



APNU's parliamentary leader is a PNCR member, not foisted on party – Norton

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Dr Terrence Campbell

Leader of A Partnership for National Unity's (APNU) 12 members of parliament (MPs), Terrence Campbell is named a member of the People's National Congress Reform (PNCR), but party leader Aubrey Norton declined to say from when.

He shied away from saying when Dr Campbell or anyone else joined the PNCR because "that don't make sense to me".

Mr Norton also dismissed suggestions in certain quarters that Dr Campbell, a city businessman,

was being imposed on the party as a senior parliamentary functionary although he is a newcomer compared to long-serving members. "When you're making political decisions, you have to look at a number of variables and the persons, who are in the parliamentary group, are comfortable with the leadership of Mr Campbell and we believe, at this stage, as a businessman, he is one of the best persons to choose at this point of time," Mr Norton said.

He added that Dr Campbell has demonstrated commitment to the cause over the period he had been there. "While people believe that Mr Campbell just emerged, I can say this to you clearly (that) for about two years or more, we had been engaging and had had assistance and we assisted as well," he said.

The PNCR leader said the 12 APNU MPs make up a "skillful combination" of six newcomers and six experienced persons.

He said he was well aware of the likelihood of criticisms had an experienced person been chosen to be at the helm of APNU's team in the 65-seat National Assembly.

Back in early 2019, Dr Campbell had pulled out from A New and United Guyana (ANUG) and the civic group Reform, Inform, Sustain, Educate (RISE) both of which he helped form, after calls were made to boycott his fast food business.

The Alliance For Change (AFC) had also floated Dr Campbell's name as a consensus presidential candidate for a joint ticket with APNU. He had also provided what he said was proof that Dr Irfaan Ali had invited him to be his prime ministerial running mate for the 2020 general and regional elections, a claim that the Guyanese leader had rejected.

The PNCR leader indicated that except for the Working People's Alliance's Dr David Hinds, the 11 other APNU MPs are PNCR members. "All the other persons going (to the National Assembly) would have joined the PNC," Mr Norton said.

Mr Norton, meanwhile, attributed the poor performance of the PNCR-led APNU in last month's general elections to bribery of the electorate by an unnamed political party.

We Invest in Nationhood (WIN) won 16 seats, Forward Guyana Movement, 1 and APNU, 12.

The People's Progressive Party Civic (PPPC) retained power with 36 seats, a larger parliamentary majority than in 2020.

Mr Norton opted not to return to the National Assembly but remain as party leader and continue much-needed political work before the PNCR's next internal elections to be decided by the party's central executive and general council.

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