

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Federal Jury Convicts St. Croix Man of Murder for Hire After He Attempted To Have A Daughter And Mother Killed

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ST. CROIX -- After a six-day trial, a federal jury on Thursday found Delroy Thomas, Jr., 28, of St. Croix, guilty of murder for hire, attempted murder and attempted retaliation against a witness, United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced.

According to the evidence presented at trial, between March 9, 2015 to March 11, 2015, Mr. Thomas made a series of telephone calls while in the Golden Grove Correctional Facility to another inmate. He solicited the inmate's assistance to eliminate two witnesses in his pending Superior Court case. Mr. Thomas described the location of the witnesses'

residence to the inmate and texted their photographs to him. He told the inmate that he wanted them “off”; that he was dead serious, and that he would get the gun. Mr. Thomas told the inmate that he had thought about the scenario for eight months and that there were no ifs, ands, buts or changing of mind. He discussed the price for the planned “hit” and directed a female to place \$500 in a designated vehicle, intended as a down payment for the murder for hire plot. Mr. Thomas also admitted that if the inmate did not carry out the hit he would get someone else to do it.

Unbeknownst to Mr. Thomas, the inmate was a confidential informant who was working for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The DEA informant proceeded to record Mr. Thomas’s phone calls, which were played for the jury during the trial. One of the witnesses at trial identified Mr. Thomas’s voice on the recorded phone calls.

Following his arrest, Mr. Thomas told agents that he may have discussed eliminating witnesses in his case with other inmates when he was angry, but he denied that he had participated in any murder for hire plot. At his trial, Mr. Thomas testified that he did make the recorded statements but that he was merely “going along” with a scheme concocted by the inmate/informant who had threatened him into participating in the calls. Mr. Thomas testified that the calls were rehearsed and he simply followed the plan.

The Government, however, presented evidence of text messages Mr. Thomas sent to other individuals, before the phone calls, stating that he was planning a massacre, and that if the authorities did not let him out of prison, he would put a “hit” on a female victim and her mother.

On March 12, 2015, Bureau of Corrections officers searched Mr. Thomas’s prison cell and seized three cellular telephones and a knife from a case that was accessible from his cell.

Mr. Thomas faces up to 10 years in prison for the murder for hire conviction, plus a maximum fine of \$250,000. He also faces up to twenty-five years of incarceration for the attempted murder conviction, and up to five years for the attempted retaliation against a witness conviction, along with a maximum fine of \$1,000.00.

This case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Gang Intelligence Search Team of the V.I. Bureau of Corrections. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Alphonso G. Andrews, Jr. and Rhonda Williams-Henry.