

1967 XMAS ISSUE:

## ARE YOU FOR OR AGAINST?

The latest issue of Christmas stamps has given rise to some controversy both in Malta and abroad. The subject was discussed at the monthly meeting of the Society held on the 6th November, 1967, and views both in favour and against were put forward. Criticism centred mainly on the shape of the stamps which makes them unwieldy to manage. Some of the speakers expressed their disapproval of the printing of twenty complete sets (with different values) on one and the same sheet and maintained that a miniature sheet would have served a better purpose. Those in favour praised the originality of both design and shape and saw no reason why Malta should not break away from tradition.

We have thought to publish two varying opinions which have been expressed abroad and we invite the views of our readers for future publication.

Lt. Com. Burns (64, Beacon Down Avenue, Beacon Park, Plymouth) wrote to the President of the Society in these terms:

*"I do not think that the stamps are up to the usual high standard of design that we expect from Malta, nor do I like the unusual shape. I hope Malta will not sink to the level of some of the African countries who issue all sorts of 'labels' for any reason at all".*

Reaction in Italy appears to have run counter to this trend. The philatelic correspondent of a Florentine newspaper "La Nazione" (The Nation) wrote as follows in the issue of the 1st November, 1967:

*"In regard to Christmas issues, the success scored among collectors by the lovely issue of the Malta Post Office should be underlined: it consists of a triptych designed by E. V. Cremona, the values being of 1d., 8d., and 1s. 4d. It is a philatelic execution of great merit, worthy of the magnificent issues with which in recent times Malta has enriched the collections of Italian philatelists with a soft spot for Maltese stamps."*