should be explained.

14. Counsel also cited **R v PS and R v Elliott [2000] OCA 267**, highlighting the importance of considering mental health in sentencing, and that general deterrence is less relevant for offenders with mental disorders.

15. He specifically highlighted the mitigating factors namely the age of the Convict
 - **Age:** Seymour was 20 at the time of the offence.
 - **Employment:** He had stable employment.
 - **No Prior Convictions:** He was of good character before the incident.
 - **Mental Health:** Medical reports confirmed diagnoses of anxiety disorder, panic disorder, major depressive disorder, and polysubstance use disorder.
16. Counsel argued these conditions likely contributed to impulsive actions during the incident.
 - **Remorse and Cooperation:** Seymour called the police after the incident and has shown willingness to continue treatment.
17. Counsel acknowledged the seriousness of the offence and the use of a knife, but noted the knife was a work tool.
18. Mr. Rolle submitted that the Convict's mental health and personal circumstances should be central to sentencing, advocating for specific deterrence and rehabilitation over general deterrence. Continuing he submitted that a lengthy custodial sentence would be inhumane and could worsen his mental health, especially given the lack of evidence that prison authorities could provide adequate treatment.
19. Defence Counsel also highlighted the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on prison visits, arguing that the lack of family support would further harm the Convict's rehabilitation and mental health, making a 35-year sentence inhumane. He contended there was no evidence that the Convict posed a danger to the public, as he had complied with treatment, had family support, and had no record of violence in custody.
20. Concluding, Mr. Rolle proposed a sentence equivalent to time already served, with an order of probation for continued outpatient treatment, citing examples where probation was imposed for serious offences post-**Larry Raymond Jones**.

Prosecution Submissions

21. Mr. Bailey the Prosecutor having summarized the facts of the case and reviewed the Probation Report reminded the Court of the principles of sentencing namely retribution, deterrence (general and specific), prevention, and rehabilitation having regard to **Benjamin v. R (1964) 7 WIR 459**.
22. Thereafter he outlined the aggravating and mitigating factors for the Court's consideration namely:
 - **Seriousness:** The offence was murder, committed in a public, commercial area during the day, with the defendant pursuing and stabbing the victim multiple times.
 - **Weapon:** Use of a knife, with the pathologist reporting six stab wounds, two cutting wounds, and three abrasions.

- **Impact:** The victim's family suffered significant loss, as described by the victim's mother.

The mitigating factors highlighted are:

- **No Previous Convictions:** Seymour had no prior criminal record.
 - **Guilty Plea:** He pleaded guilty, avoiding a trial.
 - **Mental Health:** Documented mental health issues, including ADHD, panic disorder, major depressive disorder, polysubstance use disorder, and traits of antisocial personality disorder. He was deemed fit to stand trial after treatment.
23. The Prosecutor submitted that Section 291(1)(b) of the Penal Code provides for life imprisonment or a term of 30 to 60 years for murder, as endorsed in **The Attorney General v Larry Raymond Jones et al SCCrApp Nos. 12, 18 and 19 of 2007** noting that the court should consider prospects of reform and public danger.
 24. Mr. Bailey who referenced several cases to support the sentencing range and approach, including **Prince Hepburn v Regina SCCrApp No. 79 of 2013** and **Edwardo Ferguson, Kofhe Goodman v Regina SCCrApp. No. 35 of 2019**, also emphasized the need for individualized sentencing noting the seriousness of the offence.
 25. The Prosecutor submitted that the aggravating factors outweigh the mitigating ones, describing the murder as bold and exhibiting pent-up rage, with the victim defenseless and trying to escape. He recommended a sentence of 35 years' imprisonment as appropriate.

Decision

26. In exercising my discretion on sentencing I have considered the evidence presented, the Medical Report, the Probation Report, submissions in mitigation made on behalf of the Convict and those of the Prosecutor. I have also considered the relevant statutory provisions, case law and individualized factors which are both mitigating and aggravating about the offence and the Convict.
27. I acknowledge that the Convict is youthful has no antecedents and has had a mental health history. However I have had regard to the fact that the offence is that of murder which committed in a public commercial area during the day in a heinous fashion. Additionally, having regard to the Medical Report I am satisfied that the appropriate facilities are available at The Bahamas Department of Corrections for the Convict.
28. Having balanced the aforementioned I find that a sentence of imprisonment is appropriate. Having considered all the circumstances of this case along with the authorities submitted, I find that an appropriate sentence for the offence of murder to be 25 years. Accordingly, the Convict is sentenced to a term of imprisonment of

25 years for the murder of Caron Thompson. I order that time spent on remand namely from 1st July 2022 to 4th November 2022 and 8th June 2024 to date shall be taken into account.

29. The Court orders that the Convict continue with his treatment at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Center and be out fitted with proper prescription eyewear.
30. At the request of Counsel the Court orders the Convict be afforded the opportunity to advance his education if possible at BTVI and further requests that he be given the opportunity to be exposed to carpentry masonry and electrical fields.

Dated this 16th day of February, A.D. 2026

Justice Renae McKay