



REMARKS

**The Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis
Prime Minister
Commonwealth of the Bahamas**

2020 National Honours

Government House

19 November 2020

9:30 A.M.

Your Excellency:

I thank you and the staff of Government House for your hospitality.

Ordinarily, the annual National Honors ceremony would merit a larger celebration.

But, we are not living in ordinary times.

We find ourselves in an unprecedented time in the contemporary Bahamas.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the deaths or ill-health of millions around the world, including the deaths and infection of a number of our fellow citizens.

The pandemic has caused unprecedented economic and social distress and dislocation.

Yet, in the midst of the pandemic, it is good that we are here today to acknowledge and to celebrate noteworthy Bahamians who have given exceptional service and

contributed significantly to national development.

Because of the pandemic, today's ceremony is necessarily brief and considerably smaller, with various health measures utilized to safeguard attendees.

Your Excellency:

The Father of Labour, Sir Randol Fawkes, who is posthumously being honored as a member of the Order of National Hero, once noted:

“Once I had found my people, I could have no peace of mind until I had become a part of their struggle and transmitted their heritage to future generations.”

Sir Randol’s words, which was a part of his life mission, represents the courage and dedication to country of the other men and women we honour this morning.

Today, we honour, posthumously, as
Companions of the Order of the Bahamas:
The Hon. Paul Adderley and Sir Alvin
Braynen.

We also honour, the Hon. John Henry
Bostwick, QC., who is still happily with us.

Like Sir Randol, Messrs. Adderley,
Braynen and Bostwick lent their
considerable talents, patriotic vigor and

lifeblood to the liberation and development of the Bahamian people.

Each, in his own way, was involved in the political and social struggle for equality and the advancement of a sovereign and free people.

They were among that generation of Bahamians who gave fully of themselves in the promotion of the dignity of all

Bahamians, regardless of creed or circumstance of birth.

They did not simply debate the big questions of the day from the sidelines.

They were not armchair critics who refused the call of history to make a difference and to make a vital contribution.

All of these men read history and made history.

These fine Bahamians entered the arena and helped to entrench a vibrant parliamentary democracy and two-party system, which are among the pillars of our democratic heritage.

As political leaders, as parliamentarians, as attorneys and as citizens, they recognized that the rule of law is at the heart of a vibrant democracy that protects the rights of all.

Your Excellency:

Democratic institutions, conventions and norms must be renewed in each generation.

We are most fortunate that Sir Randol, the Hon. Paul Adderley, Sir Alvin Braynen and the Hon. J. Henry Bostwick helped to secure democracy and the rule of law in our Bahamas.

Our greatest tribute to them is to follow their example in this and successive generations by safeguarding and upholding democratic values and norms.

Your Excellency:

Today, we also honor three new Officers as members of The Order of The Bahamas: The Hon. Justice Claire Hepburn, the Hon. Justice Jeanne Thompson and the Hon. Justice Rhonda Bain.

We honor them as jurists and as women of integrity.

We also honor them for their varied contributions to national life.

Not so long ago, indeed during many of our lifetimes, there were few Bahamians as Judges of the Supreme Court.

Few women served as Supreme Court Justices.

It is worth celebrating and noteworthy that the Hon. Justices Hepburn, Thompson and Bain exemplify the quality of Bahamian jurists who have populated the Courts in an independent Bahamas.

Your Excellency:

I also note the three other honorees.

Awarded The Order of Excellence, is His Excellency Frank Crothers.

Awarded The Order of Distinction, is Dr. David Allen.

And awarded The Order of Merit is, Mrs.
Roselda Woodside.

These three individuals have each given a lifetime of service to The Bahamas in their respective fields of endeavor and through community service in general.

I thank them for their service and their contributions.

On behalf of the Bahamian people and on behalf of the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, I thank all of the honourees for their service and love of country, which represents the best of the Bahamian spirit.

Your Excellency:

I once again thank you and your staff for your graciousness and hospitality.

I ask God's continued blessings on our Bahamas and all of those who continue to serve on the frontlines of our COVID-19 response.

Thank you and good morning.