

The Virgin Islands Consortium

De Jongh Attorneys Slam Mapp And Walker; Call Case Against Former Governor Sham, Disgrace And Politically-Driven

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ST. THOMAS -- Attorneys representing former Governor of the Virgin Islands John P. de Jongh on Tuesday moved to dismiss the case levied against their client by the Virgin Islands Department of Justice, under the helm of Acting Attorney General Claude Walker, which alleges that the former two-term governor embezzled public funds and neglected to repay those funds in violation of Virgin Islands criminal code.

But documents of the motion to dismiss, provided to The Consortium on Tuesday afternoon, derides the suit as a "politically-driven, poorly conceived vendetta initiated by

the current governor, whom Governor de Jongh defeated handily in his last reelection campaign in 2010."

"This sham prosecution is a disgrace both upon the Virgin Islands Department of Justice and the Governor's Office," the motion states.

Mr. de Jongh's attorneys also pointed out what they deem the irony of the DOJ's suit against the former governor, contending that the DOJ's claim of theft by Mr. de Jongh of \$490,000 of government funds to conduct repairs at his personal residence, and to build a security fence -- which the attorneys strongly disagree with -- pales in comparison to Governor Kenneth Mapp's living expenses on the backs of the territory's taxpayers.

"Ironically, in the short time that the current governor has been in office, he has apparently already spent such an obscene amount of Virgin Islands taxpayer money on so-called "living expenses" -- [\\$12,500.00 per month residential lease](#) now superseded by the daily cost of a suite at the Virgin Islands' [most expensive hotel](#), the Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas, \$16,000 for limousine and a car service on a recent trip to New York City, \$18,000 for air travel in connection with said trip, \$5,300 for sheets and bed clothes, and \$65,000 per year for the governor's "personal chef", to name a few -- that it will quickly dwarf the amount at issue here, which consists of security costs for the entire eight years that Gov. de Jongh was in office -- and even then, much of which Gov. de Jongh had offered to pay," reads the motion.

In the video below, Acting Attorney General Claude Walker announces the arrest of former Governor John P. de Jongh and Julito Francis, former director of the Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority, at the Dept. of Justice building on St. Croix on August 18, 2015.

Indeed, in April, Mr. de Jongh [made a payment](#) to the Government of the Virgin Islands' Department of Property and Procurement of \$202,832.60 for the guard house and electric fence constructed at his residence after taking office in 2007. The sum was less than half of the near \$500,000 of government monies used on de Jongh's property. However, according to de Jongh, the \$202,831.60 was the appraised, fair market value of the guard house and fence built for security measures at his private residence, located in Estate Mafolie.

But the Mapp administration [rejected the payment in May](#), with then-Acting Attorney General Terri Griffiths stating that the \$202,831.60 sum was returned because it was less than the \$497,000.25 that the United States Inspector General concluded in a report was owed to the GVI.

The motion goes on to name more of what it deems abuses by Mr. Mapp, including the leasing of a condominium here for Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter with public funds, even after being advised by Chief Legal Counsel Emile Henderson III that such a move was illegal. Mr. Mapp, however, shrugged off the advice and the administration pushed ahead with the rental.

In record time, [the situation turned into a scandal](#), forcing Mr. Potter --- who lives here -- to declare that he would pay for the condominium [with his own funds](#).

The motion also pointed out a recent scandal that rocked the current administration, after an attorney -- hired by Mr. Mapp with the recommendation of Mr. Henderson -- was fired over a credit card spending fallout. Ostensibly, Mr. Mapp wanted to see and possibly block certain expenses from the public's view -- in violation of the Freedom of Information Act -- but the lawyer, Attorney Laverne Mills-Williams, refused. She was later unceremoniously relieved from her duties at Government House and jounced to and fro to various government departments by the administration, according to local media reports.

Even so, the motion contends, Mr. Mapp or Mr. Potter has not been charged with any criminal conduct.

"Just writing these words is infuriating," the motion continues. "Doing so in spurious criminal charges leveled against a good man who devoted eight years of his life to high public service pushes its tolerance well beyond its reasonable limit."

The full motion to dismiss, along with related documents, can be seen below:

[Read the original document](#)

Feature Image: From left, Acting Attorney General Claude Walker, former Governor John P. de Jongh and current Governor Kenneth Mapp.

Collage Credit: VIC.