

IN THE CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

Rex

v

Perry Allen Thomas

Amir Salem

1. On December 14th 2024, Michelle Sadio, Kenneth Amoah and Kadeem Francis were part of a large group of people, generally from the Ghanaian community in London, who attended a wake at the River of Life Church in Gifford Road in Willesden.
2. The wake was to commemorate the life of Diane Boateng, a lady who had died in in her 80's the week before. It was a happy, family-oriented occasion to which lots of people had brought their children.
3. It turned into a terrifying tragedy. Michelle Sadio was killed leaving her husband, her two young children and the rest of her family and friends devastated. Throughout the proceedings they have behaved with extraordinary dignity and that behaviour is a testament to her memory.

4. She was 44 years of age, she led a good life, playing a valuable and valued role in society and making a worthwhile contribution. Her future and the contribution that she would have continued to make have been taken away by these defendants and others.
5. Kenneth Amoah was very badly injured and will spend the rest of his life dependant on a wheelchair.
6. Kadeem Francis was also injured but fortunately has made a recovery.
7. Their statements speak of their continuing ordeal and suffering.
8. Everyone present was terrified and, as word spread, the local community and the entire population of London was horrified by the senseless violence. The idea that people cannot attend their church in safety causes fear and despair in many parts of the city.
9. No sentence; no remarks made in passing sentence can begin to match the loss that all the individuals and families in this case have and will continue to experience. The statements setting out the loss and heartbreak suffered by all the families and friends make harrowing reading.
10. A murder was intended and planned. It was planned some time in advance, a car was stolen months before, false number plates were attached and it was stored in a safe place ready for use. A gun, which had been used on at least two previous occasions in the same part of London was acquired along with ammunition. Preparation for the destruction of evidence, in particular, the burning of the car were put in place. The gun was disposed of, it has still not been recovered.
11. The location was considered and chosen, no doubt with a particular target or targets in mind. It was decided that this gathering outside a

church after a service to mark the life of a good woman was the right occasion notwithstanding the presence of families with children. It did not matter to the murderers. However, this was not a shooting that was aimed at or intended to kill children. The murderers simply did not care who was injured or killed.

12.The fact that this was a shooting of people from a moving car, using a gun that had been previously used in similar shootings in the same area of London indicates a background of gang related crime. Perry Allen Thomas has gang associations and Amir Salem was to tell the police that he provided assistance to a person he knew to be an active gang member.

13.It was an indiscriminate shooting of people simply standing on the pavement outside a church, any one and any number of people might have been killed or seriously injured.

14.The only sentence that can be imposed is life imprisonment.

15.I must recommend the minimum term before the Parole Board can even be asked to consider release.

16.Parliament has set down guidelines that I must follow in recommending that minimum term. The minimum term which I recommend is not the sentence. The sentence is life imprisonment.

17.This case was a murder by shooting and therefore the term starts at 30 years before adjustment in each case for a number of factors. Neither man was in the car from which the shots were fired.

18.There are very different considerations which apply in the case of each defendant. This offending is of high culpability. The harm caused is very serious. The direct consequences are obvious, the indirect

consequences for all touched by this incident are profound and long lasting.

19. Perry Allen Thomas

- a. His role in the hierarchy was not at the very top of the organisation but he played an important supervisory role, he is an intelligent and articulate man, he must have understood the consequences,
- b. He drove one of the shooters home across London the day before, by which time the events of the next day were well within the contemplation of those involved,
- c. He was on the Clarendon Gardens Estate as the shooters met, then left in the stolen car to carry out the shooting and returned to the same estate where he had stayed. As soon as they left, he left,
- d. He later played some part in arranging a taxi to take them away from the area,
- e. I am sure that he was involved in the supervision and organisation of the others,
- f. I am not sure that he was directly involved in the movement of the car in the period before the day of the shooting,
- g. He was called out at the last minute to buy petrol and was therefore willing to respond to the request or direction of another,
- h. He has many previous convictions for dealing drugs but not for violence on any similar serious level,

- i. He has links and associations with a gang,
- j. The fact of just being released and still being on licence is an aggravating factor although I recognise that he has served over a year awaiting sentence which will not count towards the term I impose,
- k. He was 26 years of age, now 27 nearly 28, old enough to understand the full and likely consequences of his actions

20. Amir Salem

- a. He bought petrol for an acquaintance, knowing at the time that they were an active gang member and knowing that the petrol would be used to destroy evidence,
- b. He was available at the time of the shooting so that he appeared in the car within minutes of the shooting,
- c. He played an important part in organising the taxi to get the shooters away from the area,
- d. He is relatively young, 18 at the time of the offence and 20 now, I accept that he did not have a fully developed understanding of the consequences and was influenced by others, he comes from a good and loving family and he has been easily led astray,
- e. He has no convictions recorded against him, I bear in mind the character references that were read to the jury but he has been involved in the use of cannabis throughout his adolescence,
- f. He was clearly acting in a subordinate role but that role was important.

21.The starting point for the recommended minimum term for this offence of murder is 30 years, that is increased by a number of factors. The most significant of which is fact that two other people were shot. Those two offences of attempted murder would be likely to have attracted life sentences on these facts. If sentence on those two counts had stood alone the starting point for the minimum term would have been in excess of 20 years. I have very much in mind the principle of totality.

22.The minimum term must be increased, principally to mark the total offending. In Perry Allen Thomas' case it also has to be increased for his record of offending. Perry Allen Thomas was an active drug dealer and associated with a gang, Amir Salem was not but bought the petrol knowing he was giving it to "an active gang member".

23.In both cases I take into account all that has been said on their behalf.

24.Amir Salem played a role much lower down in the hierarchy and he was young and immature. He was susceptible to the influence of others. I have read carefully the two reports prepared on his behalf.

25.The victim surcharge will be imposed.

26.The least minimum term recommended for Perry Allen Thomas on all three counts is 38 years.

27.In the case of Amir Salem the recommended minimum term is 26 years, that is less the time served before today, the total recommended term on all three counts is therefore 24 years and 244 days.