

## Chapter IV

# THE NATIONALIST STRUGGLE AGAINST STRICKLAND'S ADMINISTRATION 1899-1902

The *fin de siècle* imperialism, a sharp, heady reaction against Little England and *laissez faire*, saw old idols broken in a sudden conversion to the new religion of possession and race:

Darwin's survival of the fittest was being elevated from a biological theory to a political precept. . . . In some, the admiration of Prussianism, the policy of efficiency and 'thorough', began to march with a distrust in parliamentary institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Joseph Chamberlain, the colonial minister from 1895 to 1903, had not much faith in parliamentary institutions in colonies, as his adamant refusal to concede the elective principle in Trinidad soon after he assumed office indicated.<sup>2</sup> The Anglo-Boer war in Transvaal (1899-1902) was indicative of the times: anti-imperialism reached new heights as nationalist leaders, such as Henri Bourassa in Quebec, used the war to attack Britain.<sup>3</sup>

Had it been for Chamberlain, Malta would not have been granted representative government: 'I would never have granted it', he wrote in 1900, 'but it is a strong thing to take it away and we cannot do it without a very clear case. My policy is to give the Maltese agitators all the rope possible'.<sup>4</sup>

Strickland was increasingly in his element; and the new governor, General (later Field-Marshal) Grenfell (1899-1903) was, like his predecessors, prepared to grant Strickland his *fiat* in administrative affairs.

A military man by training and temperament who had served in South Africa and Egypt, Lord Grenfell was nevertheless sensitive enough to have painting as a hobby, and he evidently found personal satisfaction inspecting the native and the exotic. The first thing he did on arriving in Malta in 1898, after having had tea, was to go round Valletta's curiosity shops,

buying various antikas, the best being a curious picture on glass of the meeting of Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia on the raft at Tilsit. I was fully aware that to the Governor of the island prices would be prohibitive as soon as his identity was known, and therefore I took the opportunity of making my purchases. I think the dealers never quite forgave me.<sup>5</sup>

Typically, Grenfell was interested in improving standards of hygiene and care for the sick and the aged – a disposition that both Chamberlain and Strickland certainly shared – and he also did his part by attempting to

bridge differences between rulers and ruled through initiatives such as the founding of an Archeology Society ('there being a great number of objects of interest in the island which were not properly described and in which sufficient interest was not taken'); a Military Society ('for lectures and discussions by Army and Navy officers which the non-commissioned officers were permitted to attend'); and a Horticultural Society for flower shows and horse shows and dog shows ('I presenting several cups for competitions in various classes').<sup>6</sup> The following entries from the new governor's diary give some idea of his administrative chores and of his philanthropic mentality:

January 8th. – Field day: in the morning, manning the Victoria Lines, riding round the various positions. Lunch at the Dorset Regiment; visited barracks at Pembroke Camp; home at 3; received Colonial Secretary; swore in election agents; received Catholic Bishop of Sphax; Admiral called; dinner of 36.

February 2nd. – Passed the fish market on my early ride and saw a man with mutilated fingers handling fish. Made inquiry and found he was a leper; ordered sanitary officer to report on this man, and the disease generally. In afternoon to Lunatic asylum – much too small – a horrible sight. Devoted Sisters of Mercy tend the women. One old English lady conversed with me; she appeared quite a lady, but incurably mad. The asylum must be enlarged; inspected the prison attached to the Courts – quite disgraceful – there is much to do.<sup>7</sup>

Gratifying himself with regard to the allegedly smooth running of the Malta government, he was optimistic, prepared to be civil, even pleasant, so long however as the opposition did as they were told (particularly on instructions from Mr. Chamberlain) and the administration was kept functioning (mostly by Count Strickland) whatever the political circumstances. Grenfell found Dr. Mizzi 'very affable'<sup>8</sup> but clearly he would not hesitate to take strong measures against the Maltese opposition as he would believe to be necessary for the security of the fortress-colony.

In the renewed language question – that crucial, distinguishing factor in Maltese political thought – Count Strickland was 'the prime mover'.<sup>9</sup> The manner in which he was always recurring to orders-in-council was found 'very objectionable'. Whether an 'important change of the official language should be hurriedly pushed', minuted C. A. Harris, was 'a very grave question'; the methods suggested were 'quite likely to rouse bitter feeling and defeat their own ends'.<sup>10</sup> Information conveyed in despatches thought to have been written by Strickland was 'totally different' from that in despatches thought to have been written by Grenfell.<sup>11</sup> In accordance with his idea of 'getting everything which the Government want, and the Council will not grant, by Order-in-Council',<sup>12</sup> Strickland 'talked in an airy way of an annual Order-in-Council',<sup>13</sup> and had 'only one fixed view of the whole situation'. There was no fear, for instance, that if in 1901 the education votes were rejected or curtailed, salaries could not be paid to teachers or that schools would need to be closed: the colony had an excess of revenue over expenditure and there was room for economy, so that the 'urgency' or 'imminence' claimed by Strickland in favour of order-in-

council was unreal.<sup>14</sup> Strickland, commented Wingfield adroitly, was hurrying the new governor on too fast:

It may be very probable that the elected members of the new Council will be as destructive as their predecessors but it is scarcely justifiable to adopt the extreme course of imposing taxation by Order-in-Council – while a partially elected legislature exists, without giving the legislature the opportunity of voting taxes and expenditure . . .<sup>15</sup>

In his 1899 draft Letters Patent for additional taxation, including the imposition of the 'penny postage' (which the Australian colonies, the Cape, Mauritius and Jamaica had all refused to accept),<sup>16</sup> Strickland made 'a startling provision',<sup>17</sup> 'a revelation!',<sup>18</sup> empowering the governor to legislate by proclamation. The draft Letters Patent was 'the old friend which Count Strickland has again and again been putting forward at one time as consolidation and at another, like the present, as reform'.<sup>19</sup>

Chamberlain was not prepared to legislate by order-in-council as a matter of course, nor would he, at first, adopt Strickland's favourite provisions for what he called 'a *coup d'état*. If this becomes necessary a new Constitution is the best way to settle matters'.<sup>20</sup> By 1902, after three orders-in-council, when it had already been decided to revoke the constitution altogether, Chamberlain was still unhappy that the Malta government's attitude 'made a bad foundation for the *coup d'état*. It is unusual, and too Cromwellian for the present century, to tell a legislative assembly that it has talked enough, and that it must vote everything or nothing'.<sup>21</sup> There was 'no precedent' for Grenfell's minute of 30 April 1902 whereby the postponement or reduction of a vote was considered by the government as a rejection of that vote.<sup>22</sup>

