

MEMO FOR CABINETBY THE HON. MINISTER OF LABOUR & SOCIAL WELFAREAmendment to Act No XXIV of 1957Shops and Hawkers (Business Hours) Act, 1957

Section 8 (c) of the Act provides that shops in Valletta, Sliema, Floriana, Mdina and Rabat (Malta), during the periods of time in respect of which the Director of Emigration, Labour and Social Welfare by a notice posted on the Notice Board of the Police Station of the districts concerned, grants a general permit to open for the serving of customers in view of a visit to Malta of tourist ships, troopships or naval ships for a stay not expected to last for more than three days provided that such shops shall be closed for the serving of customers not later than 10 p.m.

Representations have been received from shopkeepers in Hamrun to the effect that when tourists or emigrant ships berth at the deep water quay, Marsa, passengers find their way to Hamrun but shops in that district are not allowed to open. Their representations seemed valid and the Department has approached the General Retailers and Traders Union in order to obtain their views.

The Union agreed that the Hamrun shopkeepers had a case but suggested that the law should be amended in such a way as to include other districts particularly Mosta and the three cities.

Considering that when the D.E.L.S.W. grants a general permit to shops to open no shopkeeper is obliged to open but is only allowed to open if he so desires, and in order not to discriminate further it is felt that when a permit to open is granted it should be granted to all shops in Malta without distinction, and it is proposed to amend the law accordingly.

Cabinet is required to approve the proposal.