

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Woman Gets More Than 8 Years In Jail For Stabbing Pregnant Housemate

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ST. THOMAS -- A 40-year-old Haitian woman who was convicted of beating and stabbing her pregnant roommate, then destroying her cellphone has been sent to prison for her crimes, V.I. Department of Justice Public Media Officer Corliss Smithen announced Friday.

On March 8, a 12-member jury unanimously convicted Nathalie Premier of no known address of third-degree assault, using a dangerous weapon during a third-degree assault, simple assault and destruction of property in connection with the Dec. 22, 2016, assault of Dyane Hyppolite at the Bethlehem House for the Homeless, according to Ms. Smithen.

At Premier's scheduled sentencing hearing on Friday, V.I. Superior Court Judge Kathleen Mackay handed her a seven-and-a-half-year prison term for the weapons conviction, a suspended six-month prison term for simple assault, one year for third-degree assault and one year with all but two months suspended for destruction of property with all of the terms to run concurrently. Premier, who was free on an unsecured bond, was immediately remanded into custody.

Attorney General Claude Earl Walker said, "Intentionally stabbing a pregnant woman is totally intolerable in a civilized society. This is abnormal behavior that must be severely punished."

According to Hyppolite's testimony during trial, on the morning of Dec. 22, Hyppolite was awakened by the "constant venting" of Premier. Hyppolite got out of bed and went to the kitchen to get something to eat. Premier, at the time, was mopping the floor. As Hyppolite was on her way outside, she got into an argument with Premier. Later, as Hyppolite tried to re-enter the building, Premier blocked the doorway with the mop bucket, Hyppolite squeezed her way inside and then, Premier struck her twice with the mop handle.

Hyppolite went to her room, picked up her cell phone and called 911 as she was walking outside. Hyppolite walked out of the property gate, still talking to the 911 operator, with her back turned toward the building, according to court documents.

Then, Hyppolite said she felt "like a needle shot in my back," her hair was being pulled and she was being dragged by Premier. After a struggle, Hyppolite managed to free herself from Premier. Premier then picked up Hyppolite's phone, which had fallen from her hand, and slammed it three times on the ground, breaking it into pieces. She threw the pieces at Hyppolite and spat on her. Hyppolite, at the time, was 12-14 weeks pregnant, Hyppolite said in her testimony.

Police and emergency responders arrived on the scene. Hyppolite was taken by ambulance to Schneider hospital where she was treated for knife wounds in her back, her shoulder and right arm, as well as multiple abrasions on her knees and other parts of her body, according to Dr. Robin Ellett, the Emergency Room physician.

Premier took the stand and asserted that she acted in self-defense; however, jurors found her guilty of the four counts she faced.

Assistant Attorney General Nadja Harrigan argued the case for the prosecution.