Underlying Strickland's projects of reform in a progressive direction – extending drainage, improving harbours, building schools – there was his overriding obsession with anglicization, the absolute commitment to the superiority and necessity of 'that great Anglo-Saxon tongue':

I believe that the Maltese people are absolutely passive, because they understand that they must educate their children, that English will help them the better to earn their bread.<sup>23</sup>

Chamberlain was impressed.<sup>24</sup> But, 'at the root of the trouble',<sup>25</sup> the language question was the 'only serious point of difference in Malta'.<sup>26</sup> In fact Strickland accused the elected members of wanting to 'barter' approval for the drainage extension scheme with an agreement over the language problem.<sup>27</sup> The P.N. was described simply as 'the party who is opposed to the progress of the English language'.<sup>28</sup> The difference in education policy between Savona and Strickland was that whereas Savona catered logically for a need that was seen to exist, Strickland predicted the elimination of Italian – in the courts as well as in the schools – as the inevitable outcome to the whole situation; with characteristic absolutism he seemed to say, like Macbeth with regard to Duncan: 'if it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly' (I, vii). To the

Stricklandian camp, English in Malta was the one and only carrier and symbol of progress, of civilization: Strickland wanted 'to level the Maltese to English standards' whereas the nationalist's aim, he thought, was 'dragging down the English'.<sup>29</sup> With regard to Maltese, Strickland held the broad 'Savonian' view that Maltese was a Semitic language but that the Maltese themselves were of Phoenician origin; but Strickland went much further than Savona:

The people of this country by descent were no more Italian than the people of Great Britain. In fact in my opinion the Italian and the Latin races in general are more foreign to the people of Malta than is the Maltese Race to some important sections of the English race. I refer to the inhabitants of Cornwall, South Wales, Cumberland and the Scotch Islands where Phoenician Colonies were established.<sup>30</sup>

The implications of this strange creed, by which the North Sea was to be substituted for the Mediterranean were that it was all the more necessary that the Maltese should become as like unto the English as possible; to be anti-English in Malta was tantamount to a betrayal of the Maltese race. Strangely enough, while holding the Maltese to be of Phoenician stock, therefore Aryans, Strickland told the C.O. that the bulk of the Maltese population were 'of Semitic, not of Latin descent' but some others, he continued, particularly the Maltese nobility (and that would have included his Maltese mother) could be considered Italian by descent.<sup>31</sup> Judging from Strickland's unpleasant insinuation regarding Benjamin Disraeli's 'Hebrew descent',<sup>32</sup> it would appear that Strickland was also inclined to be (like Chamberlain) anti-semitic.

Strickland adhered to the Hely-Hutchinson principle – anglicization through systematic discrimination<sup>33</sup> – and he actually twisted this further to read in biblical terms: rewarding 'the good' and punishing 'the wicked'; or else, he said, government would soon come to the end of 'available resources for maintaining discipline and order'.<sup>34</sup> He upheld the view of 'only giving government appointments to those whose loyalty could be relied upon', evidently using the degree of assimilation (or servilism) as a criterion for determining loyalty, and believing that such a policy achieved a marked effect by being followed consistently for a period of years.<sup>35</sup> 'The law of the survival of the fittest is not of my making', he wrote.<sup>36</sup>

Stricklandism was never so pronounced or so thorough as at the turn of the century; nor had nationalism ever been so strong and desperate as now. Chamberlain was hardly the right man to restrain this:

We hold Malta solely and entirely as a fortress essential to our position in the Mediterranean . . . not as an ordinary colony, but as a fortress, . . . in a fortress anything like open agitation against the Government is a thing that cannot be tolerated on the face of it . . . you cannot allow sedition to prevail within it . . . to say that there is any national sentiment connected with the use of Italian in Malta is to be false to the whole history of the island. . . .<sup>37</sup>

Imaginary, alarmist, xenophobic and extremist attitudes were everywhere in evidence. Security was tightened and a rigid system of police surveillance

introduced in a small crowded island that was stifling enough already by its very nature – a place where everything that everybody did or said was ‘the subject of talk and speculation’, where many were connected by family ties and ‘great jealousies’ existed.<sup>38</sup> Strickland’s crown advocate, Alfredo Naudi, was full of praise for the ‘great work’ being done ‘by the Government through the police to induce the people to understand that they should beware of illegality in keeping the agitation on the political situation now pending’.<sup>39</sup> Naudi let it be known publicly that individuals critical of the regime were being shadowed: ‘There were only six persons for whom we have great respect’, he said referring to attendance at a nationalist meeting.<sup>40</sup> Data relating to names, nicknames, occupations, addresses or close relatives of such people were recorded with some dedication.<sup>41</sup> Chamberlain himself asked for ‘names’ to see how government opponents could be undermined by information relating to their private lives.<sup>42</sup> Writing in a newspaper under a *nom-de-plume* could be risky: Malta’s ‘Spartaco’, Dr. E. L. Vella, who worked as a cashier with a London-based company, was reported by Strickland to his anglophile Maltese employer (Edward Tancred Agius) and he stopped his contributions, presumably to save his job.<sup>43</sup> In 1901, when opposition became most intense, R.M.A. units were enlisted to reinforce the police in case of trouble;<sup>44</sup> Italian detectives were employed to investigate if there were anarchists.<sup>45</sup> Even the coming of a Maltese-Tunisian brass band from ‘French’ Tunis was prohibited;<sup>46</sup> and had it been for the Malta government, the visit by a group of Sicilian university students would likewise have been prohibited.<sup>47</sup> Public meetings in cities continued to be banned.<sup>48</sup> Mizzi’s bold effort to organize a protest march, to coincide with the visit to Malta by the colonial under-secretary Earl Onslow, saying that this was not the same as a political meeting, failed dismally. Appealing particularly to the parish priests and clergy, ‘to the members of the sub-committees of the districts’ and of ‘all the clubs and associations’ to explain the object of the demonstration to the populace, Mizzi declared:

I shall take part in it, and just as I have no difficulty to promote it I have no difficulty to place myself at the head of it, and to lead it.<sup>49</sup>

