

NATIONALIST PARTY ELECTORAL PROGRAM (1962)

MALTA, CATHOLIC AND FREE

Approved by the Nationalist Party Congress attended by thousands on Sunday, 21st January, 1962 at 9.30 a.m. at the Hollywood Theatre, Hamrun.

The political and constitutional status of our country must be based on a solid and permanent foundation once for all.

It is no longer the time for temporary constitutions, patched up with reserved matters and backed by the power of the British Government which can change or withdraw them at will to suit its purposes.

The British Government's policy of granting self-government to its colonies has been in continuous operation, at an ever increasing tempo, for the past fifteen years, and the time is very near when there will be no more colonies. The declarations of the Council of Europe and the decisions taken repeatedly by the United Nations have sounded the knell of colonialism. The last Papal Encyclical "Mater et Magistra" has reasserted the right of all peoples, large and small, to be free in their own country. All that awaits colonialism is its burial.

The Nationalist Party has long ago shown the people of Malta and Gozo the road to follow. The Party is convinced that the solution of Malta's problems can be found only when our country attains full and independent membership in the family of the British Commonwealth, that is what has long been understood by "Dominion Status".

The Party recalls and emphasises the fact that after the great Nationalist victory of 1932 a Maltese Government delegation, comprising the great patriots Sir Ugo U. Mifsud and Dr. Enrico Mizzi, had gone to London and submitted a memorandum to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 30th July, 19329 officially demanding the grant of Dominion Status to Malta.

Likewise, the Party is convinced that Malta's place is among the free nations of the West and in a free Europe, and we therefore approve the presence of the NATO armed forces in our midst.

The Party is determined that Malta shall not remain a passive spectator in the struggle between democracy and communism. In order that Malta slay not remain neutral, we must keen away from power the local representatives of international socialism.

The Party, therefore, reiterates the fundamental principles for which it exists, which are the following:

- 1) AS EVER IN THE PAST, THE PARTY REMAINS LOYAL TO THE CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC AND ROMAN CHURCH, TO ITS AUTHORITIES AIDE TO ITS PRINCIPLES, WHICH MUST BE DEFENDED IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. TO ENSURE THIS THE PARTY PLEDGES THAT, AS IN PAST, IT SHALL WORK HAND IN HAND WITH THE ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY. OUR MILLENARY FAITH ALONE CAN SAFEGUARD THE RELIGIOUS AND

MORAL LIFE OF OUR PEOPLE. ONE MUST NOT FORGET THAT IT WAS A NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT THAT IN 1922 ENACTED A LAW WHEREBY THE CATHOLIC RELIGION WAS DECLARED TO BE THE ONLY OFFICIAL RELIGION OF THESE ISLANDS.

2) THE SECURING FOR MALTA OF A CONSTITUTION WHICH WOULD GIVE IT FULL SELF-GOVERNMENT. THE PARTY BINDS ITSELF SOLEMNLY THAT UNDER SUCH A CONSTITUTION OUR COUNTRY SHALL BE A MEMBER OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH. BESIDES THIS MEMBERSHIP, WE WANT TO MAKE DEFENCE TREATIES WITH GREAT BRITAIN, SO THAT MALTA MAY GIVE ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE EFFORTS OF NATO AND THE WESTERN POWERS IN KEEPING THE THREAT OF COMMUNIST IMPERIALISM FAR FROM EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN. MALTA MUST SHOW INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM IN THE NEW TRENDS IN EUROPE BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE COMMON MARKET, AND BY THE GOOD PROSPECTS OF THE FORMATION OF A EUROPEAN FEDERATION.

3) SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL CLASSES OF THE POPULATION, ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST IN NEED, ACCORDING TO THE BELIEFS AND TEACHINGS OF THE PAPAL ENCYCLICALS, PARTICULARLY THE LATEST "MATER ET MAGISTRA". THE PARTY LOOKS TO THE LARGER PART OF THE POPULATION, THE WORKERS, WHOSE SUPPORT IT EXPECTS IN THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE, SO THAT IT MAY HAVE THE POWER AND AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE WORK FOR ALL. THE PARTY INSISTS THAT THE WORKING CLASS SHALL HAVE WAGES AND CONDITIONS OF WORK WHICH WILL MAKE THEM PROUD OF BEING WORKERS AND ENABLE THEM TO ASSERT THAT THEY CAN EARN A DECENT LIVING THROUGH THEIR OWN SKILL.

4) THE PARTY SHALL CONTINUE THE FIGHT IN DEFENCE OF OUR LATIN CULTURE AND OF OUR EUROPEAN CIVILISATION.

Diversification of the Economy

The recent radical changes in Britain's defence policy, as well as the British economic situation, have made it imperative that our economic structure should be diversified in the shortest time possible. In order that we may succeed in this diversification we require substantial help which Britain as long as we remain a colony, refuses to grant. The Party maintains that the Western Powers, the democratic countries and international organisations, among which the United States is the chief contributor, should include Malta in the long list of countries receiving annual aid from them to the tune of thousands of millions of pounds. In this way we shall ensure the best help towards the success of the diversification of our country.

