

The Virgin Islands Consortium

The Eye For An Eye Mentality Only Hurts The Community, Sen. Francis Says

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ST. CROIX -- Against the backdrop of what can only be categorized as a tragic and bullet ridden week for the entire territory, Senator Novelle Francis Jr. is pleading for peace in our communities, according to a press release the first-term Democrat issued late Saturday.

Senator Francis stated that the gun violence experienced across the territory reflects the “eye for an eye” mentality of the criminal element that has terrorized the community for far too long. This blatant disregard for life, he said, has caught innocent people in the crossfire and is creating an environment of fear across the community. The situation is compounded by the fact that the targeted communities are dense with families and young

children, who go to sleep every night fearing rampant gunfire.

Francis, a former police commissioner, says many of the individuals involved in this crime wave are not only well known to law enforcement but also to the community. He notes, however, that their criminal lifestyle and the gang related vendettas that they have created does not justify their abhorrent and reckless behavior that is affecting the entire community.

“These individuals have been involved in criminal activity for some time,” he said. “Their actions have led them to retaliate against each other and ignore their own flawed code of ethics that once considered churches, children and women off limits. It’s time to take swift action and bring them to justice; keeping our community safe is the first priority and disarming them by any means necessary is what we have to do.”

Francis supports the declaration of the state of emergency and believes that the deployment of peace officers to support the VIPD will help to restore normalcy to the community, but notes that there is no quick fix.

“This is not a 48 hour problem. This a major problem that has to be addressed comprehensively and strategically. The police leadership needs to show the community that law enforcement is up to the task and prepared to tackle the criminal element head on as they work to contain and eradicate violence in the streets,” he said.

Francis is also calling on the clergy and community leaders to step in to help quell the violence. “All of us have to work together to create safer communities,” he stressed. “Whether the message of peace comes from the pulpit, from our families, from our educators, community leaders, law enforcement or from our elected officials, all of us need to speak with one voice.”

Feature Image: Sen. Novelle Francis, a former police commissioner and police chief, at a crime scene in the Red Brick/Water Gut area on Friday night.

Image Credit: Ernice Gilbert for VIC.