



Office of the
Prime Minister

REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL HONOURS INVESTITURE, 2022

**PRIME MINISTER HON. PHILIP E. DAVIS KC, MP
CONVENTION CENTER
BAHA MAR RESORT
CABLE BEACH**

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On behalf of the government and people of the Bahamas, I have accepted this invitation from the Governor General to pay special tribute to the recipients of the 2022 **National Honours** during this series of investiture ceremonies. I am indeed humbled and grateful to bring remarks on this most auspicious occasion as we celebrate these outstanding Bahamians whose work and contributions to National Development have helped shape The Bahamas.

Each of these honourees has a unique and important story that is interwoven in the

fabric of our history—of who we are. It is in peering into the past that we recognize our own strength and draw courage to press forward into an ever-uncertain future.

Our story is the story of Pompey, an enslaved man, who in 1830 rallied his fellow men in a valorous display against an oppressive power.

Thirty-nine lashes and one hundred and ninety-two years later, we sit here, free, and sovereign.

When we set forth to define who we are, we think of the thousands of Bahamian women

and men who stormed down Burma road on June 1st 1942 demanding fair and equal pay.

When we make account to our children, we

must tell them about Sir Lynden Pinding's

audacious feat on April 15th 1965, when he

flung the mace out of the Parliament House

window in protest against gerrymandering.

Our story lies in the legacy of Dame Doris

Johnson who boldly refused to "know a

woman's place." With an unshrinking petition

to parliament, and an unmatched persistence,

she, and the members of the Suffragette

movement singlehandedly brought the Bahamas into a new age of gender politics.

Our story is the story of Robert Love, Sir Randol Fawkes, Stephen Dillet, Dame Ivy Dumont, Janet Bostwick, Sadie Curtis, Keva Bethel, Cleveland Eneas, Kimbo Slice, Tony Mckay, Joseph Spence, Amos Ferguson, Thelma Gibson, Sister Annie Thompson, and Anatol Rodgers.

These are our heroes. These two-hundred Bahamians honoured today represent but a small fraction of those who've lent their strength to the building of this great nation.

These women and men truly embody the good, the righteous, and the worthy. Some of them, like the four brave Marines who lost their lives working in defense of the fledgling Bahamas forty-two years ago, serve as enduring reminders of the courage, tenacity and fortitude that make a hero. These honourees stand as stalwart pillars of our community—and today, we lift them up in the highest gesture of gratitude.

Our honourees today include leaders across the swath of public profession: from business, to tourism, healthcare, public administration,

and politics. Some of them affect social change through public community and social advocacy, while others work quietly, changing lives one person at a time. What they all have in common however, is a staunch commitment to positive action and a selfless attitude in pursuit of better.

I applaud the fine work of the National Honours Committee who've done a remarkable job identifying these local heroines and heroes. While this list is certainly not exhaustive, its chosen represent us at our best.

I extend heartfelt thanks to the award recipients whose leadership and example set a firm foundational standard for us all. It is you, our heroes, who use your God-given talents to boldly tackle the challenges we face as a country, and work tirelessly in the interest of ALL.

It is the work, legacy, and sacrifice of these honourees that strengthens our democracy, advances our charge to a better, brighter future, and helps deepen our resolve to be more than we'd ever dreamed possible.

Ladies and gentlemen, at this point, I must recognize the efforts of our Foreign Minister, the Hon. Fred Mitchell, Loretta Butler Turner, Freddie Munnings, Father Sebastian Campbell, Athama Bowe, the late Terence Bethel, and all those whose efforts were indispensable in making this event possible.

In the same vein, I commend the honours committee in San Salvador who organized and executed the Wall of Honour ceremony and banquet this past weekend. This, we should replicate across the Bahamas.

My government is grateful for their leadership, vision, and hard work.

I believe that we all must continue to work together to build a national culture that celebrates and memorializes outstanding Bahamians. It is this culture of elevating goodness that stands to set the tone for a history written in "positive tense."

While the work already done has been remarkable, we have a long way to go yet.

The establishment of Heroes Park has not yet been fully realized and we must make fervent efforts to document the lives and legacies of

our heroes. Our children need to know who they are. Our children must know who WE are.

Let us leave here knowing that the example has already been set.

May God continue to bless you all, and favour the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.