

# **LABOUR MANIFESTO [1981]**

## **TOWARD GREATER WELL-BEING**

*Translated from the Maltese Original*

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### **Towards Greater Well-Being**

This electoral manifesto was discussed and approved by delegates at the General Conference of the Labour Party on Monday 9 November 1981 and by delegates of the National Conference of the Workers' Union on Thursday 12 November 1981.

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### **An appeal by the Labour Party**

The Maltese and Gozitan workers, industrial and non-industrial:

- be mindful of the fact that for the first time in the history of our country, Maltese workers who believe in unity and who have trust in their Movement with the Labour Party as its political arm and the G.W.U. as its industrial arm, have succeeded in raising the Maltese people into a free nation unshackled by any foreign domination.

- be mindful of the fact that under your leadership, the material wellbeing of your families was improved.

- be mindful of the fact that this was possible and this really happened because we remained united in spite of all the efforts by our enemies to divide us and create disruption in the country.

- be mindful of the fact that if we do not remain united and if Maltese workers lose their control over the country, not only will our march towards progress come to an end but all our achievements will be lost.

The General Conference on the eve of the 1981 general election invites all Maltese workers to consider thoroughly and scrupulously the country's great achievements in recent years which were registered without any bloodshed or violence and in the least painful way.

All this should fill your hearts with courage so that together we will continue our efforts in those new sectors which have now been brought closer to us as a result of our nationhood: our experiences during the last ten years will serve us in good stead and ensure that the Maltese people will be able to move forward in progress towards greater well-being. The nation will succeed in these efforts by virtue of the industriousness and the capabilities of its workers and its firm Socialist beliefs.

General Conference  
9 November 1981

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### **An appeal by the General Workers' Union**

As delegates representing the thousands of Maltese and Gozitan workers who are members of the largest trade union-The General Workers' Union-and assembled in this Extraordinary National Conference, we feel honoured that we participated in the drafting of the manifesto of the Workers' Movement for the coming election.

We are pointing to all workers the way that will lead us towards greater progress in all walks of life. This can only be attained by means of a united Workers' Movement.

We declare that the progress and victories which have been achieved by Maltese and Gozitan workers resulted from our

fusion and from the joint efforts of the General Workers' Union and the Labour Party.

Not only do we pledge that no one will succeed in weakening our bond but that we will work in order to encourage other unions to participate in efforts to strengthen unity among workers and ensure greater participation by workers in management.

We encourage all workers to support the principles which appear in the manifesto so that these beliefs will be put into practice in the coming years together with other measures which the House of Representatives has already agreed to implement according to the Development Plan 1981 -85.

We are certain that in this way we will continue to uphold industrial peace which is so necessary especially during the troubled days which are so rampant throughout the world and that we will continue our march towards greater achievements.

The General Workers' Union calls on all Maltese and Gozitan workers and their families to extend their full support to the Labour Party in the coming election so that we may be assured of progress towards greater well-being. An appeal by the Labour Party

General Conference  
12 November 1981

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**I. OUR IDENTITY AND OUR BELIEFS**

**Our identity**

The Workers' Movement in Malta derives its strength from the union among workers who uphold the same beliefs and who wish to live free from any bondage and in a democratic environment, founded on principles of social justice. In this way they will attain their main aim of leading a better life both individually and as a nation.

The Movement includes in its fold workers from all towns and villages in Malta and Gozo who have given their share and accepted new responsibilities so that we were able to become truly free and achieve progress. Now that Maltese workers have shown beyond any doubt that they are able to lead the country and that they do not shirk new responsibilities, it is felt that a greater number of Maltese citizens should show a greater sense of initiative and that in accordance with democratic principles, responsibilities should be spread further among the community. All citizens should show a greater drive and interest in the daily activities which happen throughout the country. This process will strengthen the Workers Movement because it will ensure that all persons of good will can become aware of the contribution which they can give towards the process of national development.

This call by the Workers' Movement to the Maltese people is in itself a recognition of the degree of maturity we have attained: it is a recognition of the new moral values which the Workers' Movement has strived incessantly to instil in the people during the last few years. This is the richest reward of the Socialist principles which the Workers' Party and the General Workers' Union have together spread among the Maltese.

### **Our beliefs**

Since June 1971 when the Maltese people elected the Socialist Government to lead the country, the Workers' Movement has given ample proof of its beliefs. The best promise that the Workers' Movement can offer for the future is to continue working with the same strong will on the same principles so that:

- our country will remain an island of peace, free from all political and military affiliations;
- we will increase still further the levels of economic activity in order to continue to improve the living standards of the Maltese people;
- the material wealth which we will create will be distributed according to the principles of social justice;
- fundamental human rights and liberties will be respected; and
- all the Maltese people will be given equal opportunities in life.

## **II. THE SOCIAL SECTOR**

During the past ten years the Socialist Government built a new society by the introduction of reforms inspired by the principles of social justice in almost all sectors of Maltese life. As a result the Maltese people have now become stronger, kinder and more united. Access to education and medical care has been brought as of right within the reach of all sections of the community while the basic human needs are adequately satisfied. As a result of the social legislation enacted by the Socialist Government all workers, besides leading a comfortable life in dignity, are also giving their share so that the sick, the aged and the less fortunate ones will be able to enjoy improvements in their living standards.

The efforts of the Socialist Government have ensured that the Maltese people have been able to improve considerably their standards of living and material wealth has spread among all and sundry. The Workers' Movement can now fully implement its beliefs since the people's quality of life is not measured solely in terms of material wealth. A stronger awareness of new ideas and values is necessary. There is a need for a growing number of Maltese citizens to participate more actively in management and in the work which has to be done so that the process of development can continue.

The Socialist Government, therefore, besides encouraging and helping all those who are ready to assume greater responsibilities and share in the country's management, will also help voluntary organisations which are willing to undertake activities for the good of the country.

## **Workers and work**

The Workers' Movement regards the right to work as a most fundamental right. Not only do we reject the view that unemployment can solve the evils of inflation, but we can never remain insensitive to circumstances which lead to unemployment or accept wage levels which do not allow comfortable standards of living to the workers. Under a Socialist Government the days when workers had no other option but to leave their homeland will not repeat themselves.

### Wages and incentives

Besides providing work opportunities for all those who wish to work, legislation covering wage increases which was introduced by the Labour Government ensures that the wages of all workers in all economic sectors are regularly increased not only to cover the rising cost of living but also to ensure that improved standards of living are shared by all. This already took place during the seventies without the need to resort to strike action and without any harm to industrial relations.

For a number of years, flat increases in the cost of living were awarded and as a result the difference between the lowest paid workers and the highest paid workers has been narrowed down. It is now felt that a system of incentives should be introduced for those workers who undertake work that requires heavy responsibilities or who carry out dangerous work and show initiative and enthusiasm to increase efficiency and production. The Government will encourage the private sector to introduce incentive systems.

