

logo not found or type unknown

Defamation Case Leads to Removal of False Article Against VIPA Executive Director

John F. McCarthy of V.I. Free Press removes article after cease and desist letter from Attorney Martial A. Webster, representing Carlton Dowe in defamation case over false claims of federal investigation and confiscated devices

Government / **Published On June 18, 2024 05:38 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **June 18, 2024**

Image not found or type unknown



V.I. Port Authority Executive Director, Carlton Dowe. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Following a stern cease and desist demand letter from Attorney Martial A. Webster, who is representing V.I. Port Authority Executive Director Carlton Dowe in a defamation case against John F. McCarthy of the V.I. Free Press, Mr. McCarthy swiftly removed a false article from his website and Facebook platform.

In the letter dated June 18, Webster accused the platform and its president, Mr. McCarthy, of publishing defamatory content about Mr. Dowe. The legal notice demanded an immediate retraction of the article posted on June 18, 2024, on the news outlet's website.

The disputed article claimed that Mr. Dowe was the fourth high-ranking government official to receive a "target letter" from the federal government, implicating him in a criminal investigation. It further stated that Mr. Dowe's electronic devices were confiscated by federal agents, allegations the attorney categorically denies.

According to Mr. Webster, these statements are "intentionally and maliciously false," designed to tarnish Mr. Dowe's reputation personally and professionally. The letter criticized the V.I. Free Press for not verifying facts before publication, highlighting that no federal or local government agency has contacted Mr. Dowe regarding any such investigation, nor have any of his devices been confiscated.

"Both you and I know these statements are false and were made solely for the purpose of defaming and harming Mr. Dowe. I refuse to believe you, as media personality, are that intellectually lazy or inept that you will not check or verify information before publishing such a story you very well know will be likely to defame Mr. Dowe in his personal and profession life," stated Mr. Webster in the demand letter.

The Consortium, which had heard several rumors on Monday, reached out to Mr. Dowe each time. The publication was able to speak directly with the VIPA executive director, who confirmed that none of the rumored incidents had occurred. Federal agents did not issue a target letter to Mr. Dowe, nor did they confiscate his cellphone or contact him in any way regarding the ongoing investigations into high-ranking officials of the Bryan administration. The Consortium has been at the forefront of reporting these developments, including breaking news about [Police Commissioner Ray Martinez's target letter from the FBI](#), the [subpoena and phone confiscation](#) of Office of Management & Budget Director Jenifer O'Neal, and last week's [phone confiscation and federal visit](#) to Calvert White.

The rumors also alleged that federal agents visited the Henry E. Rohlsen and Cyril E. King Airports; however, these events did not take place.

The letter, seen [here](#), addressed claims made by the V.I. Free Press about attempts to contact Dowe via Facebook and email, noting Dowe does not use Facebook and that there was no record of an email sent to him by the publication. Webster emphasized that irresponsible and reckless reporting could lead to legal action for defamation, including injunctive relief and damages, with costs potentially being charged to the defendants.

The platform has been warned to cease reporting false and malicious stories about Dowe and to retract the disputed article to avoid further legal action. Webster's letter ended by offering to address any questions or concerns the publication might have, urging a swift resolution to the matter.