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INTERNAL AFFAIRS = AFFAIRES INTERNES

B) Options and Implications

(1) Association with Canada

The disadvantages considered in the reviews of 1974 and 1980 and described in this paper remain valid. In addition, any move to enter into a form of political or economic association with the Turks and Caicos today would undermine seriously the intent of Canada's new policy directions towards the Caribbean as a whole. Our efforts to promote regional integration and cooperation would be compromised, our acceptability as a "non-Imperialist" interlocutor in the developed world diminished, and our bilateral relations with key states, in particular Jamaica and the Bahamas, would be strained. Cuba and the Soviet Union would be given grounds for claiming that Canada was engaged in neo-colonial activities, and our reputation in the United Nations would be affected.

(2) Retention of Dependent Territory Status

The special problem facing the Turks and Caicos Islands by virtue of their isolation, small size, limited resources and lack of infrastructure will continue to ensure the dependency of the islands on some form of external assistance. The current relationship with the United Kingdom, EXEMPT S. 15(U) does guarantee the viability of the Territory. The government of the Turks and Caicos wishes to retain the islands' dependent status for the present while arranging for greater self-government and an intensified programme of aid to accelerate the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Territory. The United Kingdom would be happy to see the Turks and Caicos independent and has linked the granting of more internal self-government to a movement to early independence. However, the United Kingdom has indicated that the choice between maintaining the status quo or proceeding via internal self-government to independence is for the inhabitants of the Turks and Caicos to make. Although this option is short-term, it is one supportive of stability and Canada's security interests.

(3) Independence

EXEMPT S. 15(U)