With respect to public sector employees, where it is not always easy to assess efficiency and work, the following measures will be taken:

- in those departments where it is not very difficult to measure the workers' productivity, following agreement between the unions and Government, methods to measure productivity will be introduced and savings by the department by virtue of higher efficiency will be distributed according to the workers' efforts;
- in other sectors where it is more difficult to measure efficiency and productivity, an ad hoc committee will be set up so that together with the union, incentive schemes will be introduced for workers at all levels who occupy responsible positions;
- since not all departments have the same opportunity to translate increased levels of efficiency and responsibility into savings or to reduce expenditure, savings by Government as a result of greater efficiency and production by all departments will be placed in a fund which will be shared among all employees.

The same system of incentives will be applied in the case of employees in parastatal bodies and commercial organisations such as for instance the banks where Government is the major shareholder. However, since the performance of these workers depends also on the work of other Government employees, these workers must allocate a share of their profits to employees in those departments where efficiency is not reflected in terms of profits.

### Greater worker participation in management

The Workers' Movement launched successfully at the Drydocks the opportunity for workers to prove that they are able to assume overall responsibility and to manage the enterprise with the same skill as any private

industrialist. In enterprises which are managed by the workers themselves, the workers are freer because they are both workers and owners at the same time. However, they have also added responsibilities on their shoulders and their future depends largely on how they use these responsibilities. Above all they must understand that it is through profit that they can improve their conditions of work and their living standards.

This success gives full encouragement to a Labour Government which will therefore take the necessary steps to ensure that gradually worker management will spread throughout all the sectors in which the Government is involved. A Labour Government will also offer to extend its help to private sector interests who are ready to allow their workers greater participation in management and profits.

The Socialist Government gave workers stronger rights not only at their place of work but also throughout the country. The largest workers' union-the General Workers' Union-which accepted the offer made by the Labour Party to all unions, is now participating directly with the

Government in the country's overall management. A Labour Government will encourage the setting up of a confederation of trade unions so that through their trade unions a greater number of workers will participate directly and share responsibility in the planning and in the implementation of national policies.

### Self-employed workers

In Malta the enemies of the Workers Movement made the mistake of grouping self-employed workers who work on their own with other self-employed workers who run their own concerns and provide employment for other workers. This second category of self-employed workers is strong enough and in no way can they be given the same assistance which is extended to the other smaller self-employed workers.

The Socialist Government has already done much for a very large number of self-employed workers who work on their own. These workers including farmers, fishermen, stall-holders at the Monti open air market, craftsmen and others have never enjoyed the work opportunities and the high levels of commercial activities witnessed during these last few years.

Besides providing new openings for self-employed workers, the Labour Government also ensured that these workers were able to receive National Insurance benefits in an equitable way. There are, however, those who choose to harp on the contributions which are paid and forget all about the benefits. All self-employed workers pay their contributions so that they will be entitled to children's allowances, hospital care, pensions and other benefits.

Yet, because a Socialist Government is concerned at the hardship which self-employed workers may suffer through loss of income during sickness, sickness benefits will be extended to all those self-employed workers who are not members of the professions and who do not employ any other workers.

### Government and the community

Now that as a result of the efforts of the Socialist Government the Maltese community is able to enjoy a comprehensive system of social security, we must ensure that this system will become more efficient and just. There are around us a number of developed countries whose governments are destroying social security systems that were built by Socialist governments. We must ensure that this will not happen in our country: indeed we must strengthen the existing network of social security.

### Health

The Workers Movement always believed that all persons have the right to enjoy a healthy life and to receive

medical care during sickness. It is for this reason that health services and hospital care facilities must not be available exclusively for those who are able to pay. Steadfast in this belief, the Labour Government reformed the health service in a way which has enabled everybody as of right to have free access to the best medical facilities that the country can provide. Hospitals were modernised, community and hospital services were improved while new services and specialized medical care which were previously only available to patients who went abroad for treatment were introduced.

A Socialist Government will implement a vast health programme. The hospital modernisation programme will be pushed ahead; community care in clinics and homes will be extended; while the number of specialists will be increased and new fields of medical care will be introduced in Malta.

As it has done in the past, a Socialist Government will increase further the range of services for the aged both in their homes as well as in residential centres where those who are not able to remain living in their own homes can live in comfort under institutionalized forms of care. These facilities are now no longer available only for those who can afford to pay for them.

In order to raise health services even further, more Maltese doctors will undergo specialised training in various countries. Radio and TV will be used increasingly to teach the community how to live in good health.

The Socialist Government has always believed that in the health sector, these services should, first and foremost, serve the community. A civilised society is not worthy of its name if medical care is only given according to the individual's financial means and not according to needs. In its efforts to reach this aim, a Socialist Government is willing to work together with all those Maltese doctors who believe that the National Health Service should be run according to modern principles of social justice, on organized lines and under control. A Labour Government is convinced that these principles should help to improve standards of health care and honour the medical profession.

### Environment

The Socialist Government paid great caution not only to ensure that economic development would not ruin the country's natural environment and its historical heritage, but also to clean and enhance our islands by means of a programme of tree planting and new public gardens. The Socialist Government enacted legislation to protect birds and established sanctuaries where bird shooting and bird trapping are prohibited. The Government also safeguarded historical monuments and converted them for public use by means of the least possible amount of structural alterations so that they will not fall into a state of neglect.

In future we must guard against all those things which may pollute and spoil our environment both on land or in the sea that surrounds us. The tree planting programme will be continued in order to make our islands more beautiful, and in our schools as well as on the local mass media we have to educate the Maltese community to appreciate and safeguard our natural and scenic beauty.

### Education

The main principles of the Workers' Movement in the educational field are the following:

- equality of educational opportunity for all, from kindergarten to tertiary level;
- the strengthening of the relationship between the world of work and study;
- the educational process should not only enhance the individual's abilities but should also contribute towards national economic, social and moral development.

In the coming years a Labour Government will continue to improve the educational system in order to serve better the country's needs. For this purpose the Government will strengthen state schools by providing them with fully trained teachers and modern equipment. Trade schools and technical institutions will be improved while training in new skills needed by the country will be introduced.

Whilst reaffirming that it does not intend to close down private schools, a Labour Government will endeavour to make these schools accessible to all, without any distinctions between the students' financial background. This is the only way in which the educational process can reach all and sundry and offer the same opportunities to all school children.

In spite of stiff resistance to the reforms carried out by the Socialist Government at the University with the introduction of the worker/student scheme, this system has now gained ground and has already given good results. By means of these reforms, stronger linkages have been established between the University and the country's developmental requirements; this is a step which many other larger countries have not yet succeeded in implementing.

In the coming years a Labour Government will undertake further efforts to strengthen the links between the University and industry and encourage University staff to participate more directly in practical issues. In collaboration with the University and employers, the Government will take part in the organisation of training programmes for Maltese workers. The Government will also ensure that the University will participate together with Government departments and other organisations in the promotion of ad hoc cultural programmes for the community.

