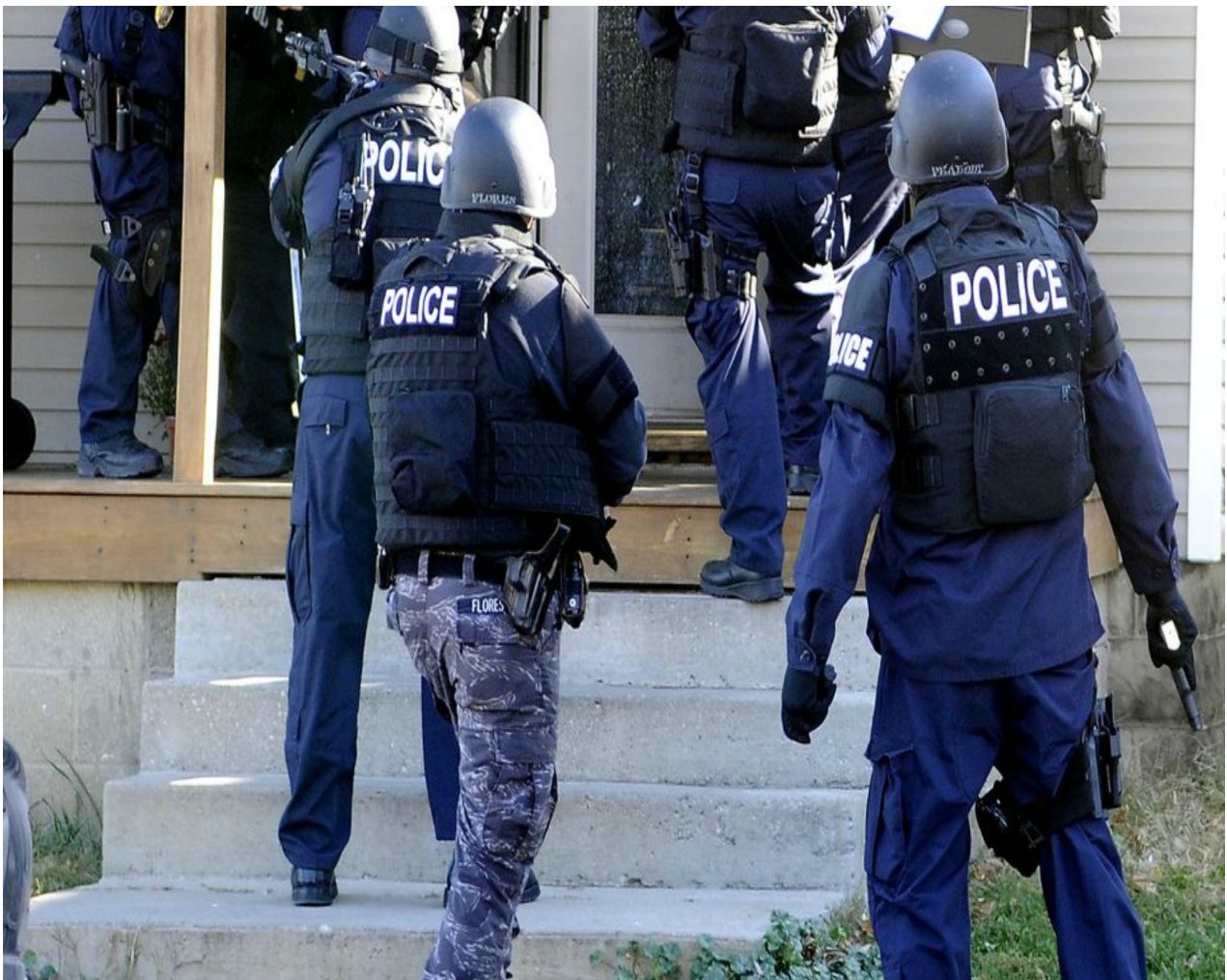


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Police And Feds Descend On U.S. Address Of Third Suspect In East End Rape Crime, Finding No One

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ST. CROIX -- U.S. mainland police officers and federal partners recently descended on the U.S. address of the third suspect said to be involved in last month's East End Road rape incident, but they found no one there, according to Police Commissioner Delroy Richards, speaking with The Consortium about the matter via phone on Saturday.

