

Turks & Caicos: an example of what happens when the law...

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[The Times](#) has reported:

Surrounded by the Caribbean, the pink dots that used to mark part of an Empire are now home to Hollywood stars and business moguls. With no income tax, an array of unspoilt beaches and the security offered by its status as a British dependency, the Turks and Caicos Islands have become a haven for celebrities and their bank accounts.

The idyllic image has been severely tarnished, however, by an inquiry into allegations of political corruption. The claims are so serious that some observers believe that the British Government will now have to consider seizing back full control of the islands.

The British judge in charge of the inquiry described the territory this week as being in a "perilous and volatile state". Sir Robin Auld, a former Lord Justice of Appeal, said that he would produce an interim report for the islands' governor by the end of the month as it couldn't wait until the April 30 deadline.

"Goodness knows what may happen here in the meantime," he said. "It is evident that there are widespread fears on the part of the people, many in the territory, that they are leaderless and their heritage is at risk of continuing fast to drain away."

These things are very clear:

- 1) The UK is responsible for these islands;
- 2) We can take over;
- 3) In that case we are also responsible for this situation having developed.

The argument that the UK is not responsible for its tax havens is, in that case, completely blown asunder.

They are a deliberate extension of British policy, promoted with deliberate intent to facilitate the tax haven status of the City of London.

We know that the city has been brought down by its own corruption: a corruption based on greed even if not on illegality. The tax havens take this one step further: in those places greed crosses the line.

Not all may be in the same state as the Turks and Caicos Islands, yet. The direction of travel is clear. That progression has to be arrested now.