## Culture

In line with its belief that material wealth should reach all members of the community and not be concentrated in the hands of a small group of individuals, the Workers' Movement likewise believes that culture should be accessible to all, without any distinction. In the past, the pursuit of culture was considered as an accomplishment and as a privilege for those sections of the community who had the means, spare time and the educational background to appreciate it.

In recent years, as a result of the efforts of the Workers' Movement, the material living standards of Maltese workers have improved and the Socialist Government has succeeded in its efforts to promote culture among the community. The Maltese population is now aware that culture can serve to develop human talents and enrich the individual's personality while providing personal fulfilment.

The Workers' Movement, having launched the school of music and the school of drama and having put on a sounder footing the teaching of painting and sculpture in schools, now invites all voluntary organisations which promote culture to join forces with the Movement and increase cultural activities in the country.

Besides serving to provide information to the public by means of balanced news coverage, the broadcasting media can also serve to promote culture, educate the public and provide good entertainment.

## Sports

In the last few years facilities for sports in the Maltese Islands have increased significantly and workers, youths and children can spend their free time in surroundings which are morally clean and keep them in good, physical health. The Socialist Government built various facilities for sport and recreation in a number of districts in Malta and Gozo while at a national level it also built the stadium at Ta' Qali and the horse racing track at Marsa.

A Socialist Government will continue to promote the development of sport in the country by means of training programmes for youths and children; requests to friendly countries to provide qualified coaches; and visits to Malta by foreign sportsmen as well as visits abroad by Maltese athletes. Now that Malta has a stadium of international standards international sports activities can be organized with the participation of athletes from neighbouring Mediterranean countries. A Socialist Government will provide greater help to voluntary organizations and will encourage these organizations to assume responsibility for the maintenance of these facilities.

## Housing

It was only the Socialist Government which succeeded in removing the great social scar of the sixties when villas were built for foreigners and Maltese families were unable to find accommodation. The Labour Government built about 5,300 new dwellings for Maltese families while under the Home Ownership Scheme more than 2,600 plots were allocated for house construction together with programmes of financial assistance. At the same time several slums and tenement houses in various areas which would put any civilised country to shame, were demolished.

A Socialist Government will do its utmost so that eventually all Maltese families will live in their own homes. Indeed, a Socialist Government is concerned not only that Maltese workers will have adequate accommodation but also that Maltese workers will reside in their own houses. The allocation of plots for house-building together with the highest levels of assistance in fact not only constitutes a measure of social justice but should also be regarded as a step that promotes diligence. It is a well known fact that a large number of people who have been allocated plots carry out various trades themselves: these people participate in these schemes not only by means of their financial outlays but more so by means of their personal involvement in the building of their own homes for their families.

This year Parliament enacted legislation whereby individuals who build their own houses on a Government plot will be exempted from expenses incurred on road formation and on the provision of sewer and water services.

This was not enough however: and the Socialist Government is accordingly extending the range of assistance and benefits under the Home Ownership Scheme. More plots for house-building will be allocated by the Housing Authority and assistance by the Authority will be as follows:

Since many people expressed their wish that in spite of their low income, they would not like to own a house consisting only of a top floor while the ground floor will be owned by somebody else, these persons will be allowed to start by building the ground floor only (while making the necessary provision for the future erection of a staircase) so that they can build the first floor as and when their financial circumstances permit them to do so.

For the purpose the Lohombus Corporation will provide loan facilities and the Housing Authority will provide assistance as follows: Category A

This covers those individuals who have the option to start by building the ground floor with space available for the future erection of a staircase leading to the first floor and whose income does not exceed LM4,000.

1. Those whose income does not exceed LM2,000: - A loan not exceeding LM4,000 for the ground floor only. This loan will carry a 2-1/2% interest rate while the Authority will subsidise the loan by 5-1/2%. The applicant will have to deposit LM400 in a local bank. In view of his low income the applicant will not be required to pay more than LM150 per annum to cover both interest charges and loan repayment.

2. Those whose income is between LM2,000 and LM3,000: - A loan of up to LM4,000 for the ground floor only. This loan will carry an interest rate of 3% while the Authority will subsidise the loan by 5%. The applicant will be required to have a bank deposit of LM750.

3. Those whose income is between LM3,000 and LM4,000: - A loan of up to LM4,000 for the ground floor only and up to LM7,000 if and when the first floor is added. Interest will be at 3-1/2% while the Authority will subsidise the loan by 4-1/2%. The applicant will be required to have a bank deposit of LM1,000.

#### Category B

Those whose income ranges between LM4,000 and LM7,000:

1. Those whose income is between LM4,000 and LM5,000: - A loan of up to LM7,000 at 6% for a two storey house while the Authority will subsidise the loan by 2%. A bank deposit of £M1,200 will be required by the applicant. Loan repayment will not exceed a maximum period of twenty five years.

2. Those whose income ranges between LM5,000 and LM7,000: - A loan of up to LM8,000 at 7% for a two storey house while the Authority will subsidise the loan by 1%. The applicant will be required to have a bank deposit of LM1,500. Loan repayment will have to be effected within a maximum period of twenty years.

#### Category C

Those with an income in excess of LM7,000: - A loan of up to LM9,000 at commercial rates for a two storey house. The applicant will be required to have a bank deposit of LM2,000. Loan repayment will have to be effected within a period of fifteen years.

Every two years the income of persons who have secured loans under this scheme will be reviewed so that the interest rate and the extent of the subsidy will be adjusted in accordance with their new income levels. These levels might be higher although they might also be lower. Lower incomes could occur for instance when an applicant becomes a pensioner or on the death of an applicant: in similar circumstances it is only fair to reduce the interest rate and increase the subsidy on the interest. Contracts between the Authority and applicants will provide for a review of conditions as explained above.

In the case of married couples participating under this scheme, the total income of both husband and wife will be considered. In the case of engaged couples, only the income of the bridegroom or the bride will be considered: this will be the applicant for the loan who will also assume responsibility for the contract. In this way engaged couples will be further helped through reduced interest rates.

In order to render home ownership even more popular, a Socialist Government will introduce an easier system for the payment of tax on the rental value of owner-occupied residences. In accordance with the size of these houses, the annual rental value of houses which, were built before 1976 will not exceed EMIQO whereas the annual rental value of houses built after 1976 will not exceed £M200.

#### **Greater community participation by citizens and by voluntary organisations**

We have now reached the stage when the community should no longer depend only on Government action in various spheres of activity but should also rely on what all Maltese citizens are prepared to do for each other, for the society in which we live and for our country.

In the years ahead the Workers' Movement will introduce democratic schemes whereby, a greater number of

Maltese citizens—such as, for instance, pensioners and housewives will voluntarily offer their services in such areas as environmental protection and public cleanliness, voluntary work in schools and hospitals, sports, consumer protection, and the promotion of culture. The Workers' Movement will also assist philanthropic organisations which work among the sick, the aged, the handicapped, prisoners, etc.

While being aware of the fact that the process whereby a greater number of Maltese citizens will undertake new responsibilities will take a relatively long time before it gains ground, the Workers' Movement believes that educational programmes designed for children, youths and other members of the community will ensure that eventually more people will be willing to come forward and to perform these new duties. On the other hand, the Labour Government will also be willing to help those organisations which are prepared to carry out similar initiatives for the benefit of the country because in this way this process will gain in popularity.

