

I. THE MALTA LABOUR PARTY RE-AFFIRMS ITS FAITH

(a) In all our actions we take our inspiration from the teachings of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as propounded by the Roman Catholic Church. In our relations with the British Government we are guided by the belief that all men are born free and equal; that all men are God's children. For the smooth and friendly co-operation between employers and employees, between rich and poor, we shall continue to apply the Christian tenets of the Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno, and we shall continue to combat Communism in all its forms.

(b) The Malta Labour Party is a national movement. Its members come from all classes.. It is not Marxist either in ideology or in action. Nationalization, where necessary, will therefore be limited to such public services as are strictly essential for the well being of The community, and only in those cases where monopolies hold away. Indeed, in the previous legislature a Nationalist-Boffa Government put into effect a measure included in the Labour Party Electoral Programme of 1950 - the nationalization of gas. -

II. THE STATE OF THE NATION

Present day relative prosperity is based on a precarious and temporary basis. Economic buoyancy exists only as a result of intensive rearmament programmes, and does not, in any way, reflect the actual state of the country.

The present(national income derives mainly from the following sources:

- (a) Employment with the Defence Services.
- (b) War Damage Fund.
- (c) Income from flats let to Service families.
- (d) Civil Defence grant. -

It appears that our dependence on British Government grants is rapidly increasing. In the Budget for 1953/54 - on which the Coalition Government was defeated - out of eight and a quarter million pounds estimated revenue, no less than one and a half million pounds were Imperial Government grants; and a sum of over one and a quarter million pounds was estimated to be spent from these grants.

This shows a steady deterioration in our financial and economic position since 1949; and unless urgent and efficient measures were adopted, it would mean our complete economic collapse.

To avoid this eventuality when the present rearmament race comes to a halt, it is essential to re-examine and to strengthen the foundations of our economic life.

III. REMEDIES

(a) ECONOMIC VIABILITY

The Malta. Labour Party considers that the major national requirements for a long term economic viability are now determined in the light of present events and circumstances and the following is their classification. Failing

their adoption the party considers that no other temporary remedies could be efficiently substituted to face the desperate situation towards which Malta is moving:

1. The development of catchment areas to increase our water supply to meet the increasing demand made upon it by ourselves, by the British and by other NATO fleets.

2. A voluntary Evacuation/Emigration scheme to reduce unnecessary confusion and hardship in case of open hostilities and to give the Islands a breathing space whilst economic reconstruction is in progress.

Meanwhile every effort will be made to improve present emigration facilities.

3. Equality of conditions and treatment of Maltese personnel vis a vis other respective national counterparts, when Maltese men and women are employed by any of the countries of NATO, including Britain.

4 Development by USA and Britain of local industries, especially those with a high labour content.

5. Payment of an economic and adequate rent for all Malta Government land and buildings held by the Forces of any friendly Nation.

6. A clear guarantee to reconstruct the Islands at NATO's expense should war break out and the Islands be bombed again.

7. An immediate drive, for large scale technical education to provide a nucleus of skilled workers vitally necessary in any region crying out for development.

(b) CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES- INTEGRATION OR SELF-DETERMINATION

Hand in hand with these measures must go constitutional changes the object of which may be condensed in one phrase, viz; to allow the people of Malta and Gozo the same political freedom as that enjoyed by the people of Britain and the Dominions.

Whether this takes the shape of Dominion status, integration with Britain or National independence guaranteed by NATO or other similar International Body, is immaterial to the well being of these Islands.

Integration or self-determination, once admitted, both imply abolition of Reserved Matters now fettering our Constitution. The Malta Labour -Party realizes that Malta cannot defend itself without extraneous help. On the other hand we considering that this incapacity ought not to be exploited against the interests of the Maltese.

We therefore consider an agreement between Britain and Malta as essential and equitable at this stage. This agreement would not only cover the best method of carrying out an efficient defence of these Islands but would at the same time admit the principle of respect of the civic and political rights of the Maltese, by being based on the terms of the treaty regulating relations between NATO countries.

IV. LOCAL MEASURES

We consider the following measure essential to supplement a long term programme as outlined above:

(a) The introduction of Unemployment Insurance which will benefit all workers, whether employed in private enterprise or by the Imperial or Maltese Governments.

