

✓ Sitting No. 80/68.

Cabinet Meeting held at the Palace, Valletta, on
Thursday, 7th December, 1968, at 10 a.m.

Present: The Hon. Acting Prime Minister and Minister
of Finance, Customs & Ports.

The Hon. Minister of Public Building and Works.

The Hon. Minister of Justice and Parliamentary
Affairs.

The Hon. Minister of Education, Culture
and Tourism.

The Hon. Minister of Labour, Employment
& Welfare.

Absent: The Hon. Prime Minister and

The Hon. Minister of Trade, Industry
& Agriculture who were away
from the Island on official
business.

The Hon. Minister of Health who was
indisposed.

Terms of Reference of the Salaries (Anomalies) Commission:
Strike action by Civil Service Staff Organisations.

Mr. J. Carabott #
was in
attendance.

The Hon. Acting Prime Minister
opened the meeting by recounting the
circumstances that led up to the current dispute
with Civil Service Staff Organisations on the question
concerning the interpretation of the terms of reference
of the Salaries (Anomalies) Commission. He read
out the minutes of a meeting which the
Hon. Prime Minister had ^{led} with a number of

cc.

Staff Associations on the 28th October, 1968. All Unions were invited to that meeting but those mentioned in the Press Release announcing the strike action did not attend. At that meeting two proposals were made by the Hon. Prime Ministers, viz:

a) Removal of anomalies in direct accordance with the terms of reference as interpreted by the Government, the findings to be operative from 1st April, 1966;

b) A general revision of salaries taking account of present day conditions in Malta, the findings to be operative from a day when the Government decides to so extend the terms of reference of the Commission, say, the 1st November, 1968.

The two proposals were communicated in writing to all the Unions, those which were present at that meeting and those which abstained from attending, on the same day of the meeting, the 28th October, 1968.

The Associations who attended the meeting gave no reply. The others, by letter dated 31st October, 1968, rejected the proposals and confirmed strike action for the 15th November, 1968. They only accepted the second proposal in so far as it left the revision of salaries in the hands of an independent body.

A draft letter in reply to the Associations' letter of rejection was produced for consideration by Ministers. In this draft reply no mention was made of the first proposal regarding the Government's interpretation of the terms of reference of the Commission, which

proposal had been made by the Hon. Prime Minister at the meeting with the Associations on the 28th October, 1968, and subsequently composed in writing. In the reply it was proposed to explain that the Commission was free to give the terms of reference its own interpretation.

Ministers felt that the reply as drafted would be inconsistent with what the Prime Minister had proposed to the Unions. The Hon. Minister of Labour, Employment & Welfare here stated that during the meeting with the Associations the Hon. Prime Minister had also expressed himself in the sense that in spite of the two proposals he had just made, the Salary (Anomalies) Commission would be free to give its own interpretation of its terms of reference. The Hon. Minister of Labour, Employment & Welfare added that he saw the inconsistency and that he had pointed it out privately to the Prime Minister during the meeting.

In the circumstances Ministers agreed that the Hon. Prime Minister be informed by cable of the position and asked for advice.


Prime Minister
3. 12. 68


Secretary to Cabinet.
3. 12. 68