

Land 647/63

MEMORANDUM BY THE HON. MINISTER OF
JUSTICE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS.

Site for Provender Mill

The Malta Milk Producers Co-operative Society requested the grant of a plot of land in 1963 for the erection of a provender mill at Marsa adjacent to the Malta Bacon Factory.

Director of Public Works, who was averse to the grant of that particular site because it was being kept in reserve for eventual extension of the Bacon Factory, suggested an alternative site shown in pink colour on the attached plan, which was agreed to by Mr. L.G. Soler, the Secretary and Manager of the Co-operative Society.

As far back as 1959 the Aids to Industries Board recommended that a site should be made available when it was required for this purpose and Hon. Minister of Industrial Development and Tourism recommended the Co-operative's request for the site suggested by Director of Public Works.

The Secretary/Manager of the Co-operative invoked in support of his request a passage from the 1964-69 Development Plan which, in fact, provides a sum of £75,000 to finance projects of this nature (vide Development Plan for the Maltese Islands 1964-69 - Page 51: Assistance to Co-operatives). As a matter of fact Director of Agriculture found no objection to the granting of the proposed site to the Co-operative by letter to Commissioner of Land dated 1st March, 1966.

The land in question is part of Government Rural Tent No. 1311 which was let and the lease of which was terminated by judicial letter in May, 1966 with my approval with the aim of dismembering the required portion and re-offering the remainder to the tenant farmers.

In July, 1966, however, Director of Public Works forwarded to Commissioner of Land a project for the conversion of the whole tenement into a small industrial estate and requested that the former tenants be informed to be ready to vacate the land when and as required after October, 1966 as the project would be proceeded with as occasion arose.

Meanwhile, the Co-operative through Mr. Soler objected to the assessed ground rent of £420 p.a. on the plea that they ought not to be considered as a commercial undertaking and with my agreement the Commissioner of Land asked Mr. Soler whether he would be prepared to accept to pay a nominal ground rent for the first 25 years and the full rate of £420 p.a. thereafter. This was accepted by the Co-operative.

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In the following September, in a letter to Commissioner of Land by Dr. R. Frenco Randon written on behalf of three of the former co-tenants the point was made that the land was irrigated and that in view of this, at a meeting held at Public Works Department Hon. Minister of Public Building and Works was reported to have decided that the land was not to be taken away from the farmers.

As Director of Public Works did not offer his comments to Commissioner of Land on this letter I took up the matter direct with Hon. Minister of Public Buildings and Works who has not come to a decision so far.

On the 19th November, 1966, Hon. Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture informed me that the site in question had already been agreed upon for industrial development and requested that early action be taken for the grant of the land for the erection of the provender mill.

Hon. Ministers are asked to consider -

a) whether in their opinion Government is committed, and therefore, His Excellency's sanction should be sought for the grant of the agreed site to the Co-operative Society; or

b) whether the Director of Public Works should be asked to explore the possibility of granting an alternative suitable site on lease to this Company.

Draft deed of Grant is also attached.

16th January, 1967.