

Man Allegedly Admits to Physically Assaulting Girlfriend During Dispute He Initiated

Crime / **Published On November 27, 2021 06:53 AM /**

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A mugshot of the suspect was not provided at time of publishing.

ST. THOMAS — A man has been charged with simple assault and destruction of property after he allegedly struck his girlfriend to the face.

Richard Albert was arrested on Wednesday evening after his girlfriend left the residence they shared to call for emergency assistance. According to the woman, she was in fear following an argument which Albert initiated when she returned home from work. She said that while she ignored his derogatory statements and accusations, this only caused him to become irate. The woman alleges that Albert suddenly attacked her, striking her to the mouth with a closed fist. She said that in his anger, Albert also knocked over a plate causing it to break, slammed a fan to the

floor and shattered a glass bottle against the wall. In a statement to police, she suggested that his anger may have stemmed from a phone conversation with his mother, which ended shortly after she arrived home.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, the responding officer observed that the woman's lips were bloody and swollen and that the broken glass, fan and plate were on the floor. When police made contact with Albert, he reiterated the sequence of events shared by his girlfriend and stated that he "did not mean for the situation to escalate the way it did." Investigations later revealed that the couple had been involved in several disputes in recent weeks. Albert was arrested and turned over to the Bureau of Corrections to await his advisement hearing.

At the Friday morning hearing, Assistant Attorney General Brenda Scales noted no objection to Albert being granted the minimum bail of \$1000, under the domestic violence statute. She noted that the Haitian-born defendant had no prior contact with the criminal justice system. Meanwhile, public defender Alexia Furlow requested that Albert be allowed to sign an unsecured bond or be released on his own recognizance. She explained that he was self-employed and engaged in construction whenever he was able to obtain work.

While Judge Henry Carr granted the defendant's release on an unsecured bond of \$1,000, he noted that a "cooling off period" was necessary. As such, while the matter is pending, Albert is prohibited from returning to the residence which he shares with the alleged victim. He will instead reside with his mother who has been appointed as his third-party custodian. While the defendant has been barred from having contact with his girlfriend, he will be allowed visitation with the 2-year-old child they share. The judge indicated that visitation arrangements will have to be made through Albert's mother or another suitable third-party.