

The Constitutional Party Electoral Programme, 1939

GENERAL POLICY

- 1) The political aspiration of the Constitutional Party is Responsible Government. The party, having made every effort to improve the present Constitution, nevertheless will co-operate therewith as the minimum that is acceptable or now workable, with a view to acquiring full recognition of the right of the Maltese People to equality of treatment and of opportunity with His Majesty's subjects born and residing in Great Britain and the Overseas Dominions.
- 2) The Party asserts the right of the Maltese People to Self-Government, acquired by having conquered and held Malta and Gozo during the two years before the landing of British troops, who were welcomed as co-belligerents with the Maltese Nation.
- 3) The Party will resist any attempt to re-create and perpetuate Bureaucratic Dictatorship through "abstentionism" or non-co-operation in the Council of Government.
- 4) The Party stands for discussion in an Elected Parliamentary Assembly of proposals of new taxation before enactment and for a suitable adjustment thereof to ensure the protection of Maltese workers whenever the collection of more revenue is necessary.
- 5) The Party maintains that the present financial difficulty has been created by the Interim Government and is not due to mal-administration on the part of the People of Malta; the Party will request, consequently, that a contribution be made by the Imperial Authorities to make good this deficit. This is in accordance with precedent. Works partly called for by Imperial necessities should be paid for proportionately. The Party, whilst holding that everyone should be adequately paid, insists on the elimination of waste in the Administration and the re-organisation of Government Departments.
- 6) The Party will seek to establish by regulation facilities that will enable workers to seek redress for grievances and reasonable complaint, and will insist on the hearing thereof without fear of victimisation.

ADMINISTRATION

- 7) The Party pledges itself to recommend and support the following measure:-
 - a. To take all possible steps to assert and forward the rights of the Maltese to equality of opportunity.
 - b. The general revision of the Commercial Laws.
 - c. The consideration and acknowledgment by the Imperial Government of Maltese interests in Commerce, Manufactures and Trade Agreements entered into between Great Britain and the Dominions and Foreign States.

- d. The removal, or lowering, of tariff restrictions against Maltese exports in those countries that export considerable quantities of goods to Malta, where importation to Malta is free, or the duty on the products of such countries is low.
- e. The re-organisation of the Labour Bureau as regards the registration of unemployed under the various trades as a step towards finding work, facilitating extensions in the employment of labour, and encouraging the investment of "New Money" from abroad in local manufactures and industries.
- f. The support of the commercial community in their endeavours to detach themselves from dependence upon commercial agencies in Foreign countries.
- g. The taking of effective measures to suppress and control smuggling within and without the harbours.
- h. The establishment by regulation that the Government shall construct all new roads on modern principles, that all essentials such as drainage, water supply and the formation of the surface of the road shall be completed before the erection of buildings is allowed on new streets; and to ensure that, in planning the roads, care shall be taken to avoid corners and turnings likely to contribute to traffic accidents.
- i. The request that the Government will not spend money on modification or extension of obsolete buildings but will give preference to new constructions in meeting necessities for new public offices; and will give facilities to applicants who may desire to cultivate available plots near built up areas as "thrift gardens". The extension of drainage for sanitary purposes throughout the inhabited areas is to be considered a matter of primary and urgent importance; the Government will be asked to insist that all inhabited buildings shall be maintained in hygienic conditions and that all factories shall be compelled to provide protection against the risk of accident.

LEGISLATION

8) The Party will recommend, in order to improve the general standard of living in the country:-

- a. The extension and amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act to include sick benefit, to eliminate unnecessary formalities, and to expedite the procedure.
- b. The introduction of legislation to establish Old Age Pensions on a contributory basis.
- c. The co-ordination and improvement of legislation regarding hours of work and minimum wages in the mutual interest of employers and employees and of the Tourist Industry.
- d. The appointment of a special Committee by the Council of Government to submit recommendations for the revision of the Fiscal Laws in the interests of industrial development.
- e. The introduction of legislation to enable the Governor to grant and guarantee to investors of capital in Malta for industrial purposes exemption from new taxation, entirely or in part, for a number of years to be agreed upon by the Council of Government.
- f. The introduction of a Post Office Saving Bank to encourage thrift among workers and the extension of such facilities to the villages of Malta and Gozo.

g. Legislative measures to protect Maltese artisans and merchants against unfair Foreign competition.

h. The protection of Agricultural interests and Legislation to facilitate the acquisition of land by the farmers and occupiers thereof and the purchase of the same on easy terms, particularly in those cases where land has remained uncultivated for more than three years; the improvement of holdings by the grant of long leases of rural property, assuring the tenants the right to compensation for improvements, together with legislation for the loan of capital at minimum rates. The Government will be asked to award bonuses to those who undertake to re-claim waste lands and to plant trees or vines thereon.

i. The Agricultural Department should be made more practical and more useful to the farmers. Measures to ensure co-ordination between owners, farmers, the Agricultural Society and the Farmers' Union and provide special facilities for the supply of water for farming purposes.

j. The re-organisation of the Migrants Training Centre at the Government Experimental Farm.

9) The Party will recommend the appointment of a Board of Education and consultations with expert educationalists for the purpose of re-organising the various branches of the Education Department, the co-ordination of Technical Instruction with Secondary Education, the encouragement of Physical Training, and the establishment of holiday camps for children with a view to improving the health of the nation. The Government will be asked to introduce Compulsory Education for all children from 6 to 10 years of age by extending, if necessary, the part-time system, to provide additional facilities for those willing to continue, to supervise the sanitation and management of all day and evening schools and to employ as teachers of English, especially as assistants for kindergarten education, those persons resident in Malta with whom that language is the language learnt from their mothers.

10) The Party will recommend that the Rent Restriction Act shall be made to operate permanently instead of by annual legislation.

11) The Party will facilitate the granting of special tariff preferences to Dominions and Colonies as an inducement to accept Maltese Migrants.

12) The Party will recommend to the Imperial Authorities the re-establishment of the Royal Naval Reserve.

(Sg.) Strickland, Chairman.

(Sg.) A. Gera De Petri Secretary.