Police have already arrested four people it said are connected to the rape, with two being prime suspects, while two others are suspected accomplices. The announcement of the four arrests came during a May 19 press briefing called specifically to announce the development, and it was there that the commissioner promised that the force and its federal partners would bring the third prime suspect -- who fled the territory following the

incident -- to justice.

"We are currently seeking him, we know where he is, [and] he will be brought back to the territory," Mr. Richards said.

On Saturday, the commissioner said local and federal authorities in the mainland state that the suspect is said to have resided in -- which the commissioner did not reveal -- recently went to the address in search of the suspect but he was not found.

"The federal agents as well as the local authorities went to the address and he wasn't there," Mr. Richards said. "We know that he was there and he left." The commissioner revealed that the suspect's info has been inserted in the National Crime Information Center (N.C.I.C.); a computerized index of criminal justice information (i.e.- criminal record history information, fugitives, stolen properties, missing persons), with both local and federal authorities having copies of the case.

"In essence we're still looking for him," Mr. Richards added.

The commissioner said the V.I.P.D. is withholding the identity of the third suspect based on a request from detectives, who urged Mr. Richards to give them at least the end of this weekend, suggesting that the investigators may be following some strong leads.

"They're trying to see if they could slow him down somewhat, so the investigators asked me for the weekend and I'm going to grant them that," the commissioner said. If nothing develops by today, the V.I.P.D. is expected to open up the hunt for the third suspect to everyone by releasing his identity.

As for the suspects captured by the force, their identities were revealed during the May 19 press briefing. The first suspect identified by police was [18-year-old Link Baltimore Jr.](#), who was charged with first-degree rape, kidnap for rape, third-degree burglary, unauthorized possession of a stolen vehicle, and first-degree robbery. The second suspect was identified as [Youan Rodriguez, 22](#), who was charged with first-degree rape, kidnap for rape, third-degree burglary, and first-degree assault.

The two other individuals that the force arrested were [Carl Cornelius, age 19](#) — charged with possession of stolen property, after a search warrant was executed and items were recovered that were removed from a home during the commission of a burglary. And [Bethzaida Berrios, age 50](#), who was charged with possession of stolen property, after a search warrant was executed at her residence and property recovered that was reported stolen from a burglary. The commissioner explained that the primary suspects involved in the rape incident had not only stolen the white truck to commit the crime, but they had heisted multiple items from the burglary victim's residence. The primary suspects were also connected to other burglaries, the commissioner said. The two suspects who were charged with possession of stolen property — the 19-year-old and 50-year-old — corralled the stolen items, the commissioner said.

Asked whether the suspects were involved in the recent [Salt River incident](#) that had similarities to the East End rape crime, the commissioner said while the force could not say for sure yet, they were not ruling out the possibility.

Mr. Richards expressed appreciation for the community's assistance, who he said had flooded police and Crime Stoppers USVI with valuable leads. He also expressed gratitude to Crime Stoppers USVI Chair Laurie Dunton for her unwavering involvement in the matter. And he thanked Chief McFarland, whose teams were deeply involved in solving the case, the commissioner said.

The commissioner also sought to unite the community, stating that the incident had caused some division. "That separation should never exist," he admonished. "Whenever a crime is committed, irregardless to who it is committed to, we have a responsibility to investigate, identify, and to bring the perpetrators to justice — and we intend to do that," he said.

The arrests represented a proud time for the V.I.P.D., as it managed to make quick and confident arrests in a high stakes case in two weeks. Mr. Richards rated the department he leads as "second to none," and said that they would continue to do their best. The commissioner was optimistic about solving other cases as well.

Ms. Dunton thanked the community for supporting with tips as well as financially. "Unfortunately, this is not the last tear we will shed in this territory," she reminded. "It's not the last call to action that you will hear."

She continued, "But what we have proven through this investigation, is that we can rest assured that with the community's involvement, the Virgin Islands Police Department, our federal partners and Crime Stoppers — together can bring justice. We have risen and we will rise again." Ms. Dunton mentioned unsolved cases that date back years. She also spoke of the more recent incidents, and urged the community to step forward with what they know.

The [incident took place on the East End Road](#), according to police. Two females were driving when suddenly a white double cab truck rear-ended them, prompting the victims to stop the vehicle. One female stepped out of the vehicle and was taken by the three assailants elsewhere and raped. The second victim managed to escape, according to police.

Feature Image: Example of a police raid on a home, not the actual raid in search of the third rape suspect.