In order to ensure that activities for consumer protection will continue to be carried out more diligently and in a more efficient way, the Labour Government will encourage voluntary consumer organisations by extending to them official recognition and protection on the strength of legislation recently enacted by Parliament. A Labour Government will also be ready to make available to these organisations air time on the broadcasting media, including television. In this way Maltese consumers will be educated on how to safeguard their interests.

### **Other social work**

In order to protect Maltese society from antisocial habits which will undermine the country's achievements, a Labour Government will intensify its efforts against drug abuse, delinquency, hooliganism and other social problems which occur as a result of rising affluence. Whilst protecting society, a Socialist Government will at the same time extend assistance to wrong-doers in order to enable their rehabilitation and their integration in society. A Socialist Government will however also be mindful of the fact that it has the duty to take the necessary steps including the most drastic ones to protect society from antisocial behaviour which is on the rise as levels of material well-being in the country rise further. However, two characteristics which should stand out in Maltese society should be kindness and understanding towards those who do wrong. At the same time police officials, welfare officers and volunteers will undergo training in various aspects so that they will be better equipped to carry out their task.

## **III. THE ECONOMIC SECTOR**

### **Economic policies**

As a result of the intense activity of the Maltese people under the Socialist Government during the last ten years, we have succeeded not only in detaching completely the Maltese economy from its dependence on military activities but activity in all economic sectors has increased substantially. Gross National Product during the seventies increased fourfold. Manufacturing industry rose briskly and increased both the number of workers and exports. Levels of activity at the Drydocks also increased while the tourist sector developed strongly. During these years the Socialist Government laid strong foundations for growth by strengthening the infrastructure and by bringing under Maltese control vital economic sectors which were previously under foreign ownership. All these activities helped to increase self-reliance.

The Workers' Movement strongly believes that it is only through work that continued economic growth may be registered and material wealth in the country may increase further. Consequently in order to ensure that the process of national development will continue unabated at the fast rate of recent years, it is of vital importance that political and economic leadership will remain in the hands of the Movement which can best safeguard the

interests of Maltese workers-those who contribute to the country's growth by means of their physical and mental efforts.

It is this which explains why workers should participate increasingly in the management of enterprises and in other economic sectors in the country in accordance with principles of social justice. The country's economic progress should not only serve to improve living standards but should also contribute towards increased levels of self-reliance and freedom from foreign domination.

### Mixed economy

Since the early seventies the Workers Movement has put into practice its belief that the public sector should set up industrial and commercial projects to stimulate greater economic activity. As a result of these initiatives, Malta witnessed the emergence of a mixed economic structure which was a new concept for the country. The Maltese people, moreover, through its representatives joined forces with the private sector and other foreign Governments and set up a number of joint ventures; these projects have resulted in profits and have increased levels of economic activity. At the same time the Government continued to extend due encouragement to private sector interests, both Maltese and foreign, to set up new industries or expand existing enterprises. The experience of the last few years has shown that there is ample room for participation both by the private sector and the public sector. In the years ahead the country will continue to operate a mixed economic structure which has given encouraging results during the last few years.

It is hoped that in the coming years other different forms of partnership will emerge in the country such as for instance joint ventures between two or three foreign Governments and private sector interests. In this way there will be a greater number of Maltese who will assume responsibility for the management of local enterprises and economic development will grow at a faster pace while democracy will spread further in the country.

### Renewal and flexibility

The eighties are expected to bring in their wake economic troubles in many countries both developed and developing. The Maltese economy lies completely exposed to the ups and downs of the external economic environment and is mostly dependent on international trade. In the circumstances Malta has no other option but to take all the necessary defensive measures to shelter itself from external threats.

In order to turn these unfavourable circumstances to good advantage, the country's development should increasingly be linked to our ability to learn new skills and modern technology, to improved management of projects already in hand and to flexible attitudes in the light of changed circumstances. It is vital for the country to combine academic knowledge with practical work experience so that new ideas will emerge: in this way we shall be able to enhance our ability to develop economic resources in peace.

A Socialist Government, well known for the various reforms which it has introduced in Malta, promises to undertake a process of renewal so that the country will emerge in a stronger position.

### New job opportunities

Socialism means equal opportunities for all citizens to find adequate employment. The work opportunities created in our country should be stable enough to ensure better living standards for all. Jobs that are no longer relevant to the country's stage of development because of low levels of profitability should give way to more productive activities.

A Socialist Government will take the necessary steps to expand economic activity in new sectors. This will

create new jobs in modern activities. In order to reach this aim, importance will be given to new activities in sectors such as engineering; maintenance of aircraft; construction of oil rigs; transshipment and processing. Other new activities for Malta include the storage of cereals, oils and other products; insurance services; projects in neighbouring countries and offshore banking.

### Work opportunities for women

Not all women have the same opportunity and time to leave their homes to work. A Labour Government will seek to create opportunities for women to work regularly on a part time basis. One of the ways in which this could be achieved could be the launching of a scheme for housewives/workers. In this way housewives will not be required to work on a forty hour week basis, and will be able to look after their families while at the same time undertaking other tasks. This will serve to boost further the emancipation of women in Maltese society without any disruption to the country's tradition of strong family ties based on respect and love.

### Industry and Commerce

A Labour Government is fully aware of the fact that commercial activities in the country and foreign trade are vital to the material wellbeing of the population. A Socialist Government therefore acknowledges that two main objectives in this field are higher exports of Maltese products and consumer protection to safeguard the rights of the community.

### Export promotion

In the export sector a Labour Government will continue to take new measures to assist local industry to find new outlets and increase exports. As a result of the healthy political relationships which were established by the Government during the last few years, new markets have been opened for Maltese products in Iraq, Algeria, the Gulf States, China and Eastern Europe. While a Socialist Government will continue to use its political relationships to open new export markets, other commercial offices will be opened in countries with potential markets for local products. Maltese exporters will be invited by the Government to participate more closely in the running and organisation of these commercial offices. The long-term objective is to ensure that exporters will be responsible for these activities.

### Assistance to small firms and handicrafts

A Labour Government will introduce schemes to help small scale firms and handicrafts. Although individually these firms only provide employment for a small number of workers, taken together they provide a strong contribution to the Maltese economy.

A Labour Government will take practical steps to assist small industries which cater only for the local market and also to assist artisan centres which produce souvenirs that are so popular among tourists. To help these industries, a Labour Government will launch a new service-a Small Firm Service-which will provide technical advice. Furthermore, wherever possible, raw materials will be procured on a collective basis and under the best possible terms. A new service will be also set up to assist small firms which cater only for the local market to undertake production for export.

The stage has now been reached when manufacturing industry should incorporate the skills of workers trained in higher technological skills that will be able to compete in foreign markets and enhance levels of profitability. Meanwhile, existing industries, both those catering for export and those catering for the local market, must remain competitive. These industries must undertake fresh efforts to identify new markets, train their workers and invest in new and modern machinery. A Socialist Government will provide encouragement and assist those firms which will choose to undertake these modernization programmes.

