HIS EXCELLENCY SIR ORVILLE TURNQUEST, G.C.M.G., Q.C.,

Former Governor General
Of
The Commonwealth of The Bahamas

His Excellency Sir Orville Turnquest, G.C.M.G., Q.C., was sworn in as the fifth Governor-General of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas on January 3, 1995, succeeding His Excellency Sir Clifford Darling. His Excellency Sir Orville Turnquest departed office November 13, 2001.

Upon assumption of the Office of Governor-General, Sir Orville was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

A former Deputy Prime Minister, Attorney-General and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Free National Movement government, Sir Orville Turnquest also has had an illustrious career as a barrister-at-law and counsel and attorney.

He became Deputy Prime Minister, Attorney-General and Minister of Foreign Affairs on September 1, 1993, having served as Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs since August 21, 1992.

He was born in Grants Town, New Providence, on July 19, 1929, to the late Robert and Gwendolyn Turnquest.

Having obtained the Cambridge Junior Certificate, Cambridge Senior Certificate and London Matriculation Certificate at the Government High School between 1942 and 1945, he was an articled law student in the chambers of the late Hon. A. F. Adderley from 1947 to 1953. Sir Orville Turnquest was called to The Bahamas Bar on June 26, 1953. [He was called to the Inner Bar in January 1993.] He earned a Bachelor of laws degree with honours at the University of London between 1957 and 1960, and was admitted to the English Bar in July, 1960, after successfully writing his Bar Examinations as a member of Lincoln's Inn, London.

In private practice since 1953 as counsel and attorney and notary public, Sir Orville was a senior partner in the law firm of Dupuch and Turnquest prior to his becoming a Cabinet Minister. He acted as Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate and coroner in 1959, and served as President of The Bahamas Bar Association and Chairman of The Bahamas Bar Council between 1970 and 1972. He is a former part-time lecturer in law at The Bahamas Extra-mural Department of the University of the West Indies and a member of The Bahamas Law Revision Committee. He was a law tutor and a member of the Examining Board for admission to The Bahamas Bar from 1965 until his ministerial appointment.

Sir Orville also served as Secretary-General of the Progressive Liberal Party from 1960 until 1962 and served as a Member of Parliament for the South Central Constituency of New Providence from 1962 until 1967 as a representative of the Progressive Liberal Party. He was Opposition Leader in the Senate from 1972 to 1979, appointed Deputy Leader of the Free National Movement in 1987 and also served as Chairman and Treasurer of the latter Party. In the General Election in June 1982, he won the Montague seat and retained the seat in the following two general elections.

He was a delegate at The Bahamas Constitutional Conferences in London, England, in 1963 and 1972, He was also a Bahamian delegate at a conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) in New Delhi in 1976, and an observer at a 1983 CPA Conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

Sir Orville Turnquest is Chancellor of the Diocese of Nassau and The Bahamas, including the Turks and Caicos Islands, and serves on several executive bodies of the Anglican Church. He is a member of the Anglican Central Education Authority, the Bahamas National Committee of United World Colleges, and the boards of governors of St. John's College and St. Anne's High School.

Sir Orville is a Past Exalted Ruler of the Elks Lodge and a former member of the Airports Board.

Sir Orville Turnquest married Edith Louise Thompson on February 19, 1955. They have two daughters and a son—Caryl Antoinette Eileen Lashley, a barrister-at-law; Michele Cecile Edith Fields, a chartered accountant; and Orville Alton Thompson Turnquest, a bank officer who won the Mount Moriah House of Assembly seat in the August 19, 1992, general election and served as a Cabinet Minister.