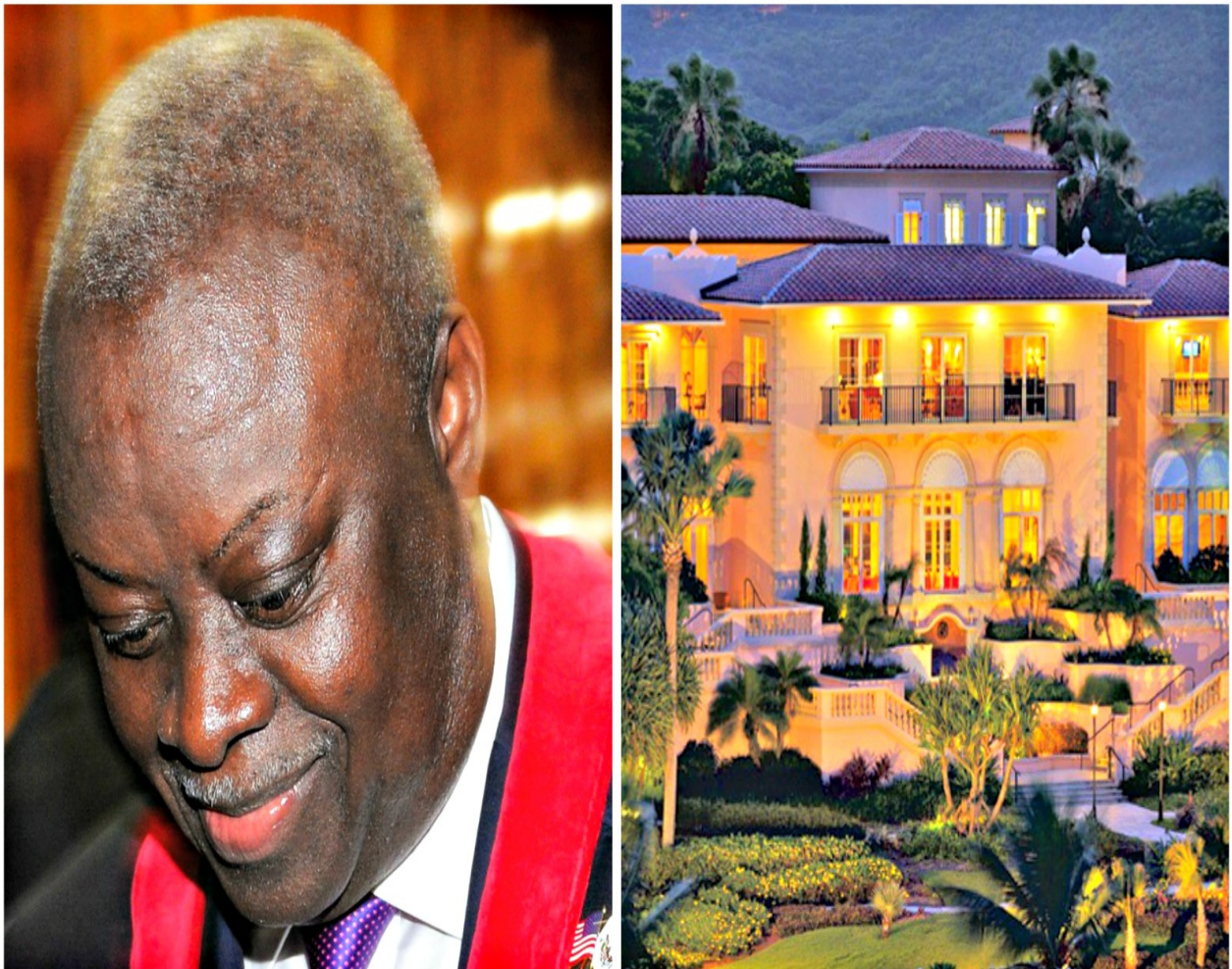


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Mapp Gets Roasted By VI Residents After He Responded To A Facebook Post Questioning His Choice Of Hotel And Vehicles

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp received a roasting on the internet two days ago, after responding to a resident who had expressed dissatisfaction with the governor's choices regarding his stay when in St. Thomas, following Mr. Mapp's [heated response to this reporter](#) during a press conference held at Government House on Wednesday.