## Licensing

A Labour Government will also encourage the introduction of licensing arrangements in the country. Under this system a foreign company will reach agreement with a local company whereby the Maltese company will undertake production in accordance with technical information and specifications provided by the mother company. By means of licensing arrangements Maltese firms will gain access to industrial know-how and acquire exclusive sales rights in export markets which have not so far been accessible to us.

During the last few years a number of Maltese firms have gained sufficient experience which should serve them in good stead to reach similar agreements and produce under licence for their own good and for the country's benefit.

## Training and new work opportunities for redundant workers

In order to ensure that Maltese industries will stand on their own feet and overcome with success the stiff competition in foreign markets, it is vital to give full importance to the training of Maltese workers both in existing skills which offer good prospects for the future as well as in new skills which the country should undertake in the years ahead.

For this purpose, a Socialist Government will not only improve the institutions which provide technical training to Maltese youths but will also assist those workers who need retraining in new skills because their lines of activity will no longer be profitable. The setting up of a Fund for Industrial Training will attain this objective. Industrial enterprises will annually be required to set aside a share of their profits out of which redundant workers will be paid while undergoing training in new skills before taking up new employment. A Socialist Government will provide an adequate contribution towards this Fund.

## Commerce

The commercial policies of a Socialist Government will continue to be geared in such a way so as to safeguard the interests of the Maltese community. For this purpose the Government will strengthen the bulk buying scheme. In this way the country will continue to be assured of supplies of essential commodities at reasonable prices. In order to enable Maltese consumers to have adequate guarantees that this scheme is being implemented carefully and fairly, a Socialist Government will allow consumer representatives the right to participate in these activities. Furthermore, a Socialist Government will continue to take adequate measures for price control so as to allow the commercial community a fair profit and at the same time ensure a stable price structure.

## Tourism

In the past, efforts to develop tourism were largely focussed on the north of Malta with the result that tourist activities are virtually concentrated in that area. It is felt to be in the country's best interest to spread tourist activities towards Gozo and Comino and also towards Cottonera and towards the eastern part and the South-East region. Fort Chambray in Gozo and Fort St. Angelo are consequently being transformed into tourist complexes. When tourist-related activities in these areas increase, the business generated by the tourist industry will spread over various localities in the Maltese Islands.

It is important to identify new sources of tourist traffic. It is equally important to ensure that the services offered to tourists are of a good standard. At the same time a Socialist Government will also ensure that tourists visiting Malta will not be allowed to bring into the country drugs and other forms of antisocial behaviour that will undermine the country's standards of social values.

The Socialist Government worked hard during the seventies so that the Drydocks which was on the verge of bankruptcy and in a most critical condition in 1971, would be converted into a viable enterprise and serve as one of the main pillars of the country's development. It was also the Socialist Government which took the bold step of handing over the Dockyard to the workers so that the workers themselves would manage the enterprise when they showed that they were willing to undertake this new and serious responsibility.

Today, as a result of the strong efforts put in by everybody, the Drydocks has not only been converted into one of the best shipyards in the Mediterranean but the enterprise is also making a strong economic contribution and is also providing stable employment opportunities and higher wage levels to thousands of Maltese workers.

In the years ahead the Labour Party, together with the General Workers' Union, promise to extend their assistance to the Drydocks so that the enterprise will become stronger and will also undertake shipbuilding activities. Traditional and old-fashioned work methods which have destroyed ship repair and shipbuilding activities in a number of European yards will have to be discarded. This is particularly relevant in the case of the new Marsa Shipbuilding Yard. A Socialist Government will introduce the most modern production systems. To achieve this, top foreign experts will be recruited for the new type of activities where Maltese personnel do not as yet possess experience.

When Malta besides undertaking ship repair work will also undertake new building activities, the two yards will be able to sub-contract work to each other and to other ancillary industries which might be set up to meet the needs of these yards.

### **Petroleum exploration and mineral nodules**

It was always under a Socialist Government that onshore and offshore petroleum exploration programmes got under way. The oil drilling programme will again get under way next month (December 1981). In the dispute between Malta and Libya on the dividing line on the continental shelf, a Workers' Government will continue to show the same strong determination which it has always shown in its struggle for freedom against foreigners so as to achieve by fair means what is Malta's by right.

Scientific surveys on the Maltese continental shelf will be carried out so as to obtain greater knowledge on the existence or otherwise of mineral nodules which can be exploited in the best interest of our country.

If the petroleum exploration programme is successful or minerals are discovered, a Socialist Government will not allow these revenues to disrupt the moral values of the nation but will guide the country in the best way of how to make use of this revenue to the country's benefit, and to the benefit of our children and our neighbours.

### **Agriculture and fisheries**

The Socialist Government has striven unceasingly in agriculture and fisheries because it strongly believes that increased levels of food production are vital to any country. Available agricultural land in Gozo is more than a third of the agricultural land in Malta. Even when they emigrate, Gozitans still feel a strong attachment towards agricultural activities. It is therefore felt that the best employment opportunities which can be created in Gozo should be in the agricultural sector. Consequently, active consideration will be given to land reclamation projects in Gozo so that irrigated cultivable land in Gozo will increase.

In order to extend greater help to Gozitans in these activities, it is intended to introduce a new system whereby vegetables, fruit and other agricultural products will be transported from Gozo to Malta free of charge.

During the past ten years the Workers' Government has built a centralised vegetable market, a new abattoir, reclaimed derelict land, planted hundreds of thousands of fruit trees, constructed reservoirs and dams for irrigation purposes, implemented the Comino pig project and built an abattoir and provided cold storage facilities in Gozo. With the implementation of these projects as well as others, it is now possible to concentrate on new projects, particularly the increase of arable land.

Work is already under way on the land reclamation project at Wied iz-Zurrieq and Ghar Lapsi where the land is being covered with soil, trees are being planted and the land thus reclaimed will be cultivated. A number of modern farmhouses could be built for families who are ready to work the land and settle there. Essential services will be extended to these areas and a sewage purification plant will be installed to provide water for irrigation. Besides the implementation of this project,, another similar project will be taken in hand in the limits of Xghajra and Wied il-Ghajj. The land reclamation project at Comino will also continue so that this Island will become more productive.

The sewage purification project at Sant'Antnin limits of Wied il-Ghajj is due to be completed shortly. In this area it is also intended to set up the solid wastes recycling project for agricultural purposes. These two projects should help in no small way to boost agricultural production in the coming years. A Socialist Government will plant more fruit trees. It will strengthen the pig industry and the dairy industry. It will increase practical instruction to farmers in Malta and also by means of visits abroad. A Socialist Government will also encourage the setting up of new farmer cooperatives and help them to develop further so that profits from agricultural activities would, as much as possible, be retained by farmers.

