

September 3rd, 2012
Address by the Hon. Kenred Dorsett, Minister for The
Environment
Petroleum Pilot Project
Freeport, Grand Bahama

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen

It is good to be back in our nation's second city. It is always a pleasure for me to come here.

I would like to begin by thanking those responsible for the kind invitation extended to me to be here with you on this occasion. I count it a privilege to be in the position that I am in at this moment.

As you all are or should be aware, this government during the last general election campaign ran on the theme 'Believe in The Bahamas'. We thought that the time had come for Bahamians to be able to take full advantage of all the opportunities that are available in our country and use those opportunities to empower not only themselves, but their families and by extension, their communities. We thought that the time had come for more Bahamians to be fully engaged in the big business that takes place right here in our little archipelago on a daily basis. We wanted to make sure that Bahamians of today and tomorrow were prepared for this challenge through training and education. Which is why we proposed to double the nation's investment in education and training.

While this government has pledged to and will do its best to make its promises a reality, it is gratifying when corporate entities in the country such as BORCO and Statoil lend a hand in the empowerment of our people, especially our young people, through the implementation of such programmes as this one. It is for our young people that we work tirelessly to make life a little better and a little easier, so that when the day comes for them to receive the baton and take their places as productive citizens of this nation they will have all that is necessary to do so successfully. They are the ones for whom it is imperative that we do our endeavour best today to make sure the road ahead is smoother.

The institution of the Petroleum Products & Measurement Pilot Programme and programmes like it falls in line with what the current government of The Bahamas wishes to do for young Bahamians. And that is to prepare them for the jobs of the future by providing them with marketable skills and education. This programme as I understand it will equip its participants with basic knowledge of the petroleum industry. It will include various topics among which are containment, shipment, the basic chemistry of petroleum and safety. The students in this programme will have lectures and field trips to the plants of BORCO and Statoil. This is a great opportunity that has been afforded to our young people, especially as the question of oil exploration in The Bahamas looms. As we collectively decide whether or not to explore for oil in The Bahamas, should it happen the knowledge gained from such a programme as this one will be even more beneficial to the participants.

We all know that the petroleum industry has been very lucrative to countries in the world and can provide those with the knowledge and training with very gainful employment. It is an industry that the Bahamas is engaged in through companies like BORCO and Statoil, two of the largest in the region. These companies that are involved in spearheading this programme should be commended for this display of commitment to community through the education of the people. I hope that this programme becomes a long lasting tradition and is hopefully expanded in the years to come, so that many others in the country will be able to take part and benefit from it.

To the parents and students assembled here. I must admonish you to take full advantage of what this and other programmes like it have to offer. You are the first to have this opportunity, which makes you a very privileged set to be able to be here as the inaugural students of this programme and you must make sure that the providers of this opportunity are inclined to extend the same courtesy to others after you. You never know where you will end up, some of you here may want to further your education in subjects related to petroleum because of what you will learn here, some of you may be able to find entry level positions because of the knowledge that you gain here

and others still may end up running or owning companies like BORCO and Statoil one day. It is possible, for all things are possible.

To the the management and staff of BORCO and Statoil, I would like to commend you on this effort. It is an admirable venture and I hope that more companies would follow your example. Hopefully in the near future I will receive word of the Launch of the expansion of this programme and will gladly attend that ceremony as well.

I thank you for your kind indulgence and wish you and the students of this programme every success.