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Violet Swings Hard at Bryan With Accusation of Providing No-Bid Contracts to Those He Favors

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From left to right, Governor Albert Bryan and Senator Kurt Violet. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Governor Albert Bryan and Sen. Kurt Violet both were given an opportunity to ask each other a question of their choosing during the V.I. Consortium/WTJX debate held Thursday, and Mr. Violet used the opportunity to target Mr. Bryan on accusations of favoritism, arguing that the governor has been showing partiality to a network of individuals by rewarding them with no-bid contracts.

"My question to the governor would be what is the justification for you to issue no-bid contracts, sole source contracts, contracts to newly formed nonprofits, contracts to friends. What is the

justification and how can you rest at night knowing that you've given these contracts to individuals that are no bid," Mr. Vialet asked. Giving an example, [he pointed to the V.I. Diabetes Center for Excellence](#).

Mr. Bryan first explained instances when no-bid contracts can be awarded. "We issued no-bid contracts for emergency things in order to facilitate cleaning of offices, cleaning of facilities where people are going to, getting medical supplies, and getting help in here like Pafford [Medical Services] to help our nurses and supplement our very tired workforce," the governor said in response to Mr. Vialet during the debate, held live at the Good Hope Country Day Pavilion.

The governor then pressed Mr. Vialet to provide information on the contracts he was referring to and challenged the senator for an explanation regarding why he hasn't sponsored legislation that would stop no-bid contracts from being awarded.

"I don't know what no-bid contract you are talking about, senator, but if you were serious about no-bid contracts, as a senator what legislation that you've put forth to make sure that this type of stuff doesn't happen? You've been there for eight years... your running mate has been there for six [years] and you guys have not produced any legislation to stop any of this so-called corruption that you're always referring to," the governor said. "If you're so intent on stopping no-bid contracts, why haven't you passed legislation?"

Mr. Vialet did not address the governor's comments regarding why the senator or his running mate had not introduced a bill to stop the practice of no-bid contracts. Instead, he sought to be more specific on his original accusation.

"What you have done is to have an overall entity and then have some contracts under that entity to give to your friends; what you have done is determine just recently that TSG [The Strategy Group] could get a source contract for Department of Finance to perform duties that are already being performed by the department; what you have done is to try to give them a contract to manage the EnVision program under Witt O'Brien's and they were the subcontractor that was rejected twice by the board — that is what you have done," he said.

The governor then said, "It's ludicrous; I don't need to respond to it." Watch the full debate [here](#).