

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Chesterfield, Trying To Bypass Security, Told Feds He Was On Assignment For Governor Mapp

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ST. THOMAS -- Government House security detail Neal Chesterfield, [allegedly caught with 21 kilos of cocaine and about \\$26,000 in cash](#) while trying to board a Spirit Airlines flight at the Cyril E. King Airport on Saturday evening, told federal officials that he was on his way to do an advance for Governor Kenneth Mapp, explaining to the federal officials that the governor was set to travel in three to four days.

That's according to the governor himself, speaking at a press conference at Government House here where the arrest of Officer Francis Williams, charged with the homicide deaths of Officers Lesha Lammy and Kai Javois, [was announced](#).

But red flags went up, the governor said, when Mr. Chesterfield failed follow certain protocols relative to when governors and lieutenant governors of the territory travel. "None of those protocols were taken, so clearly that was part of what set the red flags up, if you will," the chief executive said.

"I would like to make it clear -- because my name seems as prominent in this story as Officer Chesterfield's -- Officer Chesterfield has never served on the security detail of Lieutenant Governor Potter nor myself, nor has he traveled on any of our behalf," Mr. Mapp said.

Even so, the governor said that of more importance was that fact that Mr. Chesterfield's situation, relative to drugs, was the second such occurrence involving a Government House security detail, and promised to initiate a more stringent process for those seeking to serve at Government House as security personnel.

The governor explained a situation involving a Government House security officer who died using cocaine.

"Several months ago you may recall that one of the uniformed officers here at Government House was found dead by his relieving officer. I did not make public then but I will make public now, that that officer literally keeled over face down into cocaine that he was apparently using, and died of a massive heart attack," Mr. Mapp revealed.

The governor expressed concern "in the manner in which our security personnel are selected and screened." Mr. Mapp made known that he met with U.S. Attorney Ronald Sharpe on Wednesday, and made a request -- which Mr. Mapp says will be formalized -- that moving forward, all executive security team personnel, including those securing the governor and lieutenant governor, as well as uniformed personnel of Government House, and adjunct facilities like the lieutenant governor's office, "will be subject to a security clearance formed by the federal government," Mr. Mapp said.

The governor added: "I will also be sending down to the Legislature [a bill] to codify the executive security team of the governor and lieutenant governor, placing it squarely under the auspices of the commissioner of the Police Department, and restricting service only to those persons who are Virgin Islands police officers, and who have in fact been cleared by the federal law enforcement agencies to be serving in these positions."

Also under the new legislation, the officers driving the governor and lieutenant governor will be codified and must be officers of the Virgin Islands Police Department. Mr. Chesterfield served with the Port Authority prior to being assigned to Government House's security detail by former Governor John P. de Jongh.

"This is important because we are involved in many high-level meetings and discussions having to do with security and law enforcement, [and] matters affecting the people of the Virgin Islands," Mr. Mapp said. "I cannot have parading and masquerading around the building and the officers persons who are living a life of crime, and masquerading using their badges and guns, and the trust that we impose upon them."

The governor also said that, in fairness to Mr. Chesterfield, all are presumed innocent until proven guilty, "But I cannot let it go without saying that I am deeply disappointed in that type of behavior. The fact that you would be here in Government House and living a

life of trafficking and drugs. I am a former police officer and it would take shy of Jesus Christ to convince me that someone who would pick up 50 pounds of cocaine and \$25,000 worth of cash, and walk freely through the airport terminal in high day into an environment where federal law enforcement, local law enforcement officers, K-9 Unit and all kinds of security devices are in existence and being deployed and used, and walk right through, and you're going to tell me that that is the first time that this person has been so involved?"

Mr. Chesterfield, 37, of St. Thomas, was arrested Saturday and charged with possession of approximately 21½ kilograms of cocaine with intent to distribute, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced Monday.

According to the U.S. D.O.J., at his initial appearance and detention hearing in District Court, U.S. Magistrate Judge Ruth Miller remanded Mr. Chesterfield to the custody of the United States Marshals Service pending trial.

According to the complaint and affidavit filed with the court, on Saturday at the Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) K-9 alerted to the presence of narcotics in Chesterfield's carry-on luggage while he was waiting in the Spirit Airlines gate area. Mr. Chesterfield, who is a security officer for Governor Kenneth Mapp, used his law enforcement credentials to bypass TSA screening, and was about to board Spirit flight 212 to Fort Lauderdale. Upon inspection of Mr. Chesterfield's luggage, CBP officers discovered 18 plasticwrapped packages, the contents of which tested positive for the presence of cocaine, weighing 21.44 kilograms. CBP officers also discovered \$26,025.00 in U.S. Currency inside a small computer bag in Chesterfield's possession.

If convicted, Mr. Chesterfield faces a minimum sentence of not less than 10 years in prison, and a fine of up to \$10 million. This case is being investigated by law enforcement officials from CBP, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Delia Smith.