But Strickland promptly issued warnings threatening fines and imprisonment, the governor brought pressure to bear on Pace; and as the bishop acquiesced, so the canons of the Cathedral Chapter backed down also.<sup>50</sup> Not everybody was a Mizzi; the march did not take place. Those who expected to make ‘a good catch of victims’ were disappointed, but Earl Onslow was satisfied that the government in Malta could do as it pleased without fear of violent resistance: ‘They may protest, but they are docile, and law abiding, and the ease with which the proposed procession was put a stop to shows that they will at once yield to firm measures’.<sup>51</sup> The P.N. may be cursed for cowardice or praised for prudence. The party was also

denied permission to use Valletta's Theatre Royal for the singing of a newly-composed national anthem.<sup>52</sup> Various plots were hatched tentatively, especially in the hope of somehow getting rid of Mizzi. When, on Mizzi's instructions, the playing of the (British) national anthem began to be hissed,<sup>53</sup> it was hoped that Mizzi might be imprisoned for sedition: 'it will make the traitors more careful', thought Chamberlain.<sup>54</sup> Admiral Sir John Fisher suggested that Mizzi and others like him should be deported and their newspapers suppressed. He was perturbed by a newspaper article hoping that Chamberlain would 'die rotten, with the most horrible cancer'. The governor of Gibraltar could deport writers, he argued, 'why not the Governor of Malta?'<sup>55</sup> In fact, Victor Serre, a Maltese-Tunisian teacher of French and a free lance reporter for a French press agency, was expelled from Malta as an undesirable in 1901; he was however a French subject.<sup>56</sup> Following certain injudicious pretensions to interference with Council of Government elections by Bishop Pace in 1898, Chamberlain excluded ecclesiastics from the Council as 'a class of persons who can no longer be regarded as capable of exercising an independent judgement in the deliberations of the Council'.<sup>57</sup> As no provision was made to replace the ecclesiastical representative by another member, this automatically reduced the number of elected members to thirteen. The prohibition served to prevent Antonio Dalli, editor of *Il Patriota*, from sitting in Council on the ground that, although not a priest, he was in receipt of some ecclesiastical benefice.<sup>58</sup> Strickland attempted to use the prohibition against Mizzi – a married man who had once been on the verge of excommunication – as it was discovered that as a youth, forty-three years earlier, Mizzi had received minor orders, as was the practice with children of many respectable families in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>59</sup> The vicar-general however would not 'certify to the personal identity' of Mizzi's name and surname as entered in Bishop Pace Forno's register.<sup>60</sup> More significantly, when the C.O. found out about this plot, of which it appears that Grenfell was unaware, they immediately telegraphed Malta to stop the persecution of Mizzi by this means.<sup>61</sup> The overseer is worse than the master.

Meanwhile, all kinds of pro-English trappings were assiduously promoted: schoolchildren taught to sing songs in English,<sup>62</sup> more teachers sent for training in Britain,<sup>63</sup> better prizes for students passing Oxford local examinations;<sup>64</sup> and the translation of the catechism into English by Dr. Enrico Magro, inspector of elementary schools, 'in order to popularize the knowledge of English among the lower classes and to provide acceptable literature printed in the vernacular and at the smallest possible cost'.<sup>65</sup>

Panzavecchia, Savona, even Bishop Pace, were led by circumstances to sympathize with, indeed to rally behind, Mizzi's P.N. The bishop, reported Onslow, spoke of Mizzi 'in the most opprobrious terms', but said that 'he was forced to support his views'.<sup>66</sup>

After 1898 the P.N. took on the form of a national movement, supported by district sub-committees, clubs and associations throughout the country. Mizzi was petitioned to resume the leadership.<sup>67</sup> In August 1898, torn between the wish for a peaceful retirement and the troubles of full-blooded opposition, he decided that as Britain would stop at nothing to anglicize the Maltese, to do away with Italian and all that this represented to their way of life and thinking, it was necessary that there should be an active opposition to stand in the way and if possible to prevent the government's policy from taking effect.<sup>68</sup> The stimulus towards unity forged an almost instantaneous alliance between Savonian-Panzavecchian elements under Mizzi's command: by 1899 elected members were seen to be, at least in electoral terms, 'of the same party'.<sup>69</sup> In 1900 Mizzi was designated 'the Leader of the Elected Bench'.<sup>70</sup> By 1901 he was generally being hailed as 'the leader of the Maltese people',<sup>71</sup> as Savona had been called in 1896. Although party feelings were not suddenly and completely forgotten or forgiven, Savonian members (notably Cesare Darmanin and the architect Francesco Wettinger) no less than Panzavecchian members (notably Dr. Andrea Pullicino and Antonio Dalli) accepted Mizzi's leadership more readily, and certainly more lastingly, than Mizzian members had been prepared to accept Savona's headship of the P.U. in 1891-1893. Naudi acknowledged that there were two parties but said that there was 'no difference of opinion between those who belonged to the one or to the other of them'.<sup>72</sup> Few were the instances when the Savonian members, especially, were conspicuous by their actions or absences. Apart from a certain mutual regard, shown in the instance when they seconded each other's motions,<sup>73</sup> Darmanin and Wettinger left their seats when it came to voting on Mizzi's motion for Italian as a medium of instruction 'in every public educational institution';<sup>74</sup> they both adopted the same tactic when Pullicino, seconded by Mizzi, proposed his resolution on drainage extension.<sup>75</sup> On at least one occasion, they voted with the official members conditionally, in deference to the governor's advice.<sup>76</sup> Darmanin, who owned a marble works establishment at Hamrun, could take independent action when he thought fit, voting with the government in 1899 on the adulterated flour ordinance.<sup>77</sup> Otherwise, however, Darmanin had all the Mizzian intransigence, was committed like the rest to a 'no taxes' policy, and he never challenged Mizzi's position. The P.N., noted the governor, was 'the only political party that was organized';<sup>78</sup> Mizzi immediately became 'the leader of an overwhelming majority'. Nevertheless, the P.N.'s decision not to accept seats in the Executive Council was almost certainly a conciliatory move intended to secure the P.P.'s backing: had Mizzi or any of his supporters accepted to join the executive in 1898 Mizzi's party 'would have split at once'.<sup>79</sup> P.N.-P.P. candidates made a common front to contest the 1898 election, held in the aftermath of controversial education department changes: all the pro-government 'Stricklandian' candidates

were conspicuously defeated;<sup>80</sup> two candidates, including Cachia Zammit for the Żejtun district, were uncontested.<sup>81</sup> Subsequent elections before 1903 (the year when the constitution was finally revoked) were uncontested, all P.N. candidates being automatically returned,<sup>82</sup> except for the 1900 election when Roberto De Cesare (who in 1898 had unsuccessfully contested the Floriana-Hamrun district) contested the Qormi-Żebbuġ district as a moderately pro-government candidate with a manifesto supporting major works being undertaken in the public sector.<sup>83</sup> Formerly a Savonian and subsequently a Stricklandian by inclination, De Cesare, who hailed from Senglea, was, like his namesake Francesco Saverio, associated with *Risorgimento*: his challenge was wiped out as all the uncontested candidates converged on the district canvassing for the P.N. nominee Edoardo Semini, a legal procurator.<sup>84</sup>