The reporter was attempting to ask the governor about his spending habits, and whether he was setting a good example by buying multiple vehicles costing over \$600,000 (this figure includes four new Chevrolet Suburbans, two of which are seen [here](#), [a new](#)

[ceremonial vehicle](#) as well as four new high-end Ford Explorers) at a time when the territory is struggling to meet its obligations, and considering [shortening the work hours of government employees](#).

The resident, Shomari Francis, [registered his thoughts through a Facebook post on Friday at 1:39 p.m.](#) Tagging the governor in the post, Mr. Francis said, "And that's just for the man to rest his head. Let's not get started on other expenses like his fleet of armored vehicles. Ha. Ken Mapp why do you even need those? 'U really think anybody studying you?' Like my muda does seh."

Surprisingly, Mr. Mapp responded to the resident, stating that the vehicles used to transport him and Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter were not armored.

"Good day, for whatever it is worth I do not have a fleet of armoured vehicles. Vehicles for the Governor and Lt. Governor carry the security parameters applied on our police vehicles. I know you've seen Brinks armoured vehicles. Next time you see the vehicles used to transport either [of] us, I challenge you to see if you can identify any similarities. For the record, vehicle purchases for previous executive branch leaders were retrofitted the same," Mr. Mapp said.

The resident then told the governor that he knew the difference between a vehicle being armored and retrofitted, and that the word armored in this case simply meant a vehicle that had been fortified for protection.

"Mr. Mapp. I see what you did here. But you are not speaking to an invalid and you do not need to correct me. I am an intelligent person. "Armored" is simply a term we use on the "street" per say, to identify any vehicle that has been "retrofitted". It does not necessarily always refer to an actual armored vehicle. Just like we islanders use "weedwacker" for example, which is a brand of weed-eaters but we use it for [a] brand of weed-eater.

After the clarification, Mr. Francis tried steering the conversation back to the main topic, which was the governor's spending habits while the territory faces a financial crisis.

"[Now] that that's out the window. The concern is not that your vehicles are retrofitted, the problem is why so many, and why not something of less expense to the government, with the territory being in the condition it is in now. I am one that believes in the phrase "every penny counts," but I guess your luxurious wants are more important to you than the state of the territory," Mr. Francis said.

The governor attempted to clarify how many vehicles were purchased, however his statement included some untruths.

The governor said two vehicles, in this case Chevrolet Suburbans that cost about \$100,000 a piece, were purchased. That's not true. Four Suburbans were purchased -- two for St. Croix and two for St. Thomas, bringing the cost to over \$400,000. And he did not mention the purchase of ceremonial vehicles to ferry him around when attending "official" activities. One of those cost \$88,000.

The governor also said that the four security vehicles (high-end Ford Explorers) used by his security detail were purchased by the Virgin Islands Police Department. The funds for

the Explorers came through [Bill No. 31-0224](#), which allocated \$10 million for the purchase of emergency vehicles, to include V.I.P.D., Fire Service, Dept. of Health, Office of the Medical Examiner and Bureau of Corrections. The bill was later amended to assure that [ceremonial vehicles were not purchased with the funds](#), but the governor [wound up having his way in the end](#).

The governor had chided Mr. Francis for expressing concern about the executive branch's spending. "While you are concerned about cars, we've focused on the community," Mr. Mapp said. The governor continued with his misleading comments, stating that he had added 2,500 jobs to the public and private sectors, but there has been no official data to verify that amount. He said he brought government employees' salaries on par with their contracts, but not all government employees have received wage increases; Steelworkers Union Director Daniel Flippo told The Consortium two weeks ago [that some of the union's members had not received a wage increase since 2008](#). The governor said his administration had worked to reopen the former HOVENSA facility, but although the former refinery is indeed operational, it is only an oil storage facility, and employs considerable less (in many instances for less pay as well), than the amount of people HOVENSA hired, at one point over 2,000.

