

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Federal Agents Raid Office Of Campbell Development; Owner Refuses To Show Up For Questioning

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Ernice Gilbert **November 02, 2018**



ST. CROIX -- A group of federal agents from a variety of enforcement arms -- Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Police and Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, among others -- executed a search warrant on Friday night of the Campbell Development office in Peter's Rest, the latest turn in a fast-unfolding series of events that started with a Consortium video that showed workmen brought to the territory by Campbell Development [alleging a number of grievances](#).

The agents appeared to have packed all documents and other items that could serve as evidence in a potential case. An agent told The Consortium that because the case was

still unfolding, details relative to the matter could not be divulged. Even so, the men packed boxes of documents and other items and placed them in a truck.

They also were searching for Julie Campbell, owner of Campbell Development. However, although someone who appeared to be an office employee of Campbell Development stressed to Mrs. Campbell that the agents were at the office and wanted to meet with her, Mrs. Campbell refused to show up.

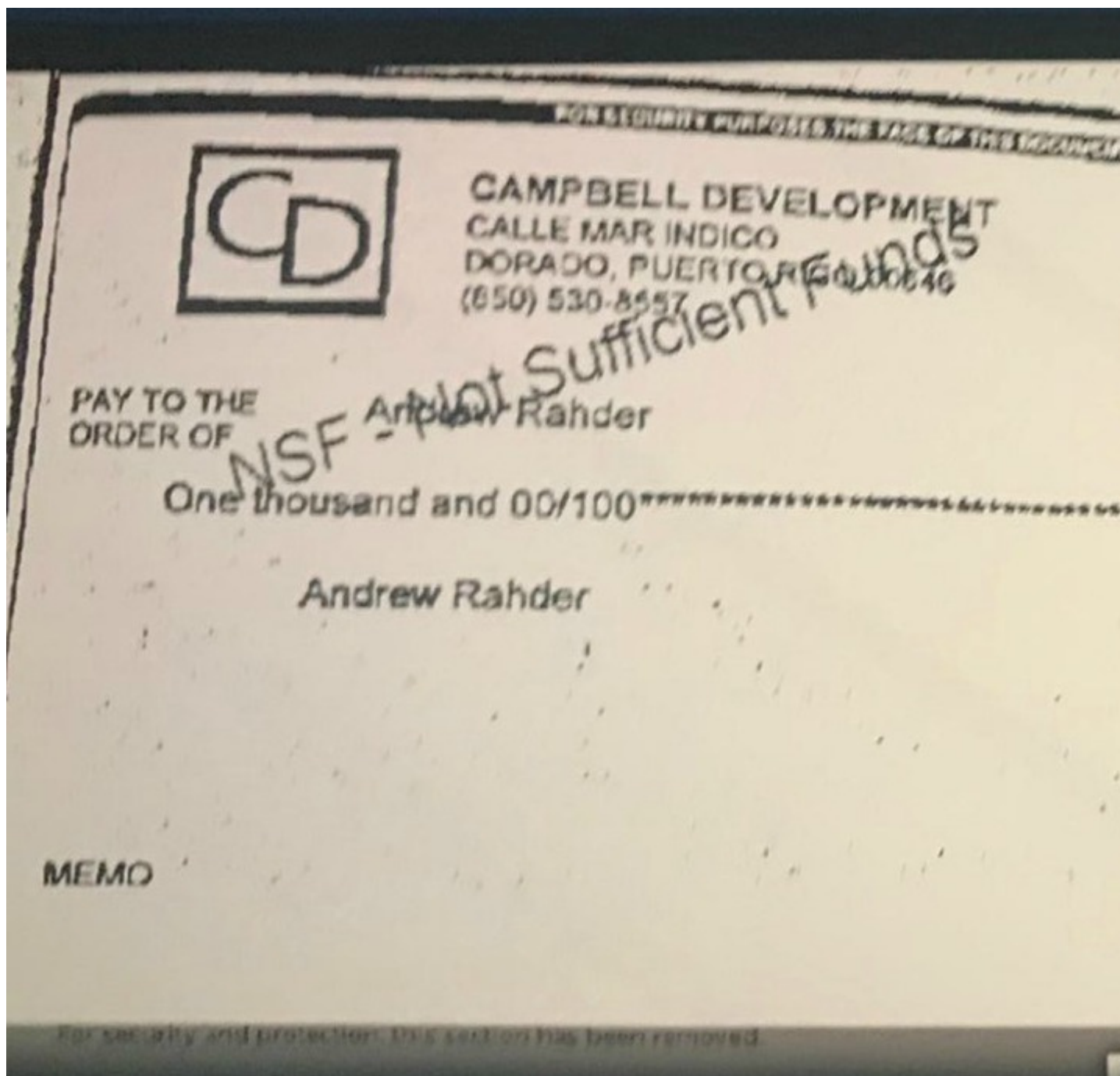
The story has gained the attention of the national media, said Attorney General Claude Walker. "They called me yesterday seeking information," the A.G. told this publication Thursday. ABC News in Florida, called "News Channel 8 On Your Side", contacted The Consortium Thursday seeking permission to use videos owned by the publication showing the workers sharing their grievances.



