

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET BY THE HON. MINISTER
OF COMMONWEALTH AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Commonwealth Scientific Committee

The Commonwealth Scientific Committee has extended to Malta an invitation to participate in the work of the Committee.

2. The activities of the Committee include such matters as the conditions for the employment of scientists, the organization and management of research, the exchange of technical information, technical assistance and the possibilities for co-operation in many fields of science. The opportunity is also offered for personal acquaintance between those responsible for the national research efforts of the different countries.

3. The Commonwealth Scientific Committee has also initiated specific arrangements such as the maintenance of an index of scientific translations making foreign language papers more readily available to research workers, reports on research in progress on specific subjects in the Commonwealth, and under its aegis has set up Commonwealth Committees for fuel research, mineral processing, mineral resources and geology and culture collections of micro-organisms. A Commonwealth Geological Liaison Office is also operated.

4. It is the practice of the Commonwealth Scientific Committee of meeting at intervals of approximately two years. The last meeting was held in New Zealand from November 15th to December 3rd and the next meeting will take place in Ghana in 1966 during a period to be arranged. As the Committee can only meet rarely, a Working Party composed of the members' deputies stationed in London has been set up and meets periodically to recommend action to the Committee on matters of common concern.

5. The larger Commonwealth countries have offices located together in a single building under the corporate name of the Commonwealth Scientific Offices (London). These provide a channel for the interchange of scientific and technical information and act as a centre for visiting scientists from Commonwealth countries

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where they may obtain assistance and advice with respect to their scientific interests.

6. The expenses for the maintenance of the Organization are borne by the Commonwealth as a whole through contributions on an agreed scale from the individual members. Whilst the proportion which might be contributed by Malta is a matter for agreement it is expected to be in the neighbourhood of £250 per annum.

7. Participation in this Organization would necessitate the naming of a senior scientist to act as a member of the Commonwealth Scientific Committee and the appointment of a deputy in London to take part in the deliberations of the Working Party.

8. Hon. Ministers have already been acquainted with the activities of the Organization and generally agree with the views put forward by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Power and Communications which are that the first step should be the setting up of a local Committee representative of Agriculture, Industry, Education, the University, Health, Water and Public Works, with the task of keeping abreast of research in the various fields, although for obvious reasons such activities would be limited. This Committee having been set up, the next step would be for Malta to become a Member of the Commonwealth Scientific Committee since for the small fee involved it is felt that membership would bring a number of advantages.

9. Mr L.A. Hayward, the Scientific Adviser in the Department of Industry, is also in favour of Malta joining this Organization and strongly supports the proposal of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Power and Communications.

10. Hon. Ministers are requested to agree that Malta should participate in the work of the Commonwealth Scientific Committee, and to the setting up of a local Committee under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture, Power and Communications.

11. It is suggested that the Secretary of the local Committee should be an officer with some scientific knowledge, preferably the holder of a B.Sc.