

The Virgin Islands Consortium

In Defense Of Governor de Jongh

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This is most unfortunate and shocking. It carries the germs of discord and revenge, and it smells political. Is this the answer to effectively govern and solve the myriad of problems confronting the Virgin Islands in terms of economic development, balancing the budget, creating jobs, raising revenues and providing new resources to guarantee quality and efficient services to the deserving public.

In addition to the failure of the current Administration to address the aforementioned, our struggling community is now engulfed in a state of sadness, despair, uncertainty, disillusionment and bewilderment as to what is going on.

Democrats in the V.I. are proud of our accomplishment. We have a long history and record of making life better for our people. - Cecile Benjamin.

While we strongly condemn and do not condone illegal acts or corruption of any kind, we must be reminded that in our society, one is innocent until proven guilty. It is our fervent hope that our former Chief Executive and Master Servant, John de Jongh, would ultimately prevail. We should not prejudge nor rush to judgement especially when we are not custodians of the facts and circumstances. We pray that the integrity of our legal system does not intertwine with politics.

Governor de Jongh did not deliberately do anything wrong or differently to a couple of his predecessors with respect to the governor's residence and security.

The charge of embezzlement is a sham. It is nothing more or nothing less than pure and raw politics. We are asking all our loyal and committed democrats and friends to support Gov. de Jongh against this despicable and mean indictment intended to gain political points and shift the attention or focus away from the current Administration's failure to effectively govern, grow the economy, create jobs and solve the myriad of fiscal problems confronting us today.

If there were a third term of office, John deJongh would have won again. - Cecile Benjamin.

This is like Nero fiddling and entertaining himself and inner circle while Rome burns.

Just look at this:

1. Gov. de Jongh acted at the advice of his Attorney General and other appropriate agency heads. Is this embezzlement?
2. The Legislature appropriated the funds for roads and other purposes.
3. When it was finally decided and agreed upon that the funds were not properly used for its intended purposes, Gov. de Jongh pledged publicly to pay back or return the funds that were not appropriately used for security improvement at his residence upon his leaving office or at the end of his term. Is this embezzlement?
4. In keeping with his promise and commitment, Gov. de Jongh returned over \$200,000 based on what was estimated and assessed. Is this embezzlement?
5. The Mapp Administration refused to acquiesce and returned the check. This action destroys the argument for the need of such funds, the denial of the compliance and resolution factor and a callous and uncompromising mindset. This is unconscionable. Is this embezzlement? This could have been resolved in a similar manner as in the 2000 Governor Schneider case. Mr. Mapp was the Lt. Gov. then. A precedent has been set. Where is the rational or compassion?
6. When Gov. Mapp was Lt. Governor under Gov. Schneider he was accused of receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars from an outside source in serious conflict with his position as Lt. Gov. He was not charged nor brought to justice. When folks have glass houses they should not throw stones.
7. This is puerile, low-rooted and doll-house politics that should have no place in today's environment. While attempting to embarrass and discredit our former Governor, the Mapp Administration is casting the territory in a bad light. It doesn't look good for all of us in the eyes of the world.

8. Gov. de Jongh has demonstrated honest and compromising efforts to resolve this long standing issue with respect to security at the Governor's residence. This is absolutely not the same as Gov. Mapp Villagate. Again is this embezzlement? What's criminal about all of the above? Where is the beef?

Gov. de Jongh, the Democrat has done an excellent job in keeping us afloat. Just look at what's happening in Puerto Rico. They are experiencing bankruptcy and hardship. We Democrats in the V.I. are proud of our accomplishment. We have a long history and record of making life better for our people. If there were a third term of office, John deJongh would have won again. Let it be known and abundantly clear that our position on "power and corruption" has absolutely nothing to do with Governor de Jongh's current case. This is like apples and oranges or day and night.

We must all examine our conscience. Let's turn to each other instead of turning at one another. There is a trend of retaliation and revenge in our society. This has to stop. We must have forgiveness and reconciliation in our hearts. We are all in the same boat and none of us is perfect. We must work together to make these beautiful islands a better, stronger, smarter, safer and healthier place where we don't turn our back on our own people, and where we respect and treat one another nicely. Let's go forward with truth, fairness and compassion while creating new and better opportunities for all. Together, in unity, we shall achieve much more.

Submitted by:

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