

Memorandum for the Cabinet by the Honourable
Prime Minister

Re-organisation of the Clerical Grades proposed by
the Malta Government Clerical Union

Following the Prime Minister's declaration regarding improvements in the lower grades of the service, discussions took place with the Malta Government Clerical Union on the form the regrading exercise should take in respect of the clerical grades. The Union objected to the issue of a questionnaire to assess the work carried out by individual officers and were against a wholesale review of the grading of the clerical classes. On the 27th February, 1970 the Union submitted a reorganisation scheme covering these classes.

2. The Union is claiming that there should be the following grades of staff with the salaries shown -

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Complements</u>	<u>Salary</u>
Staff Officer	400	£790 x 35 - £1,000
Assistant Staff Officer	600	£520 x 20 - 600 x 30 - 750
Personal Assistant	50	£540 x 20 - 600 x 30 - 750
General Clerk	800	£480 x 20 - 640
Clerk-Typist	350	£430 x 20 - 565

3. From the complements given by the Union it is clear that the Malta Government Clerical Union are after the redesignation of the Higher Clerical Officer as a Staff Officer, the redesignation of the Clerical Officer as Assistant Staff Officer and the upgrading of approximately two-thirds of the present complement of Clerk-Typists to the new grade of General Clerk. In fact, therefore, the Union is requesting substantial improvements in the grades represented by it under the guise of a reorganisation. In the Establishments view the salary changes proposed by the Union cannot be accepted. There is a long standing link between the maximum of the Clerical Officer grade and that of tradesman in Group VII, any alteration in the maximum salary of the Clerical Officer, by whatever name called, is therefore bound to have repercussions throughout the Service. The claim for the Staff Officer is a salary maximum of £1,000, this would also create repercussions over a wide sector of public service salaries.

4. In the view of Establishments, however, some changes are necessary in order to ensure that the lower segment of the General Service remains attractive. The

primary consideration is that the General Service should be looked at as a whole with promotion movements from one grade to the next. In the spirit of this concept, therefore, it is proposed that the following arrangements should operate:-

- (a) half of the Executive Officer vacancies reserved for Higher Clerical Officers and Store Officers I should be filled from Higher Clerical Officers and Store Officers I on the basis of seniority and efficiency without any test; the remaining half of vacancies should be filled by competitive examination open to Higher Clerical Officers Store Officers I and to Clerical Officers and Store Officers II with at least five years service in these grades;
- (b) Clerical Officers should be eligible for automatic promotion to the Higher Clerical Officer grade on completion of eight years service in the Clerical Officer grade irrespective of whether vacancies exist in the higher grade or not;
- (c) that a new grade of Personal Secretaries divided into two classes should be created; Personal Secretaries I should be placed on a salary scale of £690 x 20 - 750 x 30 - £860 and should comprise officers working as Personal Secretaries to Ministers and their senior officers, e.g. Secretaries; Personal Secretaries II should be placed on a salary scale of £520 x 20 - 640 x 30 - £700 and should comprise officers working as Personal Secretaries to Heads of Department and Deputy Heads of Department, the Shorthand Typist grade would disappear in the process of this reorganisation;
- (d) The salary of Clerk-Typist should remain that proposed by the Salaries (Anomalies) Commission namely £430 x 20 - £565 but a regrading investigation of this grade only should take place to determine how many Clerk-Typists posts are to be upgraded to Clerical Officer; the number meriting upgrading is believed to be quite substantial.

5. The Malta Government Clerical Union insist upon a division of the Clerk-Typist grade into a purely typing grade and a purely clerical grade. This arrangement is not welcomed by Establishments as it tends to lessen ease of movement and makes for less flexibility. If, however, it is felt that the M.G.C.U.'s claim should be conceded it is proposed that a grade of Clerk Assistant on the same salary scale of Clerk Typist should be created and that Clerk Typists not carrying out purely typing duties would be placed in this grade.

6. The arrangements proposed above would go some way towards meeting the M.G.C.U.'s claims without creating repercussions throughout the service. In order to make the proposals more acceptable to the Union and in recognition of the fact that Higher Clerical Officers have been working as Executive Officers in various departments because of the vacancies in the Executive Officer grade, it is proposed that 50% of the vacancies existing in the Executive Officer grade on the 31st March, 1970 should be filled by Higher Clerical Officers on the basis of seniority and merit without any examination.

7. Ministers are asked to give their advice on these proposals.

7 APR 1970

CB