



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

This year The Bahamas marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Independence. This is an important milestone in our journey as a people. It is therefore fitting that we should celebrate this achievement, giving thanks to God for having brought us this far, while at the same time re-committing ourselves to the many challenges that confront our future progress. It is, after all, the future that lies before. It is to the future, therefore, that we need to direct our focus and order our steps.

The theme for the 40th Anniversary celebrations is “The Bridge to the Future... The Journey Continues”. This encapsulates the overarching message that much remains to be done by this and future generations of Bahamians if we are to honour the legacy of our forbears.

There is a continuum at work here, one that connects time past with time present and future. Those who came before us, the progenitors of our nationhood and of the modern Bahamas, rose up to meet the challenges of their times, just as we, and those who will follow us, must rise up to meet the challenges of our own times. Such is the call of destiny that each and every generation of Bahamians must answer.

Accordingly, in observing our 40th Anniversary as a nation, we pay special homage to the tenacity of purpose and clarity of vision of our forefathers, especially those who laid the foundations for the sovereignty that we have enjoyed these past 40 years. We draw inspiration from the example of their unwavering love and loyalty to our country and its people. At the same time, however, we recognize that we must harness our own patriotism, our own belief in ourselves, our own intellectual resources, our own sense of optimism and of destiny, to the journey that must now continue in our common quest for a better and brighter tomorrow.

Now, perhaps more than ever, Timothy Gibson's words, the words of our National Anthem, need to resonate deep within us:

"...Pledge to excel through love and unity.  
Pressing onwards, march together  
to a common loftier goal..."

This anniversary, therefore, is not simply a commemorative celebration of a seminal event in Bahamian history. Indeed it is not a single event, nor a single day that we celebrate. Rather, the enduring significance of July 10th is that it summons us all each year to come together in unity to find common cause and purpose as we renew our collective determination to make The Bahamas the best little country on earth.

But this is not only a collective effort. Each of us, as individual members of our society, must also develop a greater spirit of service and volunteerism to ensure our success as a nation. Each of us needs to play his or her part in a way that will help relieve the suffering and distress that too many of our people still endure. This is not the responsibility of the government alone. It is a challenge that each of us must individually meet if we are to give full expression to our love for country. Each of us can help someone else in some positive way at an inter-personal life, and each of us must do so.

On this 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence, I therefore exhort all my fellow citizens to continue our noble journey as "one people united in love and service."

Together we are going to make the next 40 years better than the 40 years we have just come through. I believe in our future, I believe in us, and I know you do too.

I wish you all a blessed and happy 40th Independence!

May Almighty God continue to bless and guide the Commonwealth of The Bahamas -  
OUR nation!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Perry G. Christie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Perry G. Christie  
Prime Minister