

## **SPEECH AT POLICE ACADEMY GRADUATION CLASS OF 2015-1**

Good Morning Honorable Kenneth Mapp, Governor of the Virgin Islands, Honorable Osbert Potter, Lieutenant Governor of the Virgin Islands, Honorable Denise Francois, Judge of the Virgin Islands Superior Court, Senators of the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislature, Delroy Richards, Police Commissioner, other Commissioners and Agency Heads, Daren Foy, St. Thomas-St. John Chief of Police, Gleston McIntosh, Director of Training, other officials of the Police Department, Reverend Bentley Thomas, family and friends of the graduates, ladies and gentlemen and most importantly member of the Class of 2015-1. It is indeed a privilege and an honor to stand before you today. First and foremost, I want to thank each and every one of you for your service and sacrifice as you answer the call and undertake this most strenuous but noble path of law enforcement. Your motto “Soaring high above, striving to achieve, reaching for the stars”, speaks volumes of what is expected of you. You are to stand below no one and achieve your fullest potential. The seven months of training that you have received were intense, grueling, arduous, exhausting but of a very high caliber. It is perhaps one of the best, if not longest, in the nation, and it was all to prepare you for the road ahead. Your leaders and trainers gave their best so that you could become capable, unsurpassed and excellent members of the law enforcement community. You had physical training, classroom instruction, simulations and practice sessions all with the goal of preparing you to be the best and to do the increasingly difficult but utterly

essential job of enforcing all laws of the Virgin Islands. You have learned, fought, sweat, and bled throughout your training. You have been pushed, mentally and physically, you have been challenged to the brink of your limits and beyond time and time again. Yet here you are, triumphant and ready. We all need you to be outstanding, to work hard and to demonstrate great integrity in the execution of your duties. Our islands and our people deserve no less.

I would now like to take a few moments to speak on the importance of integrity, honesty and hard work and how far they can take you. Almost 40 years ago, before many of you were a twinkle in your parent's eyes, I was fresh out of college, starting my first job as an internal revenue agent with the VI Bureau of Internal Revenue. Within four years I moved up the ranks to be a senior agent, always liking the challenge of doing more complex tax audits, matching my wits with CPA's and attorneys. I was recruited and transferred in 1984 to the VI Bureau of Audit and Control as a Supervisory Auditor, shortly after being promoted to an Audit Manager. Then in 1989, Governor Alexander Farrelly, impressed with my presentation at a meeting and my reputation for hard and dedicated work, was convinced enough to ask me to be the first Inspector General of the Virgin Islands. March of this year will be my 27<sup>th</sup> year as the Virgin Islands Inspector General. I have been appointed or reappointed by four Governors. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> Administration that I am serving. I am in this position in no small measure, due to the uncompromising adherence to moral and ethical principals instilled in me by

my parents – yes my integrity. I am not trying to toot my own horn, but I say this to say that this is just the beginning for you! You are going to be challenged, you are going to be tempted, you are going find yourselves in very difficult situations, I implore you to always remember your duty to your people, your home. Never, ever compromise your integrity, for if you lose it, it will be very difficult if not impossible to restore. I look at each of you and I see all the potential in the world. I see future Chiefs, Commissioners, Wardens, Directors, Captains, Lieutenants, and Sergeants. In short, Class of 2015-1, I see excellence and the potential to succeed. As you strive to achieve, ladies and gentlemen, always remember to do your very best, work hard, and consistently maintain your integrity and honesty.

In closing, these are troubling times we currently find ourselves in. Life is full of many challenges and the world we live in is far from perfect. But I have the utmost faith in you Class of 2015-1. I believe that you will make this community a better and safer place, and that you will be shining examples of professionalism. I believe that we can depend on you, and I believe that you will make us all proud. Always give your best, work hard, demonstrate integrity in all that you do and you too will be “soaring high above, striving to achieve, reaching for the stars”. We are all counting on you. Congratulations! Be safe out there and God bless you all!

Thank You.