

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CABINETBY THE HON. PRIME MINISTERFuture of the Independence Arena, Floriana

As Hon. Ministers know, the former Floriana Parade Ground was converted into a temporary arena for the purpose of providing as much accommodation as possible for people to witness the Independence Ceremonies and events held there. It is now for consideration whether the temporary works carried out to the Arena for an ad hoc purpose should remain as they are, or be dismantled or else modified.

2. If the Arena remains as it is, a number of works would be required to give permanency to the present structures to prevent their eventual erosion and to provide for adequate drainage. The Director of Public Works estimates the cost at roughly £14,000.

3. If the Arena is reinstated to what it was before Independence, the cost as estimated by D.P.W. would be in the region of £12,000.

4. If the Arena is modified to provide for more comfortable accommodation for spectators, the cost would depend on the extent to which this were done, but it would certainly exceed the estimates in paras. 2 and 3 above.

5. The following points may assist Hon. Ministers to arrive at a conclusion:-

- (a) there appears to be a fairly wide consensus of opinion that the Arena in its present state is an improvement on the old Floriana Parade Ground. It is understood that the British Authorities who are at present joint users, subscribe to this view;
- (b) the maintenance of the present structures would be a Government liability;
- (c) once expenditure is inevitable, the £12,000 would have nothing to show for it, whereas for an additional £2,000 the present improvements, if they are agreed to be so, would be consolidated;
- (d) to improve the existing accommodation would, in effect convert the Arena into a stadium. The venue is most unsuitable for such a purpose;
- (e) it is desirable that account should be taken of the future possibilities for the development of the adjoining Lintorn Barracks site should this revert to

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Government. It would clearly be undesirable to have a "crowd-pulling" area in the vicinity of, for example, an administration block, luxury hotel or housing estate.

6. Hon. Ministers are kindly requested to consider the above, with a view to deciding what action should be taken.

2nd February, 1965.