

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

It has been 40 years since that historic day on Clifford Park when the Instruments of Independence were handed to Prime Minister Sir Lynden Pindling, when the aquamarine, black and gold flag was hoisted at Clifford Park, and when Timothy Gibson's melodious "Lift Up Your Head to the Rising Sun Bahamaland" wafted over the assembled crowd.

Wherever Bahamians are in the world at this time, their heads are lifted up and looking toward the rising sun. This is an opportune time for Bahamians abroad, their descendants and the many friends of The Bahamas to come together, to unite in solidarity and to enjoy the kind of camaraderie that these independence celebrations bring.

This year as we celebrate the dramatic events of 10 July 1973 when we became an independent state among the nations of the world, we ponder the themes "Bridge to the Future" and "The Journey Continues". Most of those who assumed the reins of leadership at that time have passed on. But others have crossed the bridge of the generations to take over and yet others wait to continue to lead us on our national journey.

Joan and I extend our very best wishes to Bahamians living, working and studying abroad -- in the Americas, in Europe and in Asia -- and to the many friends of the Bahamas around the world. I take this opportunity to express on behalf of the nation sincere gratitude to those who serve their country abroad in our diplomatic, consular and tourist offices.

We trust that you will enjoy the same spirit of exuberant pride and confidence in our future with which we at home will celebrate this anniversary. May God bless you all and may God continue to bless the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Sir Arthur Foulkes
Governor-General