

DT/4402/66

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET BY THE MINISTER OF TRADE, INDUSTRY  
AND AGRICULTURE

Importation of Luxury Motor Coaches for Tourists

At the Cabinet meeting held on March 14, 1967, Hon. Ministers confirmed that a licence should be issued to Messrs. Car Assembly Ltd. for the importation of five fully-equipped luxury motor coaches for tourists. It was also decided that the matter was to be brought again before the Cabinet should Messrs. Car Assembly Ltd. raise any difficulties with regard to the import licence.

2. The Licence was duly issued on March 14. It was subject inter alia to the following conditions which were laid down in the notice calling for applications, published in the Government Gazette of March 26, 1964:

- a) that the coaches are of a luxury standard not inferior to the best available in the leading tourist resorts of Europe;
- b) that the coaches will be used exclusively for the transport of tourists or otherwise for bona fide organised sightseeing tours for foreigners provided the requisite permit is obtained from the Commissioner of Police; and
- c) that they conform to the Motor Vehicles Regulations, 1948.

3. Messrs Car Assembly Ltd. have written as follows:  
"We note from the referred licence the clause indicating that the coaches should conform to the Motor Vehicles Regulations 1948, and in this respect we have been informed by our principals that no coach manufacturer in the world currently produce coaches conforming to such specifications.

As you are no doubt aware, changing circumstances have necessitated various Governments to revise the minimum specifications required for commercial vehicles and manufacturers of motor coaches have accordingly revised their specifications.

In view of the above we respectfully request you to amend "Condition C" and, if necessary, substitute by inserting "to conform to the Motor Vehicles Regulations currently prevailing in the United Kingdom and the prevailing International standards".

4. The traffic Control Board and the Commissioner of Police agree that a general departure from the Motor Vehicle Regulations should be authorized in this case.

5. The Director of Trade considers however that, if the conditions laid down in the notice calling for applications are not to be insisted upon, a new call for applications should be issued in the Government Gazette. He argued that, after all, perhaps some other interested parties failed to submit an application exactly because the conditions laid down were not acceptable to them, and they would have submitted an application if they knew that the Government would not insist on all the conditions it had laid down in the notice.

6. Strong representations were made on the 26th May by local motor coach Body Builders against the importation of these coaches. They allege that they have the means of providing such coaches to any specification made by Government. As Ministers are aware the question whether the local coach builders should be entrusted with the job was duly gone into before the decision to call for applications was taken. The Commissioner of Police had expressed the view that the policy of prohibiting the importation of ready built bus bodies should not apply in the case of autopullmans, considering that the local industry, which is not deemed to be sufficiently equipped to build such buses, would not suffer any serious hardship if two to five autopullmans are imported. These views were agreed to by Government. No fresh arguments have been brought forward to warrant a revision of the decision already taken.

7. Hon. Ministers are invited to decide whether  
(a) To agree to a general departure from the

Motor Vehicle Regulations, as recommended  
by the Traffic Control Board and the  
Commissioner of Police,

or

- (b) To inform Messrs Car Assembly Ltd. that  
the conditions laid down in the import  
licence cannot be varied.

and

- (c) A fresh call for tenders should be made  
in the case that a general departure from  
the Motor Vehicle Regulations is agreed  
to; or
- (d) To confirm the licence issued to Car  
Assembly Ltd. subject to the abovementioned  
change.

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