Peter's Rest complex were Campbell Development Workers reside (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)

As the Campbell Development crisis continues to gain momentum, it has become increasingly more difficult for Mrs. Campbell to hold a position of innocence. During an interview with The Consortium on Wednesday afternoon, Mrs. Campbell contested workers' statements that their checks were bouncing. But the employees provided The Consortium with multiple copies of worthless checks, issued by Campbell Development, that were returned because of insufficient funds. A.G. Walker told The Consortium Wednesday that issuing worthless checks is a criminal offense under U.S. Virgin Islands law. And he decried the grievances made by those in the video, stating that if true, such treatment should never be permissible and allowed to continue in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Below, copies of bounced Campbell Development checks provided to The Consortium by the aggrieved workers.



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CAMPBELL DEVELOPMENT
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(850) 530-8557

BANCO POPULAR

PAY TO THE
ORDER OF

Shane Scott

One thousand seven hundred fifty and 00/100

Shane Scott

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

MEMO

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074909962
10/24/2018
99011958

This is a LEGAL COPY of your
check. You can use it the same
way you would use the original
check.

RETURN REASON-A
NOT SUFFICIENT FUNDS

8080350098
[074909962] 10/19/2018

NSF



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PAY TO THE
ORDER OF

Andrew Leaf

One thousand five hundred and 00/100

Andrew Leaf

MEMO

X

USAA CLASSIC CH
#240690699



RETURNED DEPOSIT

RETURNED DEPOSIT ITEM

(\$1,000.00)

Department of Labor Commissioner Averil George told The Consortium on Thursday that the department would visit the complex in Peter's Rest on Friday to investigate the matter.

Campbell Development was once subcontracted by Patriot Response Group, LLC, which was hired by AECOM, to perform hurricane recovery work in the territory. In an interview with The Consortium on Wednesday, AECOM Public Relations Officer, Michael Chee, said the firm held no responsibility relative to nonpayment of Campbell Development workers, as it had paid Patriot Response Group funds in September that included funds to pay Campbell Development. Patriot Response Group also issued a statement on the matter: "Patriot Response Group, LLC has confirmed that the group of workers that have a grievance against Campbell Development never worked on any contracts that were under Patriot. Our work with AECOM ended several months ago and Campbell Development was released from any work under Patriot."

APTIM, which was mentioned by the men in the video as the firm that gave Campbell Development the contract, has since said it had no dealings with Mrs. Campbell or her company, and that it had never provided Campbell Development with any contract. On Thursday, the firm through its attorneys, requested that The Consortium remove any mention of APTIM from its videos and stories. But the publication, during further investigation of the unfolding crisis, was told on Thursday by some of the workers that the reason they said APTIM was the company that Campbell Development was under, was because some of their badges were APTIM badges. The men held Patriot Badges as well, but unlike APTIM, Patriot did not attempt to remove itself from the equation. Instead, the company said it had paid Campbell Development all what was owed, and that there was no longer a relationship between the companies. APTIM has yet to clarify why some of the men's badges bore the name APTIM.

"I haven't worked for AECOM, it's APTIM who we're actually doing our work for," said Chris Ledrew, one of the aggrieved workers. "I can't say anything more about that company, I don't know about them; they are not responsible for my pay. Campbell is responsible for my pay and they're not paying."

Below, an APTIM badge for Campbell Development worker, Andrew Leaf.

