

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

Water supply and Agriculture

as an integral part of the Wastes Disposal and Water Supply project being financed by U.N.D.P. (S.F.) and put into operation under the aegis of the W.H.O., it has become essential to tackle the problem of measuring exactly the quantity of water extracted by farmers so as to provide a better picture of the water situation.

2. Water extraction by farmers, which is estimated at 30% of the Island's total consumption, has never been metered. This estimate was made a long time ago and was based on the water requirements of crops. In October 1968, Mr. M. Karmon, the Project Manager, submitted a report in which, amongst other things, he suggested that it is now necessary to measure private extraction in order to

- a) obtain accurate figures of the amount of this private extraction; and
- b) to know the actual capacity of the underground resources and control both aquifers from overpumping thus preventing damage which would take generations to remedy.

3. This Ministry has considered Mr. Karmon's report and feels that the suggestion made therein for metering private water extraction should be approved.

4. The Water Works Department has estimated that the expense of purchasing and installing meters to private wells would be about £35,000 whereof £33,000 represents the purchase cost of the meters and £2,000 the cost of installation. It is intended, if the suggestion is approved in principle by Cabinet, to go into the question of finance with the sponsoring U.N. Agency and the appropriate Ministries in Malta.

5. It is most advisable that the rate of private extraction should be measured as accurately as possible if a serious and proper water balance is to be made. Water is a precious commodity in Malta and Hon. Ministers will agree that all efforts should be made to ensure the optimum utilization of natural groundwater resources. Honourable Ministers are accordingly asked to approve the proposal in principle which would eventually involve the metering of about 1,100 private wells.

6. For the information of Honourable Ministers a programme has been drawn up, in conjunction with the W.H.O. Project team, to be put into operation as soon as the proposal described in this Memorandum is approved.

MAPC 290/64

7th February, 1969.