Malta is in the fortunate situation of being surrounded by a vast sea with adequate fish resources for the whole country. As a result of the hard efforts put in by the Labour Government, the fish catch has increased: however, the stage has not yet been reached when we can cater for all local needs and export fish as well. The fact that the living standards of our fishermen have risen in spite of old fishing techniques keeps them back from experimenting with new methods. This explains why it has so far proved impossible to find Maltese fishermen who are ready to undergo training in modern trawling techniques so that we may take a full share of the riches in the sea around us.

This does not however prevent the Socialist Government from undertaking to continue to do its utmost to develop a small trawling fleet that will catch enough fish for the local market and for export. Until such time as Maltese fishermen are available who are willing and able to operate modern trawlers, we have no option but to engage foreign fishermen. These foreign fishermen will be required to train Maltese fishermen who are interested in learning these fishing techniques. As soon as Maltese fishermen receive training in these activities, a Socialist Government will extend to them all necessary help.

### **Essential services and infrastructure**

Economic progress during the past ten years was possible by virtue of the assumption of full Maltese control and reform of vital services which were previously under foreign ownership and also because of improved infrastructural facilities. Further development in these areas is necessary by means of new projects, improved efficiency in the management of public enterprises and by means of efforts to ensure that all essential services expand in a way that will be able to cope with the needs of economic and social development.

This will require further activity in the field of energy, water, telecommunications, ports and air and sea transport.

**ENERGY** - As a result of the initiatives undertaken during the last few years, we have succeeded in reducing

or in overcoming most of our disadvantages as a small country. However, one of the biggest disadvantages which we still have to reduce is the fact that Malta is totally dependent on fuel for its energy requirements. Other countries have hydroelectricity, nuclear power, coal and gas. However, since fuel is the most expensive amongst energy sources, other countries only use it when all other sources have been exploited. Up to now Malta depends entirely on fuel supplies which have to be purchased from overseas. A Socialist Government will lessen our dependence on oil when in a few months' time it will be possible to operate one of the boilers at the power station by means of coal (as well as oil). Meanwhile encouragement will continue to be given to experimental work so that solar energy, wind energy and other sources of energy will be harnessed. However, until such time as these projects remain in an experimental stage, we shall have to make use of coal so as not to be entirely dependent on oil.

If efforts to reach agreement with coal-exporting countries are successful, a coal terminal will be set up at Marsaxlokk. This will not only provide transshipment activity but will also ensure that Malta will have abundant supplies which will also serve our needs at favourable prices.

**WATER** - Water has always been a major problem for Malta because we have no mountains and rivers. However, by adopting prudent policies and without wasting money we were able to increase daily water production from 11 million gallons in 1971 to 15.6 million gallons in 1981.

In the years ahead we will still have to proceed with caution. As in all other countries, we shall first have to exploit all natural water supplies. Firstly, we have to collect it from valleys and springs, and then by means of boreholes and galleries we shall extract water that is stored in the aquifers. Both these methods are currently in use and will continue to provide increased levels of water production in the years ahead. We shall also endeavour to find out for the first time if there is any water stored beneath sea water level as found elsewhere (deep wells). This search will be carried out concurrently with the petroleum exploration programme.

Because of a sharp rise in demand and because the amount of rainfall in the last five years compared to the previous five years has gone down, it appears that all efforts to produce more water by natural means will not be completed sufficiently in advance so as to be able to meet future demand. There is therefore no other option but, at a great cost, to resort to artificial methods that are much more expensive than natural methods of water production. This will put us at a disadvantage when we compete with other countries. Already energy costs put us at a disadvantage and therefore great caution has to be exercised in water production.

The Government has already received tenders from a great number of firms so that either by means of the process of reverse osmosis (which so far seems to be the cheapest alternative) or by means of desalination we shall increase water production. This project will cost millions of pounds.

In order to augment water supplies for irrigation the Socialist Government is implementing the sewage purification plant project.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS** - For a small island that depends heavily on foreign trade, telecommunications are vital. The Labour Government is fully aware of this and for the purpose it has already implemented and will continue to implement new projects so as to expand telecommunication facilities both locally and internationally.

Besides an expansion of telephone and telex services, other new projects will be implemented including a maritime station for radio contact with ships sailing off Malta and a satellite earth station for communications with other countries. This project will be taken in hand once it has been established that this is the best method and the most economic alternative that can cater for our needs.

PORTS - During the last few years vast outlays have been earmarked for the expansion of quays and other facilities in the Grand Harbour and for the runway extension project at Luqa and the extension of the air terminal. Now that facilities at the ports and the airport have been modernised, the time has come for the setting up of a parastatal organisation, Port Malta. This organisation will be responsible for the running of our ports on the most efficient lines and in the most economic way. It will also be responsible for the implementation of port development projects. This will serve as another means of direct participation by all those who are directly connected with port activities and will provide another opportunity for individuals who are able and who possess good will to participate in the country's development process.

AIR AND SEA TRANSPORT - We are aware that in recent years most national airlines are operating at a loss. In spite of all this, Air Malta has so far succeeded in registering profits. A Socialist Government will do its utmost so that the national airline will remain competitive. To achieve this it will be necessary to ensure that:

- Maltese personnel trained at the company's expense will receive adequate levels of remuneration that will maintain standards of relativity with Maltese salaries;
- efficiency will increase and aircraft maintenance is increasingly carried out by Maltese staff; and
- before the fleet modernization programme is carried out, there will be a close assessment of aircraft available in the airline industry so that the most advantageous choice will be made.

Various studies have been recently carried out regarding the aircraft modernisation programme. However, it has not yet proved possible to arrive at a decision because the aircraft which seemed the most attractive proposition because of low interest rates, the best engines and configuration are not as yet in service in Europe. Moreover it is not felt in the national interest to take a quick decision when in a short time a number of virtually new aircraft are expected to become available on the market at very competitive prices. This will be to the country's advantage because it will allow ample time for a better decision to be taken regarding the purchase of new aircraft.

As regards sea transport, the Labour Government has taken the necessary steps so that Sea Malta will be able to share with Conference Lines the transport of cargo between Malta and other countries. These steps were taken to ensure that the transport of merchandise by sea would not be completely under foreign control.

Now that Sea Malta has its share of cargo transport and it has been strengthened and is registering profits, ways will have to be identified so that the carriage of cargo by sea will be undertaken at more competitive rates without prejudice to the national shipping line.

#### **IV. THE FINANCIAL SECTOR**

Between 1971 and 1981, the Labour Government gave considerable attention to the financial sector. At the start, it had to tackle a number of problems inherited from the Nationalist administration. These included the collapse of BICAL and of the National Bank Group which shook the banking system. These problems were overcome successfully. Moreover, steps were taken to restructure the financial sector. This ensured that crises which do so much damage to many families and to the economy will not happen again. These steps also ensured that as the Maltese economy developed and expanded, Malta would have at its disposal the necessary financial services for the country's benefit.

