

DECLASSIFIED = UNCLASSIFIED

INTERNAL AFFAIRS CONFIDENTIAL/INTERIEURSCANADA AND THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDSI. OBJECT

The purpose of this paper is to describe geographic, political, economic and social conditions in the Turks and Caicos Islands; to define Canada's interests; to review and update the background to the question of association between the Turks and Caicos and Canada; and to suggest policy guidelines to govern Canada's relations with this British dependency.

II. PROFILE OF THE AREA

The Turks and Caicos Islands are a British dependency consisting of some 30 islands situated at the southeastern extremity of the Bahamas chain (see attached map). The population of close to 9,000 is distributed among six of the islands, which are low, flat and barren, with bushes and stunted trees their only vegetation. Of this total population, slightly over 2000 are estimated to be Haitians, 600 of whom are illegal residents.

A) The Internal Dimension

Until 1962, the Turks and Caicos Islands were a dependency of Jamaica. Following the attainment of independence by Jamaica in 1962, the Territory became a direct Crown Colony. In 1965, a constitutional amendment came into effect by virtue of which the Governor of the Bahama Islands also became Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands. In 1973, in view of the imminent attainment of independence by the Bahamas, the constitution was amended to provide for a separate post of Governor of the Territory. Government is currently conducted under a ministerial system with an eleven-member House. The constitution provides for control by the United Kingdom of External Affairs, Defence, Internal Security and appointments to the Public Service.

In a general election held under United Nations observation on May 29, 1984 the Progressive National Party (PNP), [EXEMPT S. 15(1)] was re-elected with the same majority of 8 seats against 3 for the opposition People's Democratic Movement (PDM). In March of 1985, the Chief Minister, Mr. Saunders,