

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Letters To The Editor: Residual Planners

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Staff **February 06, 2015**



Dear Editor,

In response to the article written January 2, 2015 titled, [Mapp: Police Department Ill-Equipped for 21st Century](#), I would like to first begin by stating that the article identified issues that many of us living in the Virgin Islands are already familiar with -- from the outdated equipment to the lack of personnel and the absence of police captains, to the tools and basic resources that would enable our law enforcement agencies to provide an optimal level of service within our community.

However, what if I suggested to you that the problems listed in the article are not the primary, decisive factors that influence local law enforcement in the Virgin Islands?

Let's use a brief illustration to demonstrate a linear method of understanding.

A normal vehicle that gets regular maintenance checks, maintains proper tire pressure, and uses quality fuel can reasonably be expected to perform well, and in most circumstances, meets and exceeds the needs of the driver on a consistent basis. This level of performance is not achieved by chance; it is reached by a commitment made by the person responsible for the vehicle.

For at least eight years, and even more recently, the persons responsible for the vehicle known in this article as the 'Virgin Islands Police Department,' have clearly demonstrated they are not interested in the proper maintenance or care of the agency.

The residual individuals left behind from the last administration have consistently demonstrated the propensity to be in over their heads and under-perform when confronted with the challenges of the daily operations of law enforcement in the Virgin Islands.

The residual personnel's most comfortable and consistent response to public outcries for safety and the operational needs of the agency is to either do nothing and hope with time the community moves on to another pressing issue. Or, more often, they resort to vindictive tactics that demonstrate their internal power to the offices and supporting staff reminding them that they are in charge.

I can assure the people of the Virgin Islands that the residual chiefs and directors are constantly suggesting ways to reduce the police department's workforce, either through terminations or an unchecked and non-progressive disciplinary system that frustrates and demoralizes the officers of the department.

Our islands deserve better. The officers that sacrifice everyday deserve better. You should expect more and demand better from the people selected to these offices. You should require that at regular intervals, proposed written plans that identify the needs of the community and adjusts to current changes in criminal trends be actively implemented, and statistical information be provided to test the suitability of these plans.

The Virgin Islands Police Department is not achieving any of its goals; the reason why this can be said is because no one in management has stated a clear goal or direction they have chosen that can adequately reduce crime and improve the working conditions of the department.

As a consequence of this method of operation, the Virgin Islands Police Department has made little to no progress in making this territory any safer for the people that live or visit our beautiful islands. This is why our community and your administration is currently faced with an absence of personnel, outdated or nonexistent equipment, and not one single police captain.

You can reasonably expect that this trend will continue because although your approach to addressing many of the concerns that you have identified may be honorable, it will face many subversive and unforeseen delays as long as the residual individuals responsible for maintaining and implementing your ideas still remain.

Submitted by:

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