



## Aubrey Norton blames “small crew” for keeping him out

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Aubrey Norton

A Partnership for National Unity's (APNU) candidate, Aubrey Norton on Tuesday blamed a small unnamed clique of Peoples National Congress Reform (PNCR) members for undermining and ostracising him from the centre of that party's leadership.

His comments came against the background that Medical Doctor Karen Cummings was being considered to replace ailing Debra Backer who is expected to resign as an APNU parliamentarian. Backer, APNU's Shadow Minister on Foreign Affairs, is expected to remain in Trinidad until April which means that if she is not replaced the combined opposition would be without the crucial one-seat majority to disapprove sections or all of the 2014 National Budget.

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“When it comes to my ability, I have no doubt about that but I always knew that the present political dispensation will always generate those kinds of problems so I don’t think I will feel any different. I fact, I would have been surprised if I was the person identified,” he told Demerara Waves Online News (www.demwaves.com).

Norton denied assertions by PNCR insiders that he was unlikely to replace ailing Debra Backer because he is regarded as divisive and speaks party business at the street corner. “Under me as General Secretary, the party information never went on the road,” he said, assuring that nothing was ever leaked to the governing Peoples Progressive Party Civic (PPPC).

Asked what his non-selection as an MP meant for his future in politics, he opted to only say that “one day can make a difference and can change things dramatically”.

He hinted that he was being sidelined from the political centre because he had supported Carl Greenidge as the “better” person to become PNCR leader instead of incumbent David Granger.

Despite the political outcomes, Norton said he has always worked in the best interest of the party. “However, there is nothing that I have been asked to do by the party after that that I didn’t do and do it to the best of my ability,” he said. He added that although he had supported Greenidge, he had put aside his differences and campaigned heavily in Linden for APNU.

Norton, who has previously served as a parliamentarian, was not selected to sit in the House after the November 2011 General and Regional Election.

Denying that he has ever been involved in anything immoral or illegal, the former PNC General Secretary blamed a “small crew” in the party- APNU’s largest constituent- for his political misfortunes in recent years. “I find it strange that some in the party will allow that little group to do the things they do which are destructive to the party. They are very divisive in addition to which their performance in the party is questionable,” he said.

He claimed that he has evidence to support his contention that persons were allegedly involved in party fraud and framed him with death threats and sexual misconduct. Members of the PNCR hierarchy, he suggested, preferred to encircle themselves with people who were unprincipled and preferred to tell them what they wanted to hear rather than the truth.

The former University of Guyana Political Science lecturer rejected suggestions that then party leader Desmond Hoyte booting him out as PNCR General Secretary because he had allegedly peddled internal party affairs in public. Norton said he had arrived at some conclusions but Hoyte never explained his decision.

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