Emergency Home

VIHFA



APTIM



ANDREW LEAF

<http://www.ehrvi.com>

The companies are under pressure to address the unfolding crisis because of the D.O.J.'s investigation and the snowballing story that has now been picked up by U.S. media. And the monies involved are federal dollars made available through the [VI Home Repairs Program](#), which has a budget of \$766 million. In July, Governor Kenneth Mapp complained that AECOM, which originally won the bid, [was moving too slow](#). Mr. Mapp said at the time that he hoped another company, APTIM, would be able to get some of the rebuilding work to hasten the reconstruction of the territory.

Following The Consortium's reporting, a number of other individuals have come forward with their own stories of unfair treatment and lack of pay at Campbell Development and other companies.

Below, a few stories sent to The Consortium via its Facebook platform and email. (Send your stories of unfair treatment and nonpayment by companies doing recovery work in the territory to ernice@viconsortium.com.)

From George Koutzoulis via email

I am one of the contractors that left everything behind for empty promises from Campbell Development to go to work on St. Croix. I was in communication with Heather Thornhill, a realtor in the Pensacola Florida area who acts as a liaison between Julie Campbell and newly signed contractors. Before uprooting myself and my workers I spoke to Heather repeatedly, concerned about the work contracts and the opportunity to make the \$1000 a day max on completing work orders. Heather assured me over and over that if we were not making "at least \$750 a day, we would be sent home".

The day we landed in St Croix another worker, the man who picked us up, confirmed there hadn't been any work and pay was cut from \$500 to \$250 a day and that they were going to be holding back the first weeks checks. I immediately spoke to Jason who I was told runs the day-to-day operations in St Croix, and confirmed these details were true and that he didn't know when work orders would arrive. I explained I was not staying on the island, I had come down to help rebuild not to sit around and I had work at home. He assured me that my 2014 Sprinter that was at the time on it's way to the port in Puerto Rico would be paid for by them to return to Florida. Currently my Sprinter is still sitting in the port in Puerto Rico, I have been in communications daily with Robert D Jesus at Trailer Bridge, who has informed me that Campbell specifically said they would not pay the return and that Campbell has not paid for the trips to the island. There are tens of thousands owed to Trailer bridge.

Until they resolve the issue with Campbell they are holding all vehicles. On a final note, if Julie Campbell was so concerned about the workers left on the island why was food cut — all 3 meals per day stopped today Nov 1, one day after your video came out. I'm sorry for this lengthy email but after watching her response and hearing all of her lies, I had to reach out to you. I have much more I would like to discuss with you. If you could please call me at your earliest convenience.

From Tim Mitchell, via [Facebook](#)

I have information on another company abusing workers on St Thomas. I worked there for 4 months with little to no pay with a company called Carpenter Services. We were then told that we worked for a company called ReRoofing America instead. These companies were hired under Lamar, who were hired under AECOM. I have documentation of the work that my partner and I completed under those companies.

The entire situation was very shady, some guys were promised per diem, some weren't. We were promised a percentage of what the actual jobs that we completed paid out but were given lies and excuses when we questioned what jobs actually paid and were told to "keep our mouths shut" when other workers were present. Guys were held on the island with no money, food, etc for weeks with little to no contact with the people in charge and were threatened if they showed up to the office to argue it. The whole situation was terrible and I was fortunate to actually be sent home when I was. Since I've been back stateside, I have tried to contact the people who I worked for via text and phone call and have not received an answer ab payment or anything else.

Campbell Development on Thursday morning was scrambling to purchase tickets to fly the more than 100 workers it hired out of the territory. But many of the workers who spoke with The Consortium said they were not leaving the island until they were paid owed funds.

Also on Thursday, during the morning time, Kyshama Montes, who briefly worked with Campbell Development as an accountant, visited the Peter's Rest Complex where the company's office is located, to confront Mrs. Campbell. Mrs. Campbell had told The Consortium [during a video interview on Wednesday](#) that she had paid Ms. Montes thrice through checks — two mailed and another she said Ms. Montes never collected. Furious about what she described as a lie, Ms. Montes entered the office. In the tense room, Mrs. Campbell and Ms. Montes engaged in a brief back and forth, with mostly Ms. Montes complaining that Mrs. Campbell had lied, while Mrs. Campbell repeatedly apologized for how the situation unfolded. Mrs. Campbell had told The Consortium a day earlier that a check was sitting in her office waiting to be collected by Ms. Montes. However, on Thursday, she resorted to writing a new check, stating that the office had recently moved and that she couldn't locate Ms. Montes's check.