The most noteworthy feature on the pro-government side was probably the consistent support of the *Daily Malta Chronicle*, founded in 1887 by Antonio Bartolo. Full of advertisements of British-made commodities, *Chronicle* was linked to Strickland, who was at one time indeed suspected of infringing the colonial regulations by having financial connections with it.<sup>85</sup> After *Chronicle* had twice carried advertisements of freemason activities, Mizzi described it as a paper written at the palace, published on account of, and entirely for the benefit of, the garrison, having a 'fanatical anti-Catholic colour';<sup>86</sup> similar allegations were made by Savona.<sup>87</sup> Strickland wished to start a semi-official paper, subsidized from state funds; alternatively it was suggested 'subjecting to a press censorship all newspapers not printed in English'.<sup>88</sup> In 1902, laying the colonial regulations aside, the government planned to publish a Maltese language paper for 'the rapid advance of Anglo-Saxon civilization and British ways of thought and speech amongst the lower classes', as well as possibly an Italian language paper run on similar lines. Dr. Enrico Magro, the inspector of government schools, was to take charge of financial obligations but the *Chronicle* editor, Bartolo, 'with a good manager under him', was expected to control the undertaking.<sup>89</sup> The project, which soon misfired, indicated Strickland's trust in Bartolo and also showed that the government was more isolated than before. A similar attempt was made a year later. After Lorenzo Busuttill, a Savonian printer and editor of *Malta Ghada Taghna*, had turned down a mandate to run a subsidized government organ, an arrangement was concluded with another printer, J. Critien, and a paper, attractively named *Malta Maltia* (Maltese Malta) was started, but its circulation soon declined and it had to be stopped.<sup>90</sup> 'What would we do, had it not been for the English in Malta!', said a leaflet in Maltese printed by the *Chronicle* press in 1901; 'God forbid that we had the Italians instead of them': everybody knew that those whose relations were with the English were contented (*gawduti*) and made a living (*jiddubbawa*) whereas in Italy there was nothing but poverty and hunger; those in contact with Italians could only starve.



This leaflet, which also supported anglicization in the Transvaal, was signed by 'A Maltese who loves the English and his country (*pajjiżu*).'<sup>91</sup>

Support for Strickland's administration among the more educated Maltese was extremely limited, possibly because such admirers as existed were reluctant 'to subject themselves to the attacks of the press'.<sup>92</sup> In a letter concerning himself and Dr. Fortunato Mizzi's brother with regard to a pharmacy business, Dr. P. P. Agius referred to himself 'and other loyalists' as being out of favour with 'the Franco-Italian clique of self-elected members'. The loyalist enclosed with his letter a *Daily Express* report about Roncali, who had returned an invitation card in English, from a Maltese student, saying that he did not accept invitations in English from Maltese persons.<sup>93</sup> One P.N. member, G. C. Mallia Tabone, had obviously turned Stricklandian expecting to get a top job, but he complained that the promise made to him had not been kept. Nor would the Colonial Office oblige him either: 'If Mr. Mallia Tabone voted with the Government from conscientious motives he needs no reward; if he did so from motives of self-interest he deserves none'.<sup>94</sup>

*Malta* was 'practically the only newspaper of political importance'.<sup>95</sup> Following a libel action against it by a British general, *Malta's* name was changed temporarily to *Gazzetta di Malta e Gozo*; printing facilities were improved by the purchase of a gas motor; and on 13 March 1902 the paper was re-named *Malta e Sue Dipendenze*, sub-titled for the first time 'Organo del Partito Nazionale' – a name, said Mizzi, which signified

a daily press in the service of the Country (*Patria*), a name that will be the organ through which the faithful children of this country – ALL NATIONALISTS – will be able to express the public will.

As national consciousness grew, the term 'nationalist' was more frequently used.

Chamberlain tells us that he does not see in Malta but the interests of the fortress, and he forgets the Christians who are the sons of these lands: we, in the name and under the banner of Maltese, unite to declare that Malta, and Gozo, and Comino, and Cominotto, and that every rock which surfaces around our shores belongs to us!<sup>96</sup>

In so far as it is possible to determine at any time what public opinion really is, or if it exists in accordance with any pre-defined concept, the shifting fortunes of *Malta* and *Chronicle* were good indicators of the public debate. *Malta's* circulation at the turn of the century was estimated to have increased in a few years by one-third or more; *Chronicle* was losing subscribers. The P.N. now founded their first Maltese language organ, *Il Poplu Malti*: its circulation was much higher than *Malta Ghada Taghna*, and twice that of Emanuele Dimech's *Bandiera tal-Maltin*.<sup>97</sup> Even noted pro-British sympathisers complained about the 'terrorism' of the government.<sup>98</sup> The P.N. was considered to represent those who took an interest in public life:

The argument of the elected members that they represent Maltese opinion and that the Government are acting contrary to the wish of the Maltese can only be met by denying that they are really a representative body. This is true so far as only a minority of the electors have gone to the poll in the past in favour of the 'Mizzi Party', but then the apathetic majority are at fault, and it remains that the elected members, who have been elected this time unopposed, represent the only articulate portion of the people.<sup>99</sup>

'In this country politics reduces itself to this', said Naudi in 1901: 'on one side there is the Government, and on the other side a party against the Government for the reason that our Government is permanent and therefore we have the two parties one in government and the other in opposition as is the case elsewhere'.<sup>100</sup>

