

The Turks & Caicos Islands

Canada's 11th Province?

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT



PETER GOLDRING

Over 100 years ago Canada's maritime provinces were engaged in major shipping of trade and export goods throughout the Caribbean region but since have lost much of their influence and markets. It is time to renew this trade and shipping relationship with the Caribbean region. A direct political union of the countries of the Turks & Caicos Islands with Canada would provide the authority and vehicle to do so for the benefit of both. The following is an article written by Peter Goldring and published in the Montreal Gazette in August 2003.

Check it out on his web site www.aplaceinthesun.ca.

I'm giving my full support to help drive this wonderful idea to a successful conclusion. Canada's founding fathers did not falter in their vision of a country of many diverse regions united together for peace and prosperity to the benefit of all. Why should we?

Like many Canadians, I recall my enthusiasm for a great idea proposed about 20 years ago for the colony of the Turks and Caicos Islands to join with Canada. A good idea? You bet! It just makes good business sense for Canada to take advantage of a willing marketplace to expand into that will benefit the people of both countries. Many others thought so and also wondered why the union didn't happen.

Richard Pearson of Ottawa is once again promoting the idea that the Turks and Caicos Islands become part of Canada.



Scene of Providenciales

I'm not at all surprised at the overwhelming positive response in Canada because most of us would very much like to have a Canadian "place in the sun" year round. At the same time, residents of the Turks and Caicos, who were 90 per cent in favour of a union 20 years ago, are still very favourable to the idea. I had encouraging discussions with several people in the Turks and Caicos, and intend to visit the islands this December to talk directly with the people and their government.

The capital of the Turks and Caicos,



Cockburn Town, is about 150 kilometres north of the Dominican Republic and about 3,000 kilometres south of Ottawa, approximately the same distance west from Ottawa to where I live in Edmonton.

The Turks and Caicos have historically been in protectorate relationships. The Islands, inhabited by aboriginals, were first settled by Europeans in 1678, when the British arrived to establish a salt-panning industry. From 1848 to 1873, the Turks and Caicos were a non-aligned British colony, Then, for nearly a century, from 1874 to 1962, the Turks and Caicos were governed by Jamaica. When Jamaica gained its independence in 1962, the Turks and Caicos once again became a non-aligned British colony.



Provo Island School

primary industries are tourism, fishing, (mainly lobster and conch) and offshore banking.

The possible benefits for both countries are numerous and very exciting. **The benefits include for the people of the Turks and Caicos:**

- A greatly expanded economy
- Lower-cost goods and services
- Direct, regular air travel to the rest of Canada
- Universal health care, improved hospital and medical facilities
- Diversifying the economy with manufacturing, distribution jobs.
- Ready access to post-secondary education

The islands, surrounded by coral reefs, have a warm, pleasant and dry climate ranging in seasonal temperatures from 24 to 32 C, with annual rainfall averaging 56 centimetres. It has a population of about 24,000 people, the official language is English and the colony follows the British legal system.

The Turks and Caicos import significantly more goods than they export because most of the land on the islands is not arable and there are no significant manufacturing. The

For the rest of Canada:

- Stable, secure retirement condos
- Stable, secure vacation destination in Canada
- Manufacturing distribution for the Caribbean and South America
- A place for Paul Martin to park his fleet in Canada
- National revenue from a new "have" province
- Rebalance vacation-travel deficit



In short, the addition of the Turks and Caicos as Canada's 11th province would create economic enhancement for both regions and would be a natural fit socially for our multicultural nation.

Some 450,000 Canadians now vacation in the Caribbean. Well over one million Canadians vacation outside of Canada, leaving billions in foreign countries' coffers. If even 10 percent of this vacation travel, or 100,000 people, were to visit the Canadian province of the Turks and Caicos, the social effects would be negligible, but the boost to the islands economy would be incredible.



Providenciales

The idea of a more formal relationship between Canada and the Turks and Caicos is not new. It was discussed and then rejected by the Canadian government in the 1970s and again in the late 1980s, when members of the government of the Turks and Caicos visited Ottawa to ask Canada to consider some form of "special relationship" with their country.

At the time, the Mulroney cabinet nixed the request.

The world is very much different now. People are connected world wide on the Internet. Communications are instant. Computers and portable cellular phones

have taken big business into small communities. September 11 has caused us to appreciate and value personal security and friendly places to visit.

I feel that it is time to have the people of Canada and the Turks and Caicos speak up on the acceptability of a union between the two countries.

Most dreams take wing by the effort of many. If the same dream is shared by many people of both countries over several generations, perhaps it is time to bring that dream to reality.

House of Commons
MOTION #474

One of the methods available to a Member of Parliament to raise issues is to put forward a Private Member's Motion in the House of Commons for debate.

Peter Goldring placed the following Motion on the Order Paper on Sept. 23, 2003

That, in the opinion of this House, the federal government commence exploratory discussions to determine whether there is a social and economic will for a union of the country of the Turks and Caicos Islands with Canada, as Canada's eleventh province.

Canada—Possible Benefits

- Trade Region Stabilized
- \$1 Billion Trade Export Market Potential
- Business Development Opportunity
- Tourist Dollar Deficient Reduction
- Direct Caribbean Political & Economic Influence
- Additional Air Routes
- Retirement Investment Region
- Manufacturing Food Distribution Centre
- Canadian Navy Exercise offshore & port of call
- Port for Canada Steamship Line to be Registered and Paying taxes in Canada
- Summer Olympic Training Centre

Turks & Caicos— Possible Benefits

- Lower cost of import products
- Regional Trade Export Centre
- Regional Investment/Banking Centre
- 200 Mile Fishing Industry
- Agriculture and Aquaculture Development
- Infrastructure Development Assistance
- Business Diversification from Tourism
- Post Secondary Education
- Full Hospital Services
- Appointed Lt. Governor & Senators
- Elected Federal Member of Parliament with Provincial Government & Premier
- Summer Olympic Training Centre

Update: In January 2004, Peter Goldring visited the Turks and Caicos Islands and met with Governor Poston, Chief Minister Misick and many others. More details on the Turks & Caicos will follow in a future issue.

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This brochure series is intended to highlight special issues that Member of Parliament, Peter Goldring, has been involved in. If you wish to comment, please take a moment and fill out the survey below, write or call to the address above.

Your Opinion Matters...

Question #1 Do you believe that Canada can do more to encourage the trade of Canadian made goods and farm products in the Caribbean and South America?

Yes

No

Question #2 Do you think that Canada and the Turks and Caicos Islands should continue exploratory talks for a possible union to be ratified by all citizens of both countries?

Yes

No

Comments: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

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