This measure will have to be introduced as soon as possible whilst there is relatively full employment for all workers, and will be based on similar schemes as those in Britain and on the Continent.

(b) An Insurance Scheme to substitute the present Workmen's Compensation Act and to compensate workers for all injuries sustained during the performance of their duties.

(c) Free medical service for the lower-middle and working classes. This would also include measures to expedite the building of a modern Sanatorium in substitution of the Connaught Hospital.

(d) Introduction of new social services and betterment of existing ones to alleviate the lot of the poorer section of the population.

(e) Revision of the laws of Malta such as to bring our legislation and Courts of Law in line with other European countries and codification and improvement of present industrial legislation, particularly to bring about a more speedy settlement of industrial disputes.

Repeal of any regulations contemplating penal measures against Trade Union leaders and workers availing themselves of the right to strike, and other rights existing under the Trade Union Act.

(f) **POLICE FEDERATION** - Setting up of a Police Federation to protect and promote the interests of minor officials and for the purposes.

Service in the Police Reserve to count towards pension.

Other reforms which will ensure an efficient and happy

Police Force.

CIVIL SERVICE etc.-

(g) Reforms necessary in the Civil Service and other branches of the Administration which would ensure not only efficiency but also the well being of employees.

Recognition of rights of professional officers.

A careful study of present conditions of service with a view to eliminating any anomalies that may exist.

EMPLOYMENT-

(h) Non-party economic commission which would be allotted the task of distributing employment in Malta and Gozo.

(i) **EDUCATION-** University. Recognition of Malta's degrees in Britain and on the Continent.

Necessary reforms in primary, technical and higher education.

(j) **THE PRESS-** All party Commission to be set up with a view to studying and solving the existing problem of press monopoly in Malta, in consonance with the freedom of the press.

Making Malta known to English Residents.

(k) **TRADE**- Liberalization of local trade. Protection of local traders from expanding activities of N.A.A.F.I. and similar institutions. Restoring equilibrium in local trade. Encouragement of local industries. Instituting Board of Trade. Building of Tourist industry. Drive for Increased food production on these Islands. Institution of an Agricultural, Fishing and Industrial Bank. Sale of Government land to farmer occupiers.

(l) **RENT RESTRICTION**- Revision of Rent Restriction Law to safeguard the interests of shop tenants and consumers alike. Clubs shall be included when this revision takes place.

(m) **OIL PROSPECTING**- Encouragement of Oil Prospecting projects and other underground mineral resources.

(n) The erection of a National Broadcasting and Television Station to replace the outmoded Rediffusion Service. Negotiations with present Rediffusion owners to achieve this end.

(o) **OPERA HOUSE**- Speedy rebuilding of the Opera House.

(p) Introducing of Film Renting Regulations.

(q) **HOUSING** -A comprehensive study of the housing problem to alleviate present hardships.

(r) **COST OF LIVING** - Endeavours will be made to keep the cost of living as low as possible.

(a) Construction of Playing Fields.

V. RELATIONS WITH BRITISH AND FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

The Maltese people are proud of their European origin, Latin culture and traditions, and consider that the perpetuation of colonialism and economic discrimination between our workers and UK personnel doing the same job, is inconsistent with long established European practices and traditions.

VI. CONSCRIPTION

It is immoral to introduce conscription or any other coercive measures, unless the principle of equality of pay and opportunity to Maltese personnel as enjoyed by their counterparts in UK, is simultaneously put into practice. Should these elementary rights be ignored the Malta Labour Party will oppose conscription.

CONCLUSION

With goodwill on the part of the British Government and a strong determination by the Maltese people, the grave problems accumulated since the British occupation of Malta at the beginning of the XIX Century will be amicably solved.

If this is achieved we anticipate that the people of these Islands will follow the example of Ceylon, India, Pakistan and other countries and reaffirm their association with the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In any case Malta cannot be denied the right to Self-Determination since this is the basis of the "Charter of Human Rights".

The Malta Labour Party will strive to ensure the adoption of these principles. Failing an agreement with the British Government we shall have recourse to U.N.O. in the hope of reaching a satisfactory settlement.

17th November 1953.

DOM. MINTOFF
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D.M. CREMONA
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