Certain innovations, such as Strickland's suggestion of 'bicycles for our postmen', were met with laughter, mingled with the usual scepticism.<sup>101</sup> Strickland's major public works projects, notably the construction of a breakwater in Grand Harbour and the extension of the drainage to country districts, were far-sighted and materially beneficial to Malta. Strickland told London to sanction such plans because they were in the imperial interest – a claim that was often denied – and at the same time he told the Maltese that these works were necessary for their own benefit – a claim that was usually disbelieved. With regard to the new drainage scheme, the interdepartmental conference would only contribute to those works 'by which Naval and Military interests are affected'; only the W.O. spokesman took the Malta government's view that Britain should contribute to all sewerage works in Malta. The other departmental representatives disagreed that 'in so small a place as Malta the drainage system cannot be divided up into parts in which the imperial departments are and are not interested . . . Malta can afford to pay'.<sup>102</sup> But the drainage extension was as necessary for public health as the breakwater was for shipping and trade. The expense which these ambitious projects entailed was enormous, by Maltese standards, and the elected members were in no mood to co-operate or consent; but the money for them could only be raised by local taxation, public loans and British assistance. The breakwater (clearly Strickland's brainchild, although it was not completed until he had left Malta) would properly accomodate ships of the Mediterranean squadron, argued Strickland; adding that the project itself would increase the floating capital in the island benefit Maltese workmen.<sup>103</sup> Accusing the elected members of 'political cowardice' always voting 'at the back and call of their leader', 'escaping from responsibility', Strickland announced that the time for select committees on drainage schemes was 'over:' official members of the Council had 'a high sense of their duty to the country' and would have no part in 'poisoning our fellow citizens with foul drainage'.<sup>104</sup> Although the number of properly drained houses was increasing in step with public demand,<sup>105</sup> and the smell and insanitary state of the harbour waters was much reduced,<sup>106</sup> statistics showed the death-rate in rural areas to be somewhat lower than in urban and sub-urban areas, but relatively higher in the

undrained than in the drained areas.<sup>107</sup> Opposition to drainage schemes over the past twenty-five years, maintained Strickland, was generally traceable to a class and a political interest.<sup>108</sup> Wishing to utilize Maltese capital lying idle to pay for drainage and create work opportunities, Strickland was furious at that 'knot' of government opponents who did not want loans because they argued these would create additional bonds between the governed and the governing power:<sup>109</sup>

Our workman wants work . . . Let the capitalist have his interest, but let the workman have his wages too, and if both the capitalist and the workman find employment here, that will add to the wealth of the country.<sup>110</sup>

Strickland upheld the principle of direct taxation as just and necessary, as Savona had done earlier. The people's representatives, said Strickland, had 'so often been the slaves of class interests'. Although himself a landowner, Strickland ridiculed the idea that if taxes were increased the poor man would be made to pay; the 'real remedy', he said, was 'direct taxation upon the landowner':

the proceeds of taxation upon property come out of the pocket of the landowner and not of the tenant! The landowner is already screwing out of his tenant all that he can screw . . . We have not had the courage to apply the real remedy . . . to take the bull by the horns and say 'let us make the rich landowner pay'!<sup>111</sup>

The prosperity enjoyed by the country in general, 'and by the working classes in particular', said Governor Grenfell, had brought about an expansion of towns and villages, the construction of miles of new houses, heavy additions to the road traffic, all of which called for more revenue to keep, repair, light up, clean.<sup>112</sup>

The elected members held that Strickland's major projects were in the British rather than in the Maltese interests, that to undertake such works all at once would destabilize the economy and social structure, that the population was too poor to bear taxes, and taxation was objectionable in principle anyway. Francesco Azzopardi, a legal procurator and manager of *Malta* who became Mizzi's right-hand man, was expressing commonly held views in 1902 when he condemned the government's lack of 'conciliatory spirit' and what he called 'a flood of taxes'. While admitting that 'certain working classes today were earning rather more than a few years ago', he remarked that the population was not composed solely of these classes: in a few years, he said, there would be a deplorable, dangerous crisis. The government was spending all its revenues without guarding for the future: as soon as current works ended many labourers would find themselves out of work; meanwhile 'in these few years of prosperity' they would accustom themselves to a life superior to normal, but soon they would be quite unable to keep this up.<sup>113</sup>

Meanwhile Strickland adamantly opposed the educational compromise held out by the nationalists, the *pari passu* (simultaneous teaching of English

and Italian). The crucial factor in Strickland's language philosophy was ousting Italian from public life and replacing this by English, on the ground that English was more proper and useful in a British fortress-colony, whereas Italian was only known to a minority and served to fan the flames of nationalism. 'The time necessary to attempt to learn Italian is time wasted under the present conditions of the struggle for existence', he said.<sup>114</sup>

The first steps in the direction of his 'free choice' policy, according to which schoolchildren's parents would be asked formally to state whether they wished their children to learn English *or* Italian, were taken in the late 1890s by re-structuring the education department so as to make it directly amenable to government wants: the government wanted, as Giuseppe Bonavia put it, 'to monopolize everything'.<sup>115</sup> Savona's successor as director of education, Dr. A. A. Caruana, followed his predecessor in resigning the post; a select committee was appointed to report on institutional changes; a separate directorate of elementary schools was created; Italian ceased to be an obligatory subject for admission to the lyceum where English became the medium of instruction (except for Latin, Italian and religion); at the university too certain subjects began to be taught in English; the university senate, which had been founded in 1887 to give higher education a modicum of autonomy, was abolished, Strickland himself becoming chairman of the general and of the special councils of the university and of the lyceum.<sup>116</sup> These reforms were met 'by the most violent opposition, the newspapers printed in Italian describing them as a scheme to undermine and strangle Italian'.<sup>117</sup> Such autonomy as the university had enjoyed was altogether curtailed, so much so that when one law professor suggested that schoolchildren's parents should be given 'a third choice' – English *and* Italian – he was simply ruled out of order.<sup>118</sup> Had Strickland had his way, professors unable or unwilling to lecture in English might even have been forced to resign, but 'we cannot arbitrarily dismiss existing professors' ruled Chamberlain.<sup>119</sup> Conducted by teachers who of course were government employees – while the government made it amply plain that English not Italian was the language of the future – the 'free choice' policy was not free from coercion, although statistical data showed most parents, in almost all localities, sometimes 100%, choosing English. Mizzi was prepared to stake his career on the belief that most parents would really like their children to learn both languages in view of the special circumstances obtaining in Malta. He demanded, unsuccessfully, a proper referendum to find out what parents really wanted: 'and if the people say that they do not want to know of Italian I promise and swear that never again will I speak of the Italian language for as long as I live'.<sup>120</sup>

'Whom do you believe', Mizzi asked a P.N. meeting at Qormi, 'these Maltese who have common interests with you, who have the same duties

towards their children as you have towards your own', or did they believe the few government teachers who had to carry out 'Strickland's will'?