There is now in the country an efficient and a reliable commercial banking system. A larger share of their profits is retained in Malta. There is also the Investment Finance Bank for long-term industrial loans as well as

another bank which provides loans to small businessmen and to the thousands of people building their own houses. The first offshore bank has also recently been launched in which the Maltese people, through the Government, has a shareholding.

Nonetheless, development is a continuous process, even in the financial sector. A Labour Government will therefore immediately take the following steps:

### **Interest rate**

In other countries interest rates have risen sharply and several firms have been saddled so heavily with high interest rates that their financial position worsened. Not only were they not able to undertake new investments and employ more workers, but they also had to reduce their levels of activity and discharge workers.

In Malta, industrialists, hotel owners, businessmen and all those who undertake loans for investment purposes have, throughout these years of international difficulties, continued to borrow at the low rate of 8%. In this way the assistance which the Maltese people have already given and are still giving to entrepreneurs is enormous especially when the 8% interest rate is compared to the 20% interest rate in the USA.

So that this may happen, the interest rate which commercial banks pay on the deposits of Maltese families had to remain low. It would be dangerous at this stage (before our industries become stronger) to increase the interest rate on funds borrowed by industry from the banking sector. Efforts will have to be made so that without raising this interest rate, the commercial banks will pay higher interest rates on bank deposits.

At present the banks offer savings deposits, which can be withdrawn after seven days' notice, and which carry an interest rate of 3%; and fixed deposits, which are tied for one year and which yield an interest rate of 5%.

With effect from 1st January, 1982, a Labour Government will increase the interest rate on fixed deposits for one year from 5% to 6%. Moreover, a new fixed deposit scheme will be introduced covering fixed deposits for six months with an interest rate of 5%.

As a result of this measure, it is envisaged that Maltese families will annually earn an additional one and a half million pounds, a sum which will continue to rise in line with the rise in deposits.

### **Special repatriation deposit scheme**

In 1976, the Labour Government introduced the Special Repatriation Deposit Scheme. By means of this scheme, individuals having overseas investments will be able to repatriate their money in Maltese currency in a special deposit. An interest rate which is higher than on other deposits is paid on this special deposit. During these last years, for instance, the rate on this special deposit stood at 9%. All those who participated in this scheme set their minds at rest from the threat that sterling would lose its value on the international market. A Labour Government will continue to offer, through the banking system, facilities for this special deposit for a one year period at an interest rate that will be determined annually. A Labour Government will now also offer another special repatriation deposit scheme.

Under this new scheme-the New Special Repatriation Deposit Scheme-funds withdrawn from overseas can be placed in the Central Bank without being tied for one year. These funds can be withdrawn on fifteen days' notice. On these deposits the Central Bank will pay an interest rate equivalent to what it earns on its foreign investments less 1%. (This will cover administration expenses incurred by the Central Bank and the other banks). The interest rate will be announced in arrears not later than a week after the end of each month.

By means of this new special deposit scheme, overseas investments can be repatriated, however small the amount may be; funds will be fixed for only fifteen days and the interest rate will be much closer to what the Central Bank earns on the international market on the millions of Maltese pounds which the country holds in its official reserves. All those who withdraw their overseas investments will be given the right to invest them again overseas.

### **Unit for national investment**

There are in Malta very few public companies (that is companies whose shares can be bought on the open market). Moreover, though private companies can have up to 59 shareholders, only few have more than 10; the majority of them have about five shareholders. It is therefore felt that it is not in Malta's interest to have a Stock Exchange. This is especially so in a small country such as Malta (this can sometimes happen also in large countries) where the Stock Exchange can be dominated by persons with strong financial backing to the detriment of small shareholders.

The Maltese people, through the Government, now has a substantial share from the gains of national production. A new Labour Government will take the necessary measures to give the people the opportunity to participate in a direct way in investment.

To achieve this aim, the Government intends to offer a Unit for National Investment made up of shares and loans to a number of companies with Government shareholding.

The industrial and commercial firms whose shares will be placed in the Unit will be identified and brought to the attention of the public as soon as the Unit is formed.

In order to ensure fairness, shares which feature in the Unit will remain unchanged although Unit owners will be free to sell their Units. In order to ensure that Unit holders are not exploited because of lack of familiarity with these matters, a Labour Government will take steps so that a committee will be set up composed of representatives of the Central Bank and the other banks. This committee will, from time to time, determine the price of the Unit on the basis of the net assets and profits from shares in the Unit. This committee will from time to time make public the value of the Units so that commercial banks will be authorised to buy and sell on behalf of their clients at fair prices.

### **Government finances and taxes**

During the last ten years, the Socialist Government made radical reforms in Government finances. It introduced a serious approach and efficiency both in the collection of revenue and in expenditure: revenues rose sharply by means of public participation in industrial and commercial projects such as banks, Air Malta, Sea Malta, and other projects. Good use was also made of the vast property taken over from the British Government. This property is now providing large amounts of revenue.

The sharp rise in foreign reserves and the wise investment of these reserves, besides strengthening the Maltese pound, are also leaving handsome profits in the Consolidated Fund. Moreover, successful efforts were also made to obtain from several friendly countries many millions of pounds in grants or loans at low interest as well as equipment costing large amounts. The whole country benefited from these initiatives because these amounts were used to set up projects which are now yielding profits.

A Labour Government will continue to do its utmost so that income from investments made by the Maltese people and from other new investments will increase and this will serve to lessen the tax burden. In line with our beliefs, when tax rates are reduced, the lower income groups will be the ones to be affected first while the other groups will be the next ones to have their burden eased. A Socialist Government will continue to revise

and review the tax structure from time to time according to the country's economic progress. Attention will also be focussed on the need to ensure that taxes are paid according to one's income and that the national product should increase so that every individual's share will also rise. Even insofar as the payment of taxes is concerned, adequate incentives must always remain so that hard work and responsibilities are adequately rewarded. In this way initiative and productivity will rise.

## V. FREEDOM AND PEACE

### The basic principles

#### Democracy

The objective to strengthen democracy will be achieved when the minority will have the right to hold and express its views while the will of the majority is carried out.

Parliamentary democracy alone is not enough. It must be accompanied by measures to ensure that democracy also exists in economic and social decisions which affect closely the daily life of Maltese citizens and especially at their place of work. The Workers' Movement confirms its objective to instil further in our country this type of democracy.

With this aim in view a Socialist Government will encourage citizens to undertake new responsibilities and play a more direct role in the running of the country. Because of the fact that for thousands of years Malta was under foreign rule, the Maltese people are still not sufficiently aware of the fact that the greater the distribution of responsibilities, the lighter becomes the burden. It is not possible for the small number of individuals who direct the Government machinery to undertake alone all the tasks that are required. It is a fact that under the Socialist Government the number of people with good will who are capable of carrying out these tasks has grown; but it must continue to grow at a faster rate and a Workers' Government will continue to offer the necessary opportunity and encouragement to enable these forms of democracy to grow even further.

#### Freedom

In our country it was the Workers' Movement which fought in favour of and acquired for the Maltese the right to live in a freely democratic environment. The Movement also established the right to freedom of speech and action. This, however, will be rendered meaningless should anyone still think that he should wield greater strength than the other members of the community that will enable him to exercise control over the others.