The Dockyard

The Party is not happy with the way in which the plan to enable the Dockyard to carry out commercial works in competition with other Mediterranean Dockyards is being implemented. This matter involves the future security of at least 5,500 workers. The Party will therefore investigate the whole question properly and impartially, in the best interests of the country in general and of the workers and their families in particular.

Industrialisation

The Party binds itself to promote a serious plan to induce foreign capital and industrialists to help in the industrialisation of our Islands. The stability of our country and our assurance to respect capital helpful to the Maltese economy, should persuade the majority of the Maltese Capitalists to invest in our country.

The help given to new industries is not the best that can be given and is in many cases inadequate. With the help of experts we shall improve the Whole plan and attract more capital to our country.

Commerce

Once the country is going to be industrialised in earnest a radical change must take place in the commercial sector. A Nationalist Government would be in duty bound to continue and increase its help and protection to local industries, provided that they turn out good products which can compete in price with foreign ones, compatibly with the interests of the national economy. Special facilities will be given to those industries which really help the balance of payments by means of exports. The Customs -tariff will be revised and complicated customs procedures eliminated.

Tourism

Tourism is another way of diversifying our economy. Other Mediterranean countries have developed tourism so as to make it one of the main pillars of their economy. This can be done equally well in Malta and Gozo, because our country possesses all the necessary attractions.

To date no serious effort has been made in the field of tourism. To attract tourists to Malta, which is so near to some of the most important and developed tourist resorts, there must be an adequate number of hotels and restaurants, including the existing ones, capable of giving firstclass service. There should also be places of entertainment, and Malta should be able to attract a large number of people who are after a holiday outside their country. Means of transport to and from the Continent should be increased and their cost reduced. Archaeological research will be encouraged. A constant campaign for cleanliness will be maintained with perseverance, particularly on the beaches, and discipline and efficiency will be instilled in internal communications. Substantial aid will be given to those who are willing to contribute in earnest to the success of this industry.

Towards this end the approaches to Valletta and places of highest interest to tourists such as Kingsgate and Castille will be improved and the wardamaged parts of the city will be rebuilt. The Opera House and the law courts will be rebuilt at once.

Oil

Once abandoned by the Colonial Administration, oil exploration will be resumed forthwith in earnest. With this aim in view independent experts will be engaged and continental companies prepared to help Malta solve this problem will be approached.

Technical Education

Economic and industrial development will create a demand for a large number of specialised workers. Moreover the Party wants to reduce substantially and in time eliminate the number of unskilled workers. This will help not only the national economy but will also raise their standard of living. Technical schools will, therefore, be developed and extended with the help of international organisations and of foreign instructors. Besides this, a Nationalist Government will subsidise a plan for apprenticeship in existing industry in order to

speed up technical education.

Education

The education of the younger generation is the basis of our future national life. Compulsory education must continue and should advance towards the limits set by progressive countries. For this purpose the building of new schools, primary and secondary, will proceed; Teachers' Training Colleges will be extended and developed by doubling immediately the number of pupils, and increasing the help given to them. A Nationalist Government will improve the aid given to children in Government schools, and will extend it to children in private schools. Within practicable limits help in just measure will be given to private schools. The Lyceum will be reorganised to enable it to admit and prepare those who intend to follow a career in public administration, new industries and the development of commerce. The teaching of Italian will be intensified without prejudice to English and Maltese. There will be more scholarships at The University for needy students. Literary competitions in Maltese, English and Italian will be encouraged as well as competitions in artistic subjects such as painting, sculpture, history, music, etc. Through cultural education our people must be made to appreciate that we are Europeans and that our future must be shared with a free and democratic Europe. Malta can become a cultural centre in the middle of the Mediterranean, at the crossroads between Europe, Africa and the Near East. The sports education of the rising generation is another means of ensuring that the citizens of tomorrow will have a civic and national training on a sound basis. Every form of sports will be encouraged and, as we have envisaged in the past, there must be a national stadium. There must be a Sports Board.

Emigration

It is essential that there should be a large number of skilled workers, so that our country will not be deprived of trained workers due to the fact that the best of them will have emigrated. Emigration will not be encouraged through lack of opportunities for employment in Malta but by the desire of the skilled to earn higher wages in other lands. It is within this framework that the Party will continue to aid with all means voluntary emigration. We encourage most particularly emigration to a free Europe.

Radio and Television

A national radio station will be erected and the question of television will be studied forthwith so that we will meet national needs and so that foreign interests will no longer exploit us.

Social Services

A Nationalist Government wants social justice for all. The wealth of the country must be shared with greater equity.

In this way, and in this way alone, will socialism be kept at bay. Our workers must not be deprived of the benefits being enjoyed by the workers of Europe.

The National Insurance Act must be amended so that benefits will accrue as soon as the worker becomes unemployed on attaining the age of 60. The high cost of living necessitates that benefits should be increased, and a worker - if he falls sick - should receive assistance at once and not after three days or in the case of females after six days. A Nationalist government affirms the principle of equal pay for equal work for both sexes.