"We're now financially supporting our students so they can compete in PR, BVI and inter-island events and we're purchasing products from our local farmers that's now being served in school cafeterias," Mr. Mapp continued, which is true. And as if to remind residents that the territory was facing a surfeit of problems before he took office, the governor added, "Yes, there is much work to do and we are working to do our jobs, but we didn't inherit a well functioning system."

Mr. Francis did not let up, however. He continued to press the governor on his spending habits.

"Sir. While you are preaching to me about what you had no responsibility for accomplishing, you still fail to explain to me why you are spending excessive money on your own personal lifestyle, while the VI is still in such debt? Regardless of what you say, why do you still have to shut down the government for a day of the week? Why do the people have to pay for the irresponsibility of the government? Look at the salaries you all are being paid. The senators included. Tax checks are still pending for years and the island still owes money. Millions! And what are you doing about the crime on the island?"

On crime, the Mapp administration has done a good job on St. Croix, especially with homicides, with the island experiencing only one homicide death for the year. On St. Thomas, however, [the homicide rate remains high](#) even as [violent crime saw an overall decline in 2016](#). The improvement is a testament to the governor's selection of Delroy Richards as police commissioner, and Mr. Ricahrds's choice of Winsbut McFarland and Jason Marsh [for police chiefs](#) in the St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John districts respectively.

The exchange between Mr. Mapp and Mr. Francis did not continue, as the governor instead chose to respond to a resident who had called him a "rolie polie", a reference to overweight people, made popular by [a song praising sizable women](#). The resident, Shaniffa Christian, also called the governor a "big, black gorilla," and "scunt."

The governor for the most part had employed equanimity during his discussion with Mr. Francis, but he shot back pointedly at Ms. Christian.

"Scunt? Ok Shaniffa Christian. Gorilla? Sounds like you're from the south," the governor jabbed. "Interestingly enough a white supremacist view you and I the same. Clearly, you have little respect of yourself. Blacks don't refer to each other as monkeys or gorillas. We have enough folks who dislike the color of our skin who is happy to call us such names. God bless you and yours."

Ms. Christian responded by asking the governor why was he upset, adding, "Where is my damn tax check... You're a waste of a governor."

The governor said he wasn't upset, "Just ashamed of how you are treating yourself. You really need a good lesson in history," he said.

Even before the exchange with Ms. Christian, residents were roasting the governor, and the assailing continued.

"Why did you need new ones, governor? And why are you still staying in hotels in the territory?" asked Tryone Webster Reid, referring to the fleet of vehicles and the governor's stay at the Ritz-Carlton when in St. Thomas.

"I can't believe this is the governor of the V.I. No type of class," said Ortisha Browne.

Malik Stridiron told Ms. Christian that if she were employed by the government, her job would be at risk. "Cause you know he's looking [to] see if you are so you can get your pink slip ASAP." Mr. Stridiron was making reference to the longstanding notion that Mr. Mapp has a vindictive nature, and the notion that Mr. Mapp fires people who he doesn't favor.

"It's amazing how he gets offended when he's being called out of his name, but wasn't he the same one who called Sen. Millin Young a "SETTY FOWL"? wrote Kaytanne M. Greaves. Mr. Mapp last year called Senator Janette Millin Young [a jackass, setty fowl, stupid and crazy](#) -- on Facebook.

There are over 130 comments on the post, and it has been shared over 100 times.

It was not the first time Mr. Mapp had responded to a resident on social media, and following his outburst at this Consortium reporter, some are now referring to the governor as the Donald Trump of the Virgin Islands, referring to Mr. Trump's Twitter habits and his slashing comments against the media. But, to be fair, that's a stretch.