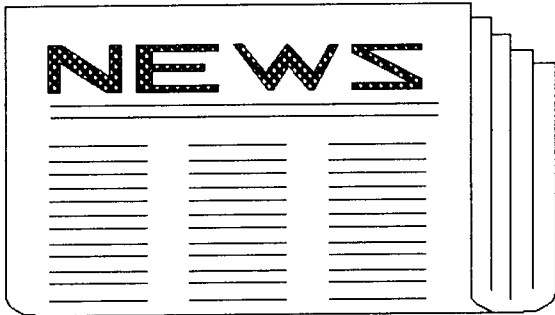


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PRESS RELEASE

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REDFIELD SAYS ST. CROIX HOSPITAL LIKEWISE IN BAD SHAPE

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REPUBLICAN SENATOR HOLLAND L. REDFIELD TODAY RESPONDS WITH DISBELIEF REGARDING PUBLISHED STATEMENTS FROM GOVERNMENT HOUSE FRIDAY WHICH CLAIMED THAT SEN. LORRAINE BERRY HAS NEVER BROUGHT UP THE ISSUE OF UNDER-FUNDING OF THE ST. THOMAS HOSPITAL.

BERRY, CHAIRMAN OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE, WAS THE ONLY MAJORITY SENATOR WHO HAD THE GUTS TO VOTE AGAINST THE CURRENT BUDGET, STATING IT WAS A PROTEST AGAINST BUDGET CUTS TO V.I. HOSPITALS AND THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

REDFIELD SAID THE OBVIOUS OMISSION OF ST. CROIX HOSPITAL IN ADMINISTRATION REMARKS LED HIM TO A FRIDAY MEETING WITH GEORGE MCCOY, ST. CROIX HOSPITAL CEO, AND JOHN DELUCA, HOSPITAL BOARD VICE CHAIRMAN, TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE FACILITY, STILL HOUSED IN TEMPORARY QUARTERS FOUR YEARS AFTER HURRICANE HUGO. REDFIELD SAID THE TWO OFFICIALS CONFIRMED THAT ST. CROIX HOSPITAL IS IN A TENUOUS FINANCIAL POSITION, ESPECIALLY WITH A MOVE TO THE LARGER, REFURBISHED HOSPITAL BUILDING SET FOR DECEMBER.

"EITHER THE ADMINISTRATION IS ON ANOTHER PLANET, OR THEY HAVE DEVELOPED AN INCREDIBLE DISREGARD FOR THE PEOPLE OF THIS TERRITORY WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH CARE," REDFIELD DECLARED. "THE ST. CROIX HOSPITAL IS IN JUST AS BAD A CONDITION, IF NOT WORSE, THAN ST. THOMAS," THE SENATOR POINTED OUT. THE TERRITORY'S HOSPITALS WERE DEALT WITH BY ILL-THOUGHT OUT PRIORITIES AND A CALLOUSED DISREGARD FOR THE HEALTH CARE OF OUR PEOPLE IN THE LAST BUDGET. I SQUARELY PUT THE BLAME ON THE SENATE MAJORITY AND THE BUDGET DIRECTOR," REDFIELD SAID, ADDING THAT ALL NON-ALIGNED SENATORS VOTED AGAINST THE MEASURE BECAUSE OF THIS DEFICIENCY.

"WITH THE NEW HOSPITAL SLATED TO OPEN IN DECEMBER, WITHOUT \$6 TO \$7 MILLION, THE HOSPITAL WILL OPEN WITH VIRTUALLY NO EQUIPMENT OR SUPPLIES. IT WILL JUST BE AN EMPTY SHELL," THE SENATOR SAID AFTER THE HOUR-LONG MEETING. REDFIELD SAID THAT ANY STATE OF EMERGENCY MUST INCLUDE BOTH HOSPITALS IN THE TERRITORY. "IN THE FISCAL YEAR '94 BUDGET, THE 20TH LEGISLATURE MUST SHARPEN THEIR PENCILS, AND PUT SOME OF THE LIMITED RESOURCES WE HAVE TO WORK WITH TOWARD OUR PRESSING HEALTH CARE CONCERNS," REDFIELD SAID.

REDFIELD CRITICIZED THE WAY THE FISCAL '93 BUDGET WAS PREPARED, WITH VIRTUALLY NO INPUT FROM NON-ALIGNED SENATORS. "WE'RE ALL IN THIS BOAT TOGETHER, NO MATTER WHAT SIDE OF THE AISLE WE SIT ON. THE LEGISLATURE AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH ARE RAPIDLY LOSING THEIR CREDIBILITY. HOPEFULLY, IT CAN BE RESTORED WITH A SENSITIVE REVIEW OF THE REAL NEEDS OF THE INSTITUTIONS WE FUND, AND THE PEOPLE WE SERVE," REDFIELD CONCLUDED.