



GUYANA NEWS

Norton rejects interpretation of Blinken tweet that opposition must be more constructive



Aubrey Norton



Bharrat Jagdeo

By [Stabroek News](#) July 29, 2023



Opposition Leader Aubrey Norton on Thursday said that the interpretation of a recent tweet by US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, that he must be more constructive is wrong.

During his weekly press conference, Stabroek News questioned Norton about the tweet from Blinken following a meeting between the two. The tweet coming from Blinken stated "While visiting Georgetown, I met with Guyanese opposition leader Aubrey Norton and learned about his vision for Guyana. Constructive opposition is essential to a vibrant and stable democracy."

Asked about some interpreting the tweet as a call for more constructive opposition from him and how he would respond to that, Norton said, that the interpretation is "wrong" adding "You weren't a part of the meeting so you wouldn't understand the vicissitudes of it", he said.

Meanwhile, PPP/C General Secretary, Bharrat Jagdeo at his press conference at Freedom House on Thursday also commented on the tweet stating that "he (Norton) has a big issue about the use of the word constructive cause the US seems to be telling him that you have to now be constructive, you can't be destructive versus constructive."

Jagdeo then pointed out that "these are the same people when the US would put a word called inclusive, would build a whole theory about the word inclusive in any US statement saying that it is a criticism of the Government of Guyana and that the US is telling us to include the opposition, so this is the duplicity of the APNU for you."

Jagdeo, also the Vice President, took the opportunity to highlight that the PPP/C has used the word "inclusive" in their documents and manifesto before the US's statements, noting, "but it just speaks to how sensitive they

are, APNU would be, particularly Norton, thin skin Norton to say he's being directed by the US now to be constructive."

Meanwhile, at his press conference, Norton was also questioned about the Reuters report titled "US Probing Exxon Contractor in Guyana for Smuggling Drugs, Gold" dated July 14, 2023. In response, he said, "As it relates to the Mohamed case, I read the report... I believe anybody who is in breach of law should face the full force of the law but since I do not have the details at my disposal I would say this... the police should investigate and determine whether there is a credible case or not. I am in no position to pronounce whether it is credible or not."

Nazar Mohamed and Azruddin Mohamed issued a statement following the report which they said was defamatory of their characters and reputations.

Norton was also asked whether his party has ever received financing from the Mohameds. However, while he said that under his tenure they have not received financing from the Mohameds, he added that it was also their internal party business. "I am answering you on this occasion but I am not disposed to discussing the party's internal business at these forums", he said.

He continued, "I can say without fear of contradiction that we are not financed by any Mohameds, I don't which Mohameds you are talking about but no Mohamed that I know of contribute to our party."

Further asked whether he would take financing from them in the future, he said, "At present, we have not taken any money from any Mohameds. Who we will take money from in the future is not a question I would want to answer."

Norton then stated that while persons may offer assistance, as a party they would not release this in public "when we know we have a vindictive government that will seek to punish them, take away contracts, etc."

He said he wished not to continue "down that road because of the nature of the political beast we are dealing with."

When Jagdeo was asked the same question, he said: "We may have received but I don't think it is any different or on any scale that is different from anyone else". He said that as General Secretary he is not responsible for collecting money.

"You pay your money at Freedom House and you collect your receipt", he added.

He reiterated that Guyana has not received any notification from the US that the "Mohameds are involved in anything".

Jagdeo added: "We have not asked the Mohammeds for any money and we don't expect them to give us any money, and even if they have given us money in the past it's not a magnitude that is different from any other ordinary people", he said.

"If anyone donates to the PPP with the hope that they can do something illegal and bypass the system or get a free pass, they are sadly mistaken", he declared.

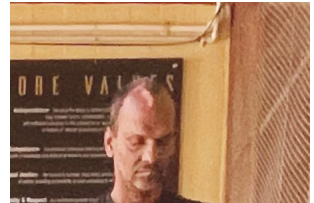


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