

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Yacht Haven Grande Removes Crew And Vessel Carrying Confederate Flag From Marina

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ST. THOMAS -- Yacht Haven Grande on Wednesday issued a statement regarding the incident that occurred at Brewers Bay on Sunday, where a vessel with three Caucasian men was seen prominently displaying a Confederate flag, swiftly igniting the ire of the Virgin Islands community, including Acting Governor Osbert Potter.

The men, according to Yacht Haven, were guests of its marina, with the company being made aware of the Sunday incident on Monday. "Yacht Haven Grande were made aware of the inappropriate actions/behavior of some marina guests, Monday afternoon the 12th of June, 2017. YHG took the immediate decision to remove the offending crew and vessel from the marina, as such the vessel departed YHG that same evening," reads the

statement.

It adds, "As a multi-cultural, international company, IGY Marinas, and therefore YHG, take this form of inappropriate behavior very seriously. We, as part of the St. Thomas community, feel this was the correct and appropriate action."

Mr. Potter on Tuesday moved to denounce the occurrence, which took place during the "What's Going on St. Thomas" event which was a fundraiser for My Brother's Workshop, according to Mr. Potter's office. The attendees at the event were enraged and expressed concerns and offense towards the flying of the Confederate flag in the territory, according to Mr. Potter, who is currently serving as governor while Governor Kenneth Mapp is



Two Caucasian men aboard vessel displaying

Confederate flag at Brewers Bay on Sunday.

"The Confederate flag is not welcomed, not accepted, nor tolerated in the Virgin Islands under any circumstances," Mr. Potter said. "The Confederate flag represents divisiveness, bigotry, slavery, and oppression. This is totally out of line with what we as Virgin Islands residents embrace, which is unity and acceptance of all people, regardless of race, color, religion or creed. The flying of the flag is totally offensive to Virgin Islanders, and I will not tolerate this blatant display of hatred to our people."

Mr. Potter ordered the perpetrators of what he referred to as an offense, to cease and desist immediately. He stated that the flying of the Confederate flag is not welcomed neither on the waters or on land in the USVI.

The Sunday incident received immediate and united backlash from Virgin Islanders, with multiple people capturing the unusual sight and sharing it on social media. The image was shared on The Consortium's Facebook platform as well, with residents calling for the publication to dig further into the matter.

In 1860-61, eleven southern states seceded from the United States to protect the institution of slavery, forming the Confederate States of America and precipitating the Civil War. During the war, the Confederacy and its military forces used a variety of flags, but the flag that became most associated with the Confederacy was the so-called "battle flag."

Organizations such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans adopted the flag as a symbol of Southern heritage but the flag also served as a potent symbol of slavery and white supremacy, which has caused it to be very popular among white supremacists in the 20th

and 21st centuries. This popularity extends to white supremacists beyond the borders of the United States.

Today, the use of the Confederate flag is often controversial. While a number of non-extremists still use the flag as a symbol of Southern heritage or pride, there is growing recognition, especially outside the South, that the symbol is offensive to many Americans.

Correction: June 14, 2017

A previous version of this story stated that two men were in the vessel, when there were three. We've updated the story to reflect the correct information.

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