

Acquisition of a plot of Land at Marsaxlokk
for allocation to the American Marine & Machinery Co. Ltd.

On the recommendation of the Aids to Industries Board, a project for the manufacture of dredges by the American Marine and Machinery Co. Ltd, has recently been approved under the Aids to Industries Scheme.

The assistance approved for this project consists of income tax relief for 10 years; exemption from Customs Duty on capital equipment for 5 years; and temporary importation facilities for materials incorporated in the finished dredges. The Aids to Industries Board in considering the company's application for assistance recommended also the provision of a plot of land.

The company, in consultation with the Director of Public Works, selected a plot of privately owned land near the Gas Board Installation at Marsaxlokk as suitable for their project.

This project is expected to provide employment for 50 men initially and over 300 men within 5 years. Other important features of the project are the good export sales prospects for its products and the fact that considerable use will be made of facilities and surplus manpower available at the Dockyard.

In view of the contribution which the project is expected to make towards the economy, it would be in the national interest to acquire the land from its private owners for allocation to the company.

The company's requirement for the site involves (1) the acquisition of the land from the owners under the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Ordinance and (2) the clearing up of part of the public road skirting the foreshore and leading from Birżebbugia to San Lucian.

The company are prepared to contribute £10,000 towards the acquisition of the land. This amount is not expected to cover the value of the land

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which is tentatively estimated at some £30,000. The difference would therefore have to be met by Government.

The closing up of the public coast road is not an immediate requirement, but approval of the grant of this site to the company will eventually entail such closure. Apart from the question of principle involved, this would necessitate an approved Scheme for the area under Part 1 of the Code of Police Laws, and the provision of an alternative road bordering the site in question.

It is to be pointed out that if the required land will not be made available early there is the probability that the company will abandon the Malta project and set up in North Africa.

It is for consideration by Ministers whether the site in question should be acquired by the Commissioner of Land under the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Ordinance - Chapter 136.