



BRIEF REMARKS

by

**THE HONOURABLE T. DESMOND BANNISTER, M.P.,
MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

on the occasion of:

Omega College's Commencement
Exercises

at

**The Paul Farquharson Centre
Police Headquarters, East Street
Nassau, The Bahamas
7:00 p.m.**

24th, June 2010

Salutations:

1. Permanent Secretary – Mrs. Elma Garraway

2. Reverend Noel Clarke – Priest, St. Bede's Catholic Church

3. Dr. Hazel Jupp – President of Omega College
4. Dr. Gregory Chan – Provost, Chief Academic Officer and Professor –St. Thomas University (STU)
5. Dr. Seok Ho Song – Associate Professor of Business, Chairperson of Dept. of Management Studies (STU)
6. Dr. Hilroy Thomas –Asst. Dean of the Institute for Leadership Studies, and Professor (STU)

7. Mr. Ian Jupp – Director of Omega College

8. Reverend Beryl Higgs – Lecturer of Business Management Studies

9. All other Executive Officers of Omega College

10. Graduates
11. Ladies & Gentlemen

Good Evening!

“The fireworks begin today. Each diploma is a lighted match. Each one of you is a fuse.” These words belong to former United States Congressman, Edward Koch.

This evening, I am delighted to join the **Omega College** family, as you celebrate your **Eighth Commencement Exercises** for the year **2010**. Graduands, thirty four (34) of you have made a great investment in your future, and now that you have completed your programmes of study in the areas of Business and Elementary Studies, you have opened many doors of opportunity for yourselves. With the knowledge and skills you have gained, we expect that you would make positive contributions not only in your chosen fields, but also to your country. Indeed, you may consider yourselves wealthier, having earned a degree from the prestigious Omega College.

Recognized as one of our leading institutions of learning, Omega College was born out of the Benedictine University College which closed its doors in 2000. To avoid the tragedy of students who were studying at the time, not being able to complete their degrees, Dr. Hazel Jupp, an administrator of the former Benedictine University College, began

discussions with faculty members, which led to the college being reopened under the new name, ***Omega Educational Institute***. Later, in 2003 the name was changed to **Omega College**, which more adequately reflected the mission and educational performance of the college. The college continues to maintain its outstanding reputation, having bestowed through the years, certificates, diplomas, and Associates and Bachelors degrees that are of a high quality. Since its opening, Omega College has thrived and owes its success in part, to its unwavering commitment to high standards as its motto dictates: ***“In Omnibus Excellentia et Qualitas- Excellence and Quality in All Things.”***

We, at the Ministry of Education are aware that behind the success of Omega College’s students are the great minds of the Board of Directors and faculty who comprise graduates of top universities. Through these nation builders, the students are exposed to current theories and practices, making their knowledge both relevant and superior. In addition to this, students are provided opportunities for personal and professional growth in a diverse learning environment. I applaud the leadership of the college for its good work and encourage you to continue to *“provide the*

best educational, training, and developmental opportunities for personal and professional growth.”

I am very proud of the young men and women who sit before me this evening, some of whom are teachers, bankers, and government workers who have studied on a part time and full time basis. There are thirty four (34) of you graduating today, under the theme: ***Forward through Education: Embracing Infinite Possibilities.***” This serves as excellent advice because it encourages you to use the vehicle of education as a means of forward progression. No doubt this moment would have arrived after much sacrifice, long nights of studying, and many days of trying to find a balance between work and study. I am told that there is a married lady in this group who is currently undergoing cancer treatment but whose perseverance to achieve her degree which has been a lifelong goal has brought her to this point. I am told also that there is a gentleman who after educating all his children has decided to return to school after thirty (30) years to complete his degree and graduated at the top of his class. You have all persevered and will now be the proud recipients of: **Associate of Arts Degrees** in Business Administration, and **Bachelor of Arts Degrees** in Business

Management, Business Administration, and Elementary Education.

While the degrees you have earned are worthwhile, we want you to think about how you are going to use them. American activist for the rights of children, Marian Wright Edleman, once said, ***“Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it.”*** This, then, puts a greater responsibility on you to work diligently towards ensuring the advancement of our country through education. We expect you to:

- join the ranks of the creative thinkers;
- question and challenge old ideas;
- initiate new and relevant programmes;
- constantly evaluate;
- improve the products and services that we offer in our country;
- remain life-long learners; and to
- work towards finding solutions to our nation’s problems.

Once again, I commend Omega College for the fantastic job it continues to do under the leadership of Dr. Hazel Jupp. All other stakeholders who partner with us in the initiative to

build our citizens through education are commended also. We encourage business and civic organizations and all others to share their ideas with us and join us in the transformation of our educational system and of our country.

Graduates, you have done an outstanding job, but it is important to remember that you did not arrive at this point all by yourselves. Please remember to show your gratitude to those who would have supported you in your educational journey, for in so doing, you give back in a positive way. As you go out into the world of work, or perhaps further study, remember also to represent Omega College well. Speak positively of the college and allow your education to propel you to higher heights. In closing, I encourage you to heed the words of United States Senator, Orin Hatch, who said, ***“There is good reason they call these ceremonies commencement exercises. Graduation is not the end; it’s the beginning.”***

Thank you.