

R v Marcos Arduini Monzo

Sentencing remarks

Central Criminal Court

27 June 2025

1. In Hainault, East London, just before 7am on 30 April last year, the weather was good and the streets were starting to fill with people on their way to work and even a few children heading off early to school. Over the 20 minutes that followed, that peaceful, busy scene was devastated as members of the public were attacked, police officers were gravely injured, a couple were terrified in their own home, and a clever, talented, much loved young boy was killed by a savage blow with a sword. You, Marcos Arduini Monzo, did all of that.
2. That morning you drove to Hainault in a clearly psychotic state. Your first victim was Donato Iwule, who was walking to work. You tried to murder him, driving your van into him, sending him flying, then attacking him with your Samuri sword. It is a miracle he was not injured far more badly. He was left with a penetrating stab wound passing into the muscles of his neck. You then must have seen Daniel Anjorin as he left home for school, wearing his sports kit and carrying his rucksack: you must have known, whatever state you were in, he was a child, a schoolboy, but you came up behind him and, with extreme force, struck him to the neck causing a terrible, utterly un-survivable wound. By now members of the public had gathered or been called: I pause to note the bravery of one, Nathan Hutchinson, who seeing Daniel on the ground, moved forward to see if there was anything that could be done to save him, only to be forced back by your approach, shouting and waving the sword.
3. An ambulance approached but was forced away by your attacking the vehicle, then police officers arrived. Showing notable courage Police Constables Cameron King and Samiur Miah tried to force you away so they could get to Daniel to offer

such treatment as they could, only to be faced by you shouting and threatening them. Police Constable Yasmin Mechem-Whitfield arrived. She was the first officer on the scene equipped with a taser so, totally fearlessly, she led the charge to try to apprehend you. You turned in the mouth of an alleyway and delivered three or four savage blows of the sword, inflicting a chopping wound to her head of such force it caused a compound skull fracture, a deep chopping wound to her left arm which could have caused fatal bleeding, and a chopping wound to her left wrist which caused a complete division of the nerves and serious muscle damage. At that point Police Constable King, despite being without a taser, placed himself between her and you, probably saving her life.

4. Your next victims were Sindy Arias and Henry De Los Rios Polania. They were in bed with their young child asleep nearby. You erupted into their bedroom, shouting about God and jabbing the sword at Mr De Los Rios Polania, then aimed a sweeping blow at Ms Arias's neck: She was saved from very serious injury or worse by Mr De Los Rios Polania grabbing the blade, causing a deep slash wound across the fingers of his right hand.
5. By now many police officers had arrived. You became cornered in a garage area and Inspector Moloy Campbell, showing great bravery and leadership, tried to disarm or subdue you with his baton, only to be caught by a powerful swing of your sword, leaving him with a deep chopping wound to his right hand. Soon afterwards you were stopped and detained by a number of police officers using tasers, that finally brought you under control.
6. All the police officers I have named behaved with exemplary courage and put their lives on the line to try to protect the public they serve. No doubt other officers at the scene did the same. They are all a credit to the uniform they wear, and both the Metropolitan Police and London can be proud of them.
7. I have read and heard evidence from the victims of your offences. Turning first to the injured and traumatised, Mr Iwule still suffers with both physical and mental

pain, experiencing flashbacks and being unable to sleep. Police Constable Mechem-Whitfield has been left with very severe injuries and deep trauma. A series of operations have not fully restored her use of her left arm and she has listed in her statement the numerous ways her life has become poorer and the pleasures she is no longer able to enjoy. Ms Arias wrote that she has been left with constant anxiety, stress, sleepless nights and deep persistent fear. Mr De Los Rios Polania states that over a year on, he is still waiting for further surgery on his hand. He suffers with anxiety and panic attacks and is unable to return to work. Inspector Campbell gave evidence: he described numerous trips to hospital, pain and only gradually recovering some of the use and movement of his hand. He is concerned that his wife has had to bear the burden of looking after their child and him. He stressed his determination that he and his officers will continue to respond to whatever calls duty requires.

8. Dr Anjorin, Daniel's Father, made a witness statement. It is a hard read, so heartbreaking are its content. Daniel was a clever boy. He was gifted musically, and played a variety of sports well. He was a happy child, and his loss is obviously devastating to his parents, and his brother and sister, and his grandparents. I should also pay tribute to the calm, dignified manner in which Dr Anjorin has witnessed the entire trial, with a composure that most of us would find impossible. I am very conscious that no sentence I pass can even begin to temper Daniel's family's grief.
9. There are a number of technical matters with which I need to deal. I make deprivation orders for the drugs and the three weapons seized, under section 153 of the Sentencing Act 2020. The surcharge applies in the correct amount. You pleaded guilty to counts 8 and 9 so, in the circumstances of this case, I will impose sentences reduced by a quarter for those two offences. The sentences I pass for the offences other than murder will be determinate sentences to be served concurrent to the life sentence: Two consequences flow from that. First, there is no problem of what the courts call totality, as none of the various determinate sentences are added one to another. Second, to ensure the offences other than

murder are reflected in your actual effective sentence, I need to increase the minimum term I impose for murder to reflect the most serious of the other crimes. The days you have served until now have to be deducted from your minimum term, and I proceed on the basis that the slightly larger of the two figures being put forward, 421 days, is correct. I add that I have read your letter given to me today, and within its eccentric terms is a degree of remorse.

