

MEMORANDUM TO CABINET  
BY THE PRIME MINISTER

INSTALLATION OF R.A.I. REPEATERS IN MALTA

COSTS

On the 31st August, 1967, Cabinet had "agreed to the installation in Malta of R.A.I. T.V. Repeaters on the understanding that Malta would be involved in no expense."

Since that time, R.A.I. T.V. Engineers have been to Malta to carry out further technical studies and to estimate costs. At the same time negotiations were continued with the Italian Authorities about their responsibility for costs. It has now been ascertained that the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has made a request to the Italian Cabinet for the allocation of a further £26,600 to cover the cost of installing the repeaters and the auxiliary internal electrical equipment and fittings. Consequently it can be assumed that the Italian Authorities will be meeting the costs of the repeater equipment, the masts, the attendant substations and all the relative construction and installation works.

It is expected that the Italian Authorities will not be prepared to bear the recurrent costs necessary to maintain the Repeaters in good operating condition. This recurrent cost has been estimated at £3,000 per annum made up of £1,500 in spares, etc. and £1,500 (pre Anomalies Report) in salaries of three technicians.

The Director of Information considers that there should not be any objections to meeting maintenance costs and wages since the equipment will include powerful transmitters for local transmissions for use as and when considered necessary by the Government and/or the Broadcasting Authority. As a consequence he considers

/that.....



that the Government should have a free hand in the use of the equipment and should not be fettered by the Italian Government having a say in the day-to-day operation through a recurrent financial subsidy.

While there may be scope for further negotiations with a view to the possible participation of R.A.I. in the responsibility for the recurrent costs (possibly by way of assuming responsibility for all spares) it is considered that, in view of the terms of the Cabinet decision, Ministers may now wish to decide whether, on the assumption that recurrent expenditure will be met by the Government, the proposal is to be pursued.

#### LOCATION OF MAIN MAST

It has been established that improved reception in the Marsa and Msida/B'Kara areas would only be achievable by a repeater station on the Valletta/Floriana promontary.

The R.A.I. Engineers had suggested that the main tower bearing the reception antenna should ideally be sited on St James Cavalier where a 20-metre metal lattice mast would be erected. Alternatively a 59-metre mast could be erected within the Upper Barrakka Gardens.

The Director of Public Works would opt for the lesser of the two evils i.e. the shorter and less conspicuous mast on St James Cavalier and considers that one objectionable mast in Valletta may be preferable to thousands of unattractively high masts dotted all over the Island but Minister of Public Building and Works is very chary of "spoiling our City's skyline by erecting a high mast."

/Ministers....



Ministers may wish to consider whether they approve in principle the location of the required mast in the Valletta/Floriana area. The actual location of the mast would be the subject of further study in order that it is kept as unobstrusive as possible.

28 February, 1970.

m vb