We are rowing in the same boat. We have no conflicting interests. Our interests are your interests. We do not say that we should learn English and that you should be taught Italian. No: we insist on the necessity for all Maltese of learning the two languages simultaneously and of there being no waste of time in teaching Maltese to Maltese.

Emphasising the flexibility of the social structure, the potential of village schoolchildren to take professional careers and be 'of service to their Country', Mizzi discounted the old distinction between rich and poor: 'in respect to the Country rich and poor, ignorant and wise, are all equal'. Many people had been born poor, yet by the sweat of their brow had carved out for themselves most respectable positions, he said, upholding individual merit compared to inherited privileges. Mizzi believed in a 'national' education that was impossible without Italian, would be impossible through English, but to which the study of Maltese was irrelevant or harmful. Beseeching parents to take an interest in what their children were taught at school, and not to send them to school merely 'to get rid of them during the day', Mizzi compared the schoolboy to a plant capable of growing into a big tree, if so God willed and, if not, the child could learn what was required for his trade and become 'a good citizen'. He reiterated the belief that the government wanted to keep the people in a state of ignorance and in poverty:

When the stomach of the people is empty and its mental faculties undeveloped, the people must necessarily follow the dictates of the Government. But if, on the contrary, the people are well off, and well advanced in civil instruction, their rights will not be easily tampered with.<sup>121</sup>

Rejecting Strickland's argument that the elimination of Italian was 'for you, the working classes', Francesco Azzopardi asked why, if nothing but English was required, was the government teaching Maltese for as long as three years at primary school. As the 'children of the people' did not stay at school for more than three or four years, he argued they would leave school knowing neither Italian nor English. The elimination of Italian from all government schools would preclude a poor child from proceeding to a professional career – Italian was still used at the university – so that the government was placing 'the children of the people' in a position where it would be impossible for them to compete with the rich. Azzopardi alleged that the government's aim was to encourage Englishmen to take jobs in Malta while the Maltese would be told to emigrate, to be 'exiled'; the government wanted to keep the people, especially the poorer classes, ignorant, so that they would be more easily overburdened like a set of donkeys and bear quietly their wretched lot, because they would have no consciousness of the power they wielded:

they don't know that they can tell their masters: 'We are more powerful than yourselves and by means of a kick we can set ourselves free of you'.<sup>122</sup>

'In other places where Government is in the hands of persons chosen by the people', Azzopardi told another meeting, 'there are laws which protect the working man. For instance, if a man meets with an accident while at work, the employer is bound to pay him until he is able to resume work'. He added:

In Malta, there is nothing of the sort. Here, those who happen to have sufficient means, so much the better for them; whilst those who have not are supposed to die. (Cheers).<sup>123</sup>

English was necessary, said Mizzi, because Malta was under British rule, but it should likewise be considered that the Maltese lived in the midst of many nations – Italy, France, Spain, Morocco, Algiers, Tunisia, Tripolitania, Egypt: 'as we have intercourse with all these countries Italian is necessary for us'.<sup>124</sup>

To save Malta's Italian patrimony, Mizzi was talking like an internationalist; to elevate Maltese into a language of study, Strickland was behaving like a nationalist. The primary wish of the former was to safeguard the interests of the Italian-speaking classes, with which he identified the national interest; that of the latter was to eliminate these people by means of anglicization, which he identified with progress and the glorious empire. One looked back to history, hoping for cultural integration, the other looked forward to imperial expansion and work opportunities; yet can one look forward in disregard of the past? The nationalist wanted change too, more desperately so than the colonial administrator, from whose clutches he yearned to escape: In Mizzian circles 'anti-English' and 'pro-Italian' became fixed ideas, signifying more than words could tell. Strickland could be particularly flippant. According to one eye-witness, he used to enjoy, during debates on the language question, 'extracting his watch from his pocket and, with his peculiarly sardonic smile, counting out to the deputies the years, days, hours and minutes that remained until the Italian language should be banished from the tribunals'.<sup>125</sup>

Strickland wanted to substitute English for Italian in the law courts partly to force the troublesome legal body into submission, but also because he thought it unjust to try English-speaking persons in a foreign language in a British colony, and he considered English to be no more foreign a language to Malta than Italian; Maltese were usually tried in a language they could not understand. So far as Strickland wished to see Maltese used in court, his approach was a Savonian one, but to introduce English in the legal sphere was possibly 'the thin end of the wedge' with regard to the courts just as Savona's language reform had been with regard to the schools.

The reasoning used to justify anglicizing the courts was similar to that used for the schools. Children of British residents had suffered from having

to know Italian in order to enter the lyceum or university<sup>126</sup> just as Englishmen disliked being unable to understand the pleading of their lawyers or the translated transcription of their evidence (given naturally in English) in court. The number of British subjects compelled to live in Malta by reason of military service of trade had greatly increased in 1891–1901. And it was not unlikely that this number would be doubled in the next decade on account of the large prospected increase both of the garrison and fleet, as well as the persons to be employed on the new docks and repair shops connected with the building of the breakwater and enlargement of the naval harbour. The governor noted that cheap steam communication, the penny post, and other facilities had so expanded that even stokers in the naval service now were able 'to bring out their wives to Malta'; the number of British wives and children was increasingly rapidly. 'These cannot be treated as outsiders in the courts of law of a colony of the Empire in which the number of British subjects who speak English is larger than the number of those who speak Italian', wrote Grenfell,<sup>127</sup> conveniently adding up the number of British servicemen and their wives and children to that of the civil population so as to outnumber the Maltese Italian-speakers. Grenfell in fact wished to give British servicemen in Malta the vote, as well as the right to be elected to the Council of Government.<sup>128</sup> He urged the necessity of substituting English for Italian as this would

thoroughly bind together the English and the Maltese, and crush the nucleus of permanent anti-English agitators . . . there is now a well educated, deeply interested, and violent party, with whom there can be no compromise on this question.<sup>129</sup>

As 'a question of principle', said Strickland in reply to a protest from the Chamber of Advocates in 1901, the language question had little 'practical value':