A Nationalist Government will amend the National Insurance Act to cover everybody.

Old age pensions must at once be substantially increased. Treatment in Government hospitals will be free of charge. Consequently the Government will pay a fair subsidy to private hospitals to enable them to receive patients who cannot be admitted to Government hospitals for lack of space. Besides a free medical service in private homes, there should be in all districts, a free service of specialist consultants. Medicines shall be duty free.

Workers in private employment

Workers in private employment have not had a fair deal so far. A Nationalist Government will enact a law whereby all workers in Government and private employment will enjoy an annual spell of paid leave.

Whitley Councils, introduced by Government under Nationalist Leadership and which have been so beneficial to workers, will have their activities extended to all sectors of work, including those in private employment, and in all industries. Thus a worker, wherever and however employed, will receive decent wages and enjoy decent working conditions as required by social justice defined in the Papal Encyclicals. "Establishment" will gradually be granted to all Government employees who are on permanent employment.

Industrial Relations

Industrial development and social justice cannot be achieved unless relations between employers and employees are based on good and solid foundations. The employer should not exploit those who produce his goods; the worker should not fail to do his duty towards his employer. It is therefore essential that a Nationalist Government should introduce legislative machinery to bring about a rapprochement between both sides every time that an industrial dispute arises and that this should take place without loss of time and without prejudice to any body. Thus, without detracting from the established rights of the workers and the Unions, any industrial disputes will be avoided which gravely harm the national economy, discourage foreign capitalists from investing here and above all do greater harm to the worker himself every time he loses his wages or production is reduced. Both the employer and the employees should bear the consequences if no agreement is reached on the differences between them.

In this sector the Nationalist Party is after the promotion of Trade Unionism and expects that, in the interest of the workers, these should do their duty and contribute towards the development of the Maltese Nation. This can be achieved by safeguarding above all the interests of their members within the framework of the national interest and without any preferences and bias towards any political parties.

The Government Joint Council should be reorganised in order to become more representative and assistance should be granted to the Unions to enable them to send their officials abroad to train more fully in the aims and activities of Trade Unionism.

Fishing

The Fisheries Board should be reconstituted to secure better control of the industry, especially regarding the importation of fish, of sea manoeuvres held by the services on fishing sites, to grant subsidies on fuel and to enable the small fishermen to improve fishing equipment. Suitable works will be carried out in fishing localities and ports throughout Malta and Gozo wherever they are still necessary and especially in neglected areas. Laws will be enacted to check the harm being done to the reproductive element of the bottom to enable fishermen to make use of radiotelephone and to remove the duty on motors intended for fishing purposes. Assistance will be given to fishermen to enable them to acquire fishing boats, motors and equipment. In order to improve his lot, the formation of cooperatives will be encouraged. In order to obtain the best development of the fishing industry and to secure technical and financial assistance Malta should become a member of

F.A.O.

Agriculture

Farmers have a right to a better living and to a just income. A Nationalist Government would introduce the following facilities:

- a) effect improvements to each farmhouse to give the farmer and his family a decent dwelling place;
- b) open and repair farm roads;
- c) distribute more water to increase the acreage under irrigation;
- d) lend money at low interest in order to help farmers to acquire farm machines and equipment;
- e) ensure a fair and just price for farm produce especially tomatoes, grapes and milk used for industrial purposes;
- f) give better facilities for the transport of farm produce from Gozo to markets in Malta;
- g) encourage farmers to form co-operatives;
- h) assist farmers to purchase the land tilled by them for a long time.

General

A Nationalist Government would give great importance to the extension of water, electricity and sewers with a view to reducing appreciably the taxpayer's contribution;

The Nationalist Government reminds certain categories of the population such as soldiers, seamen, airmen and Maltese personnel employed with the Defence Departments that an improvement in their status, more particularly as regards the sense of security - whose need is badly felt - depends entirely on the constitutional powers obtained by Malta as a result of negotiations with the British Government. The attainment of Dominion Status, which today has become an absolute necessity, will put the Maltese Government in a position to be able to provide effectively for the improvement and continuity of their employment in our country.

The 5/- in the £1 tax on interest repealed.

Legislation will be enacted against the infiltration and establishment of communist organisations. A Nationalist Government would assist effectively so that an ever increasing number of families would own the house they inhabit.

The Income Tax and Succession legislation will be revised.

Gozo

The foregoing will apply also to Gozo. Under a Nationalist Government Gozo has always had an extensive share of the benefits which could accrue to these Islands. The Party will continue in its efforts to ensure that ways and means will be found to secure full employment for Gozitans as well. Today Gozo enjoys its own Civic Council whose activities the Party intends to follow with interest, with the aim of giving it the assistance it deserves. A programme for the opening of new roads and the widening and repairing of existing ones will

be proceeded with, with special emphasis on roads used by the farmers.

Long live Catholic and Free Malta.

G.Borg Olivier LEADER

V.E. Ragonesi, General Secretary.