

## Governor Bryan Addresses David Whitaker Allegation, Reacts to White and Hendricks Convictions

**Bryan called Whitaker's claims "a setup from the start" after being mentioned in court recordings; White and Hendricks, convicted of federal bribery and wire fraud, remain free on bail under travel restrictions and await potential multi-year prison terms.**

Government / **Published On July 28, 2025 02:33 PM /**

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**Governor Albert Bryan Jr. By. GOV'T HOUSE.**

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. on Monday responded directly to allegations raised during the recent federal bribery trial of former Sports, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Calvert White and contractor Benjamin Hendricks, after federal government witness David Whitaker named the governor during a recorded conversation presented in court.

In a taped exchange played before jurors, Whitaker is heard saying, “I got Ray, Jennifer, and the governor,” during a discussion with Hendricks about government contracts and officials. When asked at the press briefing if he knew why Whitaker would include him in that statement, Governor Bryan responded, “I don’t know why he would say that.”

The governor continued, “It seems to me—and maybe I shouldn’t say that—but this person was looking to create a name for himself by incriminating government officials and seeking ways to make us look bad.”

He clarified that this observation did not excuse any wrongdoing but noted, “It’s just obvious they were making inroads into public officials... implying that there were some kind of bugs in the offices and creating an investigation about these bugs. It was a setup from the start.”

Bryan confirmed that he had met Whitaker in the past. “Yes, I met him before. He was a contractor for the police, and he was showing me some of the work that we’re doing.”

Regarding Whitaker’s claim that he planted recording devices inside Government House and left the building with them the same day, the governor disputed that account. “He wasn’t able to walk in and walk out. He came in there with the team looking for bugs that were allegedly in the offices, and all of their actions were supervised by our former chief of staff, Karl Knight.”

“They went in the bathroom away from everybody’s view, and the guy was like, ‘Uh huh. See one here.’ You know it was a scam from the beginning,” the governor added.

Bryan stated that Government House had suspicions early on and initiated an internal investigation. “We already had our feeling that something was untoward, and we had our own investigation as well,” he said. “We called in the FBI... we were suspicious... we’re the ones that initiated most of these actions. We’re the ones that called them in to find out what was going on with this guy.”

When asked whether Government House had paid Mon Ethos, Whitaker’s company, to remove the devices, Bryan said he was not aware of payments for that specific purpose. “I know we paid Mon Ethos for sweeping a variety of government offices, including Labor, Personnel, OMB and Government House.”

The governor was also questioned about revelations that Calvert White allegedly received confidential bid information without signing the required non-disclosure documents issued by Property and Procurement (P&P). Bryan said he remained confident in the P&P process. “I’m pretty confident in P&P’s evaluation and contract process.”

However, he announced he would recommend a change to how those bid meetings are monitored: “I am... going to recommend that we put cameras in all of the evaluation rooms... While it wouldn’t be public, all of it would be recorded. So anything you say in those rooms while deciding on those bids, if something comes up, we’ll always be able to go back to the tapes and find out what was discussed.”

“For me,” Bryan added, “I think that all the bid openings should be public and should be live... for just straight-up bids where you have a price, I think it should be totally transparent.”

The governor’s remarks came just days after [White and Hendricks were found guilty](#) of honest services wire fraud and bribery concerning federal programs. Bryan addressed the convictions head-on at the beginning of his weekly Government House press briefing.

“Friday was not a good day for the Virgin Islands by any stretch of the imagination,” Bryan said. “The conviction of someone who once held a position of public trust is a painful reminder that public services are sacred responsibility.”

Referring to White personally, Bryan said, “It is difficult to watch a young Virgin Islander, one I considered a friend and almost family, one full of promise and potential, fall from grace. But justice has been served.”

Bryan warned that violations of the public trust come with consequences. “That damage is irreparable, but this moment should serve as a clear and fair warning to anyone entrusted with the public's confidence that you are expected to act with honor and accountability. If that trust is betrayed, there is a price to pay, and you will be held accountable.”

He concluded with a call for unity around ethical public service. “Let it reaffirm for all of us our commitments to transparency, to integrity and to the standards the people of this territory expect and deserve from the government.