The first and greatest undertaking which the Labour Party can give the Maltese people for the years ahead is that it will continue to safeguard Malta's freedom as a state so that it will remain untarnished. The second undertaking is that it will continue to safeguard the liberty of each and everyone of us. This cannot be accomplished if all members of the community only act in their own interests. Every citizen must act in a way which is beneficial to himself and his neighbour. A society built on these truly Socialist principles is the greatest guarantee to a free life.

#### Social Justice

We believe that in a free and Socialist society, each one of us, irrespective of his condition, should have an equal opportunity to live a full life and to develop his personality. We believe that each one of us has the same right to education, housing accommodation, work, medical care and assistance in old age. This is the basis of

a Socialist society where each one gives his share and receives what he truly deserves. The conditions under which wealth in the country is distributed should therefore be N. guided by these principles of social justice.

## **The institutions**

### The Constitution

The supreme instrument which regulates the administration of the country is the Constitution. It had to be the Workers' Movement which provided Malta with a republican constitution acceptable to all the political forces of the country. This constitution is based on the principles of democracy, liberty and social justice. Its cornerstone, however, is the belief that progress in all sectors in our country results from work. The Constitution will continue to safeguard this main basic principle under the process of social development which the Workers' Movement intends to continue to carry out in the years ahead.

The Constitution must be safeguarded not only against outside forces but also against any threats from within the country. Therefore every Maltese citizen should be prepared even to shed his blood to defend the Constitution. The Armed Forces should serve as the shield of the Constitution. There is now also Id-Deima. In future its activities will have to be expanded so that every citizen will become more conscious and capable of defending the country against any threat which may occur.

### Parliament

Parliament will remain the institution where the will of the majority and the views of the minority will find their expression. Parliament will serve the country in the following ways:

- the Government will continuously inform the Maltese people about its activities in those sectors falling under its responsibility;
- the Government will present to Parliament laws which are drafted in accordance with the wishes of the majority so that the views of the minority and of all members will be put forward;
- all members, on behalf of the people they represent, should ensure that the country's administration is clean; and
- each member, especially the Opposition, can freely express their opinions about activities in all sectors in the country and outside.

A Socialist Government will do its utmost so that the people will be better informed on all the activities carried out in Parliament. This will be done by increasing airtime for broadcasts of parliamentary debates.

Parliament has still out-dated procedures which were thrust upon us by the British, or which because of our colonial mentality, we copied too slavishly from the British system. Measures will therefore be taken so that work in Parliament will be rendered more effective and closer to everyday life and so that this institution will be able to carry out its functions better.

As regards the island of Gozo, which although separated by a stretch of sea from the other parts of the Maltese Islands, is and still remains an integral part of the Republic of Malta, representatives of Gozo in Parliament, Ministers and public officials will meet in public to discuss the problems of this island. This should help Gozitans to understand better the decisions which affect their everyday life.

### The Courts

The Workers' Movement is proud that it set up the Workings of the Workers' Law Courts Commission. We have now proved beyond any doubt to all and sundry that the reforms which we are introducing are only meant to ensure a greater measure of justice. The first report of the Commission that was recently presented to Parliament has served as an indication of the need to expedite procedures and to exercise greater control over the work of the courts. Thus justice will be meted out in the shortest possible time to all individuals. In this way, due steps can be taken against those who harm others or who disrupt society.

The Socialist Government is carrying out the people's wishes whereby the judicial system allows equality of treatment for all. It is not enough to let judges and magistrates free to deliver sentences with impartiality. There must also be the means whereby the people can feel sure that this is in fact being done. A Socialist Government therefore promises that the reforms which have been introduced will be reviewed from time to time in the light of circumstances and in accordance with the will of the people.

### **Foreign Policy and Peace in the Mediterranean**

The Workers' Movement linked the freedom of the Maltese people with beliefs and objectives that will ensure that in due course, together with other neighbouring states, we shall be able to live in a peaceful region. It was for this reason that the Socialist Government throughout the fierce struggle against foreigners started to sow the seeds for a Mediterranean free from nuclear bombs, free from bases manned by the superpowers and where conflict between countries in this region does not serve as an excuse for interference by extraneous powers in order to continue to create tension and thus hold sway over the area. The Maltese people now fully understand why Malta adopted such a rigid stand in Helsinki, in Belgrade and now also in Madrid.

While we were carrying out this task we proved to our Arab friends and to our friends in Europe that Malta no longer wants others to use it against the interests of the Mediterranean. This new Malta was born and was able to start asserting its own identity because the country fully realized that it should maintain friendly links with both sides of the Mediterranean region.

This is the political reason which explains why Malta cannot share the same aspirations and ideas of the European Community before full cooperation and understanding exists between the Community and Arab States. It is not considered in Malta's interest to break ties with Arab countries to expect that in this way the respect of European states will be gained because it is really in the interest of the European countries bordering the Mediterranean that Malta will continue to serve as a bridge of peace between the two sides.

European countries are now getting closer to our views concerning the solution of the biggest problem of the Mediterranean. European states are now increasingly aware that the Palestinian problem can only be solved if action is undertaken along the lines which we have always strongly advocated and which we still firmly believe in, namely that Israel should return to the 1967 frontiers and that the Palestinian people should be given the right to establish their own independent state. This readily explains how in recent years Malta has striven for the benefit of both sides-Arab as well as European nations. All these endeavours have also resulted in material advances for the country. Our commitment towards a free Mediterranean will be strengthened further.

Broadcasting should also serve as another important instrument that will enable Malta to continue to strive for freedom and peace in our country and in the Mediterranean. There is no need to hesitate or to expect another powerful country to undertake this task as well. A reliable broadcasting service can offer a stronger contribution towards the safeguarding of our freedom than a fleet of warships or an arsenal of bombs. We believe that a share of our resources should be earmarked for these activities.

The Workers' Movement feels proud that Malta as a nation has made a big step in the right direction now

that consensus has been reached that in our country there should never again be a foreign military base. This is the strongest evidence that we can give our neighbours and other powerful nations that Malta wants to remain neutral and equidistant from the two superpowers. The whole world is aware that we gave the United States of America the same opportunity which we offered to the Soviet Union. Whereas the USSR accepted to recognize, respect and sustain the status of the Republic of Malta as a neutral State with a policy of non-alignment, the USA is still hesitating.

We will continue to undertake efforts to convince the United States of America that if it really does not want wars, if it really does not want to use Malta against its neighbours or against the other superpower, then it is in their own interest, as much as it is ours, to enter into an agreement as Malta has proposed.

As regards neighbouring states, we will continue our efforts so that these countries will choose the most suitable formula to support Malta's neutrality in accordance with their own needs and circumstances.

But we also believe that the Maltese should be ready so that, whatever the circumstances, when an outside threat exists or worse still, force is used against us we will use all the means at our disposal as well as the resources of our friends to overcome these threats. For the Maltese, Malta comes first and foremost.