

Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Independence Message 2015

The Rt. Hon. Perry Christie

Prime Minister of the Bahamas

on the 42nd Anniversary of Independence

10 July 2015

I extend congratulations and best wishes to all my fellow citizens of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas on this, the 42nd Anniversary of the Independence of our great nation. I do so reflecting on the heroic struggles and sacrifices of the men and women who committed themselves to the ideals of Independence and made it a reality. It is also worth reflecting on the "post-independence" generation, those citizens who have lived in a free and independent nation over the course of the past 42 years and who by their exemplary commitment to the common good have given renewed meaning to the ideals of Independence and national sovereignty.

Today, 42 years on, we fix our gaze on our children, our grandchildren, our future. In doing so, we inevitably ask what our country will be like in 42 years from now. Hopefully, it will still be a nation committed to the virtues of tolerance and mutual respect of our diversity; a nation of patriotic pride and common endeavour; and above, a nation still striving to become the best little country in the world.

Whether such hopes are realized will depend on how well Bahamians, especially our youth, remain committed to the timeless values of hard work, loyalty to country, and respect for one another. This is not a task that can be assigned to our educational system alone. It must be led by parents, by guardians and mentors, by religious and community leaders.

So, as Bahamians all across our archipelago come together to celebrate our 42nd anniversary as an independent nation, I urge you to become ever more personally committed to the task of nation-building, one citizen at a time. There is no one else in the world who can do this for us. We must do it ourselves. That's what Independence is all about. That's what mastering our own destiny really means.

Happy Independence, Bahamas!