10. I need to consider the state you were in when you committed these offences. You were clearly psychotic. I have had the advantage of hearing you give evidence and hearing the expert evidence of two eminent psychiatrists. I make the following findings, applying the criminal standard of proof. You had traits of a schizotypal disorder that played some part in you becoming psychotic. Your choosing to consume cannabis over the months and days leading up to the 30 April last year was the dominant cause of your state that day. You had no reason to believe that cannabis would lead you to commit violent offences, still less the murderous ones of which you have been convicted, but you had some warning of its adverse effect on you: You knew it made you paranoid and could lead at least to panic attacks.
11. The law states, perhaps as a matter of public policy, that the voluntary consumption of drugs cannot found the partial defence of diminished responsibility. The question for me in your case, is whether I can treat your psychotic state caused in large part by the voluntary taking of drugs as mitigation for the offence of murder. In my view I can to a limited extent, given:
 - (1) The listed aggravating factors in schedule 21 of the Sentencing Act 2020 do not, in contrast to other guidelines, include the offence being committed under the influence of drink or drugs.
 - (2) The listed mitigating factors in the same schedule allow in terms for any mental disorder that falls outside the defence of diminished responsibility.
 - (3) The Sentencing Council guideline on Sentencing Defendants with Mental Disorders, particularly at paragraph 15, has the clearest implication that a state of self-induced intoxication, where the accused was not aware of the

possible consequences, can be mitigation. That is complicated in your case given my finding of some awareness.

(4) In my view the necessary public interest in not letting offenders hide behind drugs they chose to consume is addressed, on the facts of your case, by the consequent rejection of the partial defence of diminished responsibility.

12. On those grounds I will reduce the minimum term I pass on you for the offence of murder. The position is less clear as regards other offences, as the relevant Sentencing Council guidance for them does list the influence of drugs as an aggravating factor, so that balances out some of the mitigation afforded by your psychotic state.

13. The only other mitigation is your previous good character, that is limited by your consumption of a variety of unlawful drugs over the years, but you have no convictions for violence: I will therefore make a reduction for that, to each sentence.

14. I have considered the Sentencing Council guidance for all the offences other than murder. For all these sentences I will reduce the term you would otherwise have received by 10% or slightly more to allow for your previous good character and the fact you were psychotic at the time of offending. Those sentences will all be concurrent to the term of life imprisonment but nonetheless I need to specify what each will be. For those counts I sentence you as follows:

(1) Count 1, the attempted murder of Donato Iwule: Category B2, as you took the sword to the scene, which leads to a starting point of 28 years. I reduce that to take account of the mitigation to **25 years imprisonment**.

(2) Count 3, the attempted murder of Yasmin Mechem-Whitfield: Category 1A to reflect both her serious and lasting injuries and the fact she was serving police officer. That leads to a starting point of 35 years which I reduce to **31 years**.

(3) Count 4, aggravated burglary: Category B1. That leads to a starting point of 8 years which I reduce to **7 years**.

- (4) Count 5, the attempted murder of Sindy Arias; Category B3 which leads to a starting point of 20 years, but the attack was in her own home in front of her child so I increase the figure, before mitigation, to 24 years, which I reduce to **21 years** for the mitigation.
- (5) Count 6, the wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm of Henry De Los Rios Polania: Category A3 which leads to a starting point of 5 years but here again the attack in his own home in front of the child which increases that figure, before mitigation, to 8 years, which I reduce to **7 years** for the mitigation.
- (6) Count 7, the wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm of Moley Campbell: Culpability A, harm between category 2 and 3. This would lead to a sentence of about 6 years, but this crime has the profound aggravation of being an attack upon a serving police officer so I would increase that sentence to 9 years before reducing it to one of **8 years** for the mitigation.
- (7) Counts 8 and 9: Possession of the two swords: Category A1, which leads to a starting point of 18 months which I reduce to 16 months for the mitigation, then by a quarter for the guilty pleas, to a sentence of **12 months for each offence**.
- (8) Count 10: Possession of a bladed article in a public place. Culpability A, as it is a bladed article, but I do not think you had it there as a weapon, but as part of your psychotic half-planned later consumption of your cat, so I take harm category 2. That leads to a starting point of 6 months, which I reduce to **5 months imprisonment** because of the mitigation.
15. The life sentence that I must impose for the murder of Daniel Anjorin will also have a minimum term that you must serve before the Parole Board can consider whether it is safe to release you on licence: They may decide that time will never come in your case. Nonetheless I have to consider and impose that minimum term. In my view the proper approach in your case is to first take the term I would impose were I only dealing with the murder of Daniel. In that case I would take the starting point in Schedule 21 for a murder when a weapon has been taken to the scene of the crime, of 25 years, then increase that term to 30 years because the victim in this case was a child.

16. The two issues I have had to grapple with are how much should I increase the minimum term to address the other offending, and how much should I then reduce that term to reflect the mitigation of previous good character and, above all, your psychotic state on the day?

17. I have asked myself what minimum term would I have imposed on someone who had committed all these offences when they were in their right mind. The sort of figure that I would have arrived at, to reflect the three attempted murders and two woundings with intent, with two police officer victims, would lead to a term of perhaps 50 years, though in fact I would probably instead have regard to paragraph 8 of the Schedule and conclude the mass of aggravation of the other offences would lead to a whole life order.

18. On the basis a person who had committed all the dreadful offences of 30 April last year would attract a minimum term of the order of 50 years, I reduce the term I impose on you by a fifth to recognise your mental ill health and previous good character, to 40 years. From that I have to deduct the number of days already served. Therefore, the sentence I pass for count 2, the murder of Daniel Anjorin, is **life imprisonment with a minimum term of 38 years and 309 days.**

Joel Bennathan

27 June 2025