

STATEMENT ON THE SPEAKER'S SENTENCING
MP Ezzard Miller
Elected Representative for North Side
December 22, 2020

The following statement has been issued by MP Ezzard Miller in connection with the sentencing of the Speaker of the Cayman Islands Parliament in Magistrate's Court on Monday (December 21, 2020):

"Given (i) the provisions of the Cayman Islands Penal Code, under which a person convicted for offences such as 'common assault' and 'assault causing bodily harm' is liable for imprisonment, respectively, for one year (section #215) and for five years (section #216),

and (ii) the Speaker's original plea of "not guilty", with a guilty plea not forthcoming until all of six months later,

the sentence handed down by the Magistrate is, to say the least, disappointing.

Equally disappointing is the statement attributed to the Hon. Premier on CNS: 'I am not sure that the country will be well served now by my taking action which precipitates the collapse of the Government and the holding of early elections.'

I take strong issue with this position of the Premier from a number of points of view; further, I do not think that his stated prediction on the end results necessarily obtains:

Currently there are eleven members on the Government bench and seven members on the Opposition bench (five in the Official Opposition).

If the Speaker is removed, even if fellow West Bay representative MP Capt. Eugene Ebanks does opt to "cross the aisle" to join him, there will still be ten on the Government bench.

Further, eight Members cannot bring down the Government—I have told the Premier privately, said so publicly, and now reiterate that I would not join Members in a vote to remove the Government.

Nevertheless, I remain firmly committed to the view that we must as a matter of urgency set about repairing the breach created by the reprehensible actions and consequent conviction of the Speaker and that now further threatens to damage our Islands' reputation locally and internationally.

I therefore appeal to the Hon. Premier and the others in the Unity Government to please do the right thing for Caymanians and Cayman and to publicly ask the Speaker to resign by December 24, 2020.

In the event that the Speaker does not comply, the Premier should exercise the option of convening a Special Meeting of Parliament to remove the Speaker and to have him replaced with a someone other than a currently serving Member of Parliament.

Considering all the circumstances, I urge that this meeting be convened on the first working day of the new year (January 4, 2021).

I consider this a matter of greatest priority and importance for maintaining the moral rectitude of one of our three branches of the Cayman Islands Government.

We must maintain the values for civility, integrity and respect for our laws and rules for which our governing institutions and the Cayman Islands have always so proudly stood and exemplified."