The principle of practical politics governing this question is . . . that English must, at an early date, become the language of education in Malta, except for an inconsiderable minority – unless Italian is forced on English residents. . . . It is quite indifferent to the majority of Maltese whether they are sent to prison in English or in Italian . . . In fact more than 90% of evidence is now given in Maltese.<sup>130</sup>

The anglicization drive in the law courts was sparked off by a rather suspicious incident in 1898. On 25 February 1898 Col. J. L. Hewson, of the Army Pay Department, was a witness at a magisterial inquiry connected with a charge of embezzlement involving one of his employees. Hewson refused to sign a transcript of his evidence; he would not sign a document in Italian, which he could not understand. The presiding magistrate assured Hewson that the transcript was accurate and kindly adjourned the hearing to give him time to reconsider: but Hewson insisted, wanting to register a protest in English if he signed the transcript. He was therefore condemned to three days detention for contempt. Yet Naudi, the crown advocate, had himself advised Hewson not to sign the transcript – for conscientious

motives; moreover the magistrate also had to consult Naudi privately about the case. Now Hewson could have asked for a translator, but of course he did not do so.<sup>131</sup> As earlier the government had tried, unsuccessfully, to amend the law so as to make the official use of English possible in cases involving English-speaking persons,<sup>132</sup> Hewson may have been serving as a pawn. He was never detained in a prison cell at all, merely staying in the office of the (British) superintendent of police, until the governor quickly pardoned him.<sup>133</sup>

The Maltese court's decision was 'monstruous', fumed Chamberlain; 'we must prevent the repetition of Col. Hewson's case':<sup>134</sup> it was 'a miscarriage of justice'.<sup>135</sup> But as there were 'very few' Maltese lawyers competent to plead in English, observed Edward Wingfield, a prospective change in the language of court would have to be gradual 'as recommended by Sir Penrose Julyan': it was 'impossible' to abolish 'a system which has prevailed for centuries and has been deliberately confirmed by British governments at the beginning of British rule in Malta, and on more than one subsequent occasion, suddenly'.<sup>136</sup> Mizzi regarded the Hewson incident as 'an epoch in the history of the scandals for which the present public administration has now become famous . . . open rebellion against the laws of the land'. If the English in Malta were not subject to the law, he went on, they had no right to claim any protection under it.<sup>137</sup> Savona's proposed motion in censure of the governor's conduct was disallowed.<sup>138</sup> 'After what we have witnessed', concluded Dimech's *Bandiera*, 'we expect to see two codes of law, one made of lead for the Maltese and another made of tissue paper for the British'.<sup>139</sup>

The Hewson case opened the road to the Malta (Use of the English Language in Legal Proceedings) Order-in-Council of March 1899 and served as a pretext for the accompanying proclamation that English would officially replace Italian in all Maltese courts in fifteen years' time, i.e. from March 1914 onwards.<sup>140</sup>

'Let us see what effect this first bombshell has', wrote Chamberlain, 'before we proceed further'.<sup>141</sup>

The effect of this language substitution order on the Maltese 'political nation' was one of shock, on the legal body one of utter revulsion. After several meetings, the legal bodies presented a memorandum suggesting, by way of compromise, but to no avail, that evidence in English could be given without any interpretation in Italian being asked for; that a document in English need no longer be translated into Italian; that any British subject should within a day be able to have any act translated into English at the public expense.<sup>142</sup> As the legal element had always been preponderant in the P.N., opposition to the regime was bound to intensify greatly; but the way in which language substitution was supposed to come about, and the purpose for which it was intended, could attract no support from either the Panzavecchian or Savonian wings in the whole nationalist movement



under Mizzi. On the contrary, there was sympathy with all those who were ill-disposed to 're-educate' themselves in the colonizer's language: 'the lawyers possess great power', noted the governor, 'and the whole press is in sympathy with them'.<sup>143</sup>

The usual associations of *italianità* were made in support of the principle of self-determination. 'The language of the civilization of a people', wrote one elected member, 'is what ennobles that people in the presence of the dominating Power; if that language is done away with, the dominated people become a people of serfs . . . let us at least save our honour'. Chamberlain was treating the Maltese as a haughty Englishman would treat his servant making him 'put on this livery'.<sup>144</sup>

Since once again the interests of the *professionisti* were at stake one is bound to ask, however, if the pro-Italian standpoint was truly nationalist – in the sense of putting the nation first – or else simply a 'dog-in-the-manger' complex. Savona once mentioned a quarrel between a member of the bar and a relative; the lawyer said to the other: 'you know the English language, and you are in its favour because it suits your interests, but why do you want to deprive me of my bread?'<sup>145</sup> Nevertheless Savona did not think that Italian should be ousted from the law courts: 'who has ever dreamt of abolishing the Italian language, and substituting the Maltese dialect for it?'<sup>146</sup> Mizzi's worst fears were proved right by the 1899 order-in-council and proclamation. On one hand, there was the attitude born of fear, motivated by self-interest, or rather self-preservation, but to that extent oblivious of the public interest; however self-preservation and nationalism were intimately connected, and it was mostly educated persons, after all, who were committed 'pro-Italians'. The object of anglicizing the courts – which could logically have led to anglicization of the laws – was meant, in fact, to prevent inconvenience to English-speaking defendants and to 'crush the nucleus of permanent anti-English agitators'.<sup>147</sup> The number of persons able to read/write Maltese had made a huge leap forward, but still there were many more who knew Italian than English, although English was continuing to make steady in-roads into the position of Italian.<sup>148</sup> As in 1880, the anti-Italian drive led to further mobilization and diffusion of the 'Malta dei Maltesi' philosophy; but the language-culture-nationality rationale was more desperate and disaffected: as the regime seemed indifferent to anything the representatives desired – expecting to uproot the consequence of centuries by a stroke of the pen – *italianità* assumed a still more exaggerated significance, becoming the guiding light of the Mizzian nationalist, a cloud of smoke by day, a pillar of fire by night. For whose benefit was all this change intended, asked Mizzi. 'For some half-a-dozen English soldiers, who, by getting drunk, commit crimes', was the answer. At the same time that the British government declared that the order-in-council of 7th March was made in a spirit of justice towards these Englishmen who should not be judged in a language unknown to them – the

nationalist leader continued – it warned all Maltese by a ministerial despatch dated 15th March that the entire Maltese population would be judged in the English language.<sup>149</sup> It was a question, as he put it, of ‘our dignity, our freedom and our bread’<sup>150</sup> the reference to ‘our bread’ being usually extended to imply a decrease in jobs available to Maltese caused by English migration to the sunny ‘English-speaking’ colony. Worse than the Russian or Turkish governments, the ‘Czar of Downing Street’ wanted to reduce Malta to ‘another Gibraltar’.<sup>151</sup>

