

MEMORANDUM TO CABINET
BY THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIVATE TENTS ON PUBLIC BEACHES

Representations have been made both in the House of Representatives and in the press that some form of control should be exercised with regard to the prevailing practice of people pitching tents on public beaches without restriction during the summer season, and living in them with their families for long periods, and in some cases for the whole summer.

2. This practice not only detracts from the much publicised charm of seaside resorts, so popular with the local population and which are meant to be a major tourist attraction, but the resulting confusion and litter makes the beaches look untidy and uninviting, and constitute a definite health risk.

3. Going by last summer, measures of control are required especially in the case of Ghadira, Golden Bay, Ghajn Tuffieha and possibly Armier. It is understood that no restrictions need be imposed in Gozo where the practice is, so far, uncommon.

4. The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Tourism and the Commissioner of Police are of the view that, with the exception of beach concessions authorized by the Commissioner of Land, recommended by the Malta Government Tourist Board, and duly licensed by the Police

(i) all tents et similia should be set up not earlier than 7.00 or 8.00 a.m. and be dismantled every evening, not later than 7.00 or 8.00 p.m: this will allow for the area to be properly cleaned;

(ii) tent pitchers should be obliged to set up their tents in straight lines with an unencumbered distance of 5 ft between each row. No tents shall be pitched within a

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distance of 15 ft to 20 ft from the water's edge and 30 ft in the case of tents with guy ropes or pegs for support;

(iii) the pitching of tents bigger than 9 ft by 8 ft is to be prohibited.

5. In order to give effect to the above measures it is recommended that notice boards indicating the demarcation lines and showing the times during which tents may be pitched be fixed on the beaches in question and that adequate sanitary facilities be installed.

6. The question of caravans has also been considered but as these call for greater sanitary requirements and control, the Minister of Health holds the view that these should be excluded altogether until such time as suitable caravan sites have been found and duly licensed as such.

7. The Crown Advocate-General has advised that legislation is required to regulate and control the pitching of tents on public beaches as there is no legal provision at present empowering such control.

8. Ministers may wish to consider whether they agree that control on the pitching of tents should be exercised on the lines stated above and that the Crown Advocate-General be asked to draft the necessary legislation. Additionally Ministers may wish to indicate whether such control should be exercised in respect of all public beaches in Malta and Gozo or whether it should be limited to specific beaches, e.g. the sandy beaches in the North Western region of Malta.

78 MAY 1970

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