

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CABINET

Unpaid T.V. Licences

An amendment to the Wireless Telegraphy Ordinance was put into effect on the 1st February, 1962. This amendment provided for a new licence costing £4 which every owner of a television set was required to obtain as from that date. Those persons already owning or renting a T.V. set and in possession of a licence costing £1, whether or not such licence covered a wireless radio set, were required to obtain a new licence at £4, but they were reimbursed a sum at the rate of 1s/8d for each month in respect of the unexpired term of the surrendered licence.

The position now is that out of 15,633 registrations by persons owning a T.V. set 13,907 were by the end of August, 1962, already paid up leaving 1,726 licences for which no payment has so far been received.

The Government can legally amend the Wireless Telegraphy Ordinance with a view to reducing the fee for a T.V. licence. Administratively, however, the Government would have to face a loss in revenue of £45,000 which amount is required to meet the Government's commitments to the Broadcasting Authority - a commitment which was given the force of law by the Broadcasting Ordinance 1961 whose provisions are entrenched in the Constitution.

The Deputy Financial Secretary stresses the fact that the Government is not in a position under present circumstances to forego any revenue and so he advises that the increased licence fee should be maintained.

Hon. Ministers are asked to consider whether instructions should now be issued for the collection of the licence fees in respect of the 1,726 registrations which are still uncovered. It is suggested that this could be done by reminders being sent and the licence holders being pressed to effect the necessary payments. Should it be necessary to take legal proceedings in any particular case, the matter would be brought up again to the notice of the Hon. Ministers before any further action is taken.

L-Arkivji Nazzjonali ta' Malta