

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp On His Demeanor: 'I Don't Have Any Regrets'

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp said [during his VIPC interview on Wednesday](#) that he had no regrets for some of the things he's said to individuals in the territory during his first year in office, some of which include coarse words hurled online causing the internet to light up with commentary on his behavior.

Mr. Mapp said while he brought his personal style to Government House, the Office of the Governor, he believes, was not demeaned by his deportment.

"I don't think I've had any regrets," he said during the interview, held at Government House on Wednesday evening. "I think that I'm human, and I think that I've had 36 years on the public stage and I think people know that I do my work with tremendous passion.

And you know when you arrive at the office of governor, there's a level of respect and dignity that you must carry, and I do not believe I've done anything to disrespect or bring any lack of dignity to the office. I think I brought some of my style, which is I don't just tolerate folks getting deeply personal with me, or getting very offensive with me, and for the essence of political correctness smiling and walk away."

Yet even as Mr. Mapp sought to paint himself a leader who fights back yet brings no degradation to the Office of the Governor, he has offended some residents by his response to Virgin Islanders, most of which came in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

His platform of choice to fire back responses is [Facebook](#). It was there that he aimed his sights on Senator Janette Millin Young in January 2016, hurling some insulting words at the lawmaker based on a feud between the two.

"I did not realize how dishonest and frankly how stupid you are. I have never spoken to you about ArcLight or any monies that may be owed to your father's estate. Never, not once. To accuse me of trying to bribe you for your vote; The Consortium was not the place for you to go. You are a confounded liar and a jackass. I will work or refuse to work with you on the terms you have established. It is clear that you care about one issue and that issue is Janette Millin Young. How sad! Why are you such a setty fowl?"

The above quote was sent to Ms. Millin Young directly, but the governor also [included it in his Facebook post publicly](#).

Then, in October 2017, the governor unleashed an expletive on Facebook responding to a post by Herbert L. Schoenbohm, a staunch Republican and frequent poster on Facebook, who has criticized Mr. Mapp's performance. The post questioned the choice of water that Government House used, Le Bleu, with Mr. Schoenbohm arguing that the governor should send truckloads of Le Bleu water, which he considered to be premium, to local housing communities, where he said some residents were boiling cistern water or "brown WAPA cocoo water" to drink.

Then he wrote, 'Nope...only the best for the governor while the rest of us suck salt.'

The comment from Mr. Schoenbohm appeared to be part of his regular dissent against the Mapp administration. But the governor's response took many by surprise, letting loose not only the expletive, but also taking a hard shot at Mr. Schoenbohm by calling him a "blazing idiot."

"Le bleu water is bottled on st. Thomas. Herb, go \$&#k yourself. I've been front and center from two days before Irma and have not stopped since and you complaining about water. Buy some and support the locals you blazing idiot," [the governor wrote](#).

In November 2017, Mr. Mapp commented on the popular Facebook group, "What's Going On, St. Thomas", after someone questioned why a generator that was being used [at the Estate Nazareth mansion where the governor once resided](#), dubbed Villa Fratelli Cresta, was not adhering to the curfew put in place by the Mapp administration following the storms. The curfew recommended generator use between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. daily.

“Thought there was a curfew on generator use. Mapp’s former villa in Nazareth running a huge, very loud generator 24/7,” [reads the post](#).

The governor’s first response took aim at commenters who made it appear as if he was still residing at the villa. In that response, Mr. Mapp [said](#), “Why ah yo so? Everyone knows I have not been in that home [since May 2015](#). Just gotta criticize even when u know what u saying ain’t true. Sounds like a screw on the top floor loose. New executive order: free 4” screwdrivers till noon on Monday. Who is the crazy person that want to “bomb” people property? Put Billy in the cell to bunk with Bubba.”

Then, a resident named Patrick Deery asked the governor where he resided in November, and it was to Mr. Deery that the territory’s leader exacted the insult.

“So, where are you now residing, on the people’s tax dollars?” [asked](#) Mr. Deery. Four comments later, Mr. Mapp [responded](#), “Patrick Derry, wit ur mudda.”

Referring to someone’s mother in such a manner, along with the way the governor spelled the word, is widely known in the Caribbean as an insult. Mr. Deery [did fire back](#) at the governor: “Please, grow up,” he said. “If you were living with my “mudda”, you would already be dead.”

Mr. Deery added, “Now, that accommodation would please the vast majority. But, once again, you lie. As you always have.”

The governor has also shutdown journalists seeking to ask questions pertinent to Virgin Islanders, and has berated those who oppose his point of view.

On the night of October 18, 2017, Mr. Mapp took aim at Consortium reporter Ernice Gilbert. Mr. Gilbert, who was first to ask questions following an hourslong Hurricane Recovery briefing, inquired about the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP) checks, which were supposed to be issued on Oct. 16, but got delayed for two to three weeks. During a previous press briefing, Mr. Mapp had said the decision to delay the DSNAP checks was based on his administration’s belief that residents would use the funds to purchase frozen items, and since power was still widely unavailable territory-wide, those items would spoil soon after.

Residents were furious about that reasoning, and they shared their frustration with The Consortium and requested that one of the paper’s reporters ask for clarification. Mr. Gilbert sought to do just that during the October 18 press briefing, but the governor snapped, and in an uncivil manner yelled at Mr. Gilbert in an attempt to shut him down.

“I’m not gonna do that, I’m not gonna do that,” Mr. Mapp interrupted when the question was posed. “The DSNAP program will be rolled out in November. That’s the plan, that’s the agreement with the federal government, all the work is being put together to do that. Today is October 18, the Disaster SNAP program is not a direct response to a disaster.” Mr. Mapp said he had a long conversation with Department of Human Services officials, and he agreed with them that residents would buy frozen items with their DSNAP checks, and so the decision to delay was made.

Mr. Gilbert then attempted to ask whether there were other issues causing the delay, but the governor completely lost control and gave way to uncouth behavior, shouting the

reporter down while refusing to answer. He then said he would allow one more question from Mr. Gilbert, however when Mr. Gilbert told Mr. Mapp that his question would remain in the same vein, the governor would not allow the report to ask the question, and hastily moved on to another reporter. "That was your last question," he said, although Mr. Gilbert never got to ask it.

On Wednesday, however, the governor maintained that his leadership style while in office, though sometimes combative, never diminished the Office of the Governor.

"If you really know my political history, I've never been one of the accepted old school boys, I've been always swimming upstream," he said. "I fight vigorously for the things I believe in; I believe I've demonstrated that I'm a good learner, I listen very well. But when I believe I am right, on point and on target with the things that I think will aid the territory, I've always fought for them and sometimes I've had to fight right in people's face. That's just part of my style and I think when you measure overall the work that I've done, if one's looking for perfection, Kenneth Mapp is not the place to look for that."