Mizzi expressed the Maltese predicament with regard to the language problem at the same time as he profoundly re-stated the nationalist cause. ‘If force is to crush a weak and unarmed people – a people who trustingly threw themselves into the arms of Great Britain – we shall fall’, he said, ‘but we shall die fighting, affirming our rights until the last moment’. It would never be said that the Maltese should say what others had said – that they should surrender because otherwise they would be defeated by force. ‘We cannot surrender, from this moment we must resist. Our sentiments, our national dignity, our interests oblige us to do so!’ Malta, he repeated, was surrounded by Latin peoples – even Tripolitania would soon be occupied by a Latin power, France or Italy, and there Italian had already been introduced in the schools as the medium of instruction:

How can we, in the central Mediterranean, surrounded by Latin peoples, how can we, us 160,000 souls, adopt as our language the Anglo-Saxon tongue? How would we, through it, express our sentiments? How on earth could we, caressed by this sun, we who are a poetic and music loving people, adopt the language of a people who inhabit the Nordic snows? How can we adapt our way of thinking and of feeling to the way of thinking and of feeling of the English people? And if we cannot strip away the soul from the word, that is the thought, how can we ever dress this thought in any other form but that which suits our sentiments, that is the Italian form?<sup>152</sup>

Had it not been for the fact that Maltese was spoken in the islands, Mizzi’s ideology would have conformed easily to accepted contemporary theories about self-realization that relate thought processes to language and environment. A mixture of Renan and Herder, influenced generally by Italian and European secular thought and, to a lesser extent, by British liberalism, Mizzian nationalism was the result of circumstances rather than a *doctrinaire* commitment arising from acquired knowledge through familiarity with writers such as the Neapolitan Gianbattista Vico (popularized in the nineteenth century by Michelet) or the German romantic school, although Professor Ramiro Barbaro once did mention Heinrich Heine,<sup>153</sup> and the *Diritto* had been clearly inspired by Mamiani.<sup>154</sup> The equation of *italianità* with self-realization, consonant with nationalist theories about government and regeneration, was reaffirmed by Mizzi and Cachia Zammit in their case for retaining Italian in the courts – considering that Maltese laws were based on the Roman law, codified and incapsulated in Italian for ages, all the legal jargon, even in common parlance, being Italian or derived from Italian:

The Maltese will never speak English in the same way as the English people for the reason that there are profound differences in thought and sentiments between the two peoples. They will speak Italian with English words, but their thoughts must be Italian, however correct the phrases may sound. Obligated to use a language that is not their own and that does not correspond to or naturally express their feelings, the people will lose the native dignity which today is so conspicuous in our courts of law.<sup>155</sup>

In May 1899 a delegation composed of Mizzi and Cachia Zammit travelled to London in the vain hope of convincing Chamberlain of the justice of their cause. Chamberlain saw them, sternly, the picture conjured by accounts of this interview being rather like that of some American Indian chiefs before a General Custer:

Why did you not come to me at once? – When did you send the printed statement in? – Is that the statement I have already? – Is this the statement to which you refer?

Impatient at this arrogant treatment, Mizzi interposed to say that if Chamberlain let them speak he would know what they had to say.<sup>156</sup>

In their statement to Chamberlain, the delegation formally requested self-government, protesting against 'the system of corruption', of 'bribery as a method of administration', condemning the formula, detrimental to the people's best interests, which ran: 'those who serve the Government shall be rewarded by the Government', while the officials in power reserved to themselves 'the right to judge *who really serve the Government*'. The Maltese paid taxes, protested the delegation, but had no voice in the spending of them.<sup>157</sup>

Not one of the Generals who have governed Malta ever conceived the idea of utilizing for the good of the Empire, the character of the Maltese. They were only able to see the defects of the people, skilled only in exaggerating them. . . .

They had 'always held that the remedy was to curtail the liberties of the Maltese, to exaggerate their defects, to propose emigration, to force the English language into the country'.<sup>158</sup> Recalling the *Sei Maggio* – 'the cruel scene' when Strickland 'stood at the Palace balcony and looked on with laughter while the people were being batoned by the police and blood was being shed'<sup>159</sup> – Mizzi and Cachia Zammit claimed that if the Maltese were held not to be mature enough for self-government this would be a mature enough for self-government this would be a conclusive reason for making a speedy end of the existing system as it would prove that one hundred years of military and despotic rule had left the people unfit for the exercise of the elementary duties of civil life.<sup>160</sup>

While Mizzi and Cachia Zammit were in London the elected members repeatedly tried to postpone Council discussions until they returned, but at this moment a second order-in-council was issued, in July, authorizing a public loan of £150,000 (mostly for drainage works), doubling duties on spirits and spirituous liquors, imposing the stamp duty, sanctioning a yearly salary for a new post of assistant university rector (given to an Eng-

lishman).<sup>161</sup> Shortly before, Grenfell had warned the elected members to support the government or else face the consequences.<sup>162</sup> *Malta* called for independence:

it cannot be denied that the Maltese are now disgusted and that they feel like the Irish who, as Mr. Michael Davitt lately declared in the British Parliament, will be only too glad when the British Government will clear out bag and baggage, and let them alone to look after their own affairs.<sup>163</sup>

The P.N. made various attempts to interest Italian and British politicians in Maltese affairs. Their best spokesman in the British Parliament was undoubtedly the Irish nationalist and *Gaelic League* supporter John Boland. 'In Malta the national sentiment has been growing, in proportion as the Government has been trying to drive it out by the substitution of the English language', said Boland, condemning the law against meetings, the prohibition of singing a national anthem in the Theatre Royal, and the persistent disregard of the unanimous wishes of the elected members. 'You cannot find anywhere in the British Empire a state of things like this', he said.<sup>164</sup> In a letter of encouragement to *Malta*, Boland wrote that the anglicization of Ireland had been followed by 'the most disastrous results'. Therefore the Maltese were right in opposing the attempted anglicization of their historic island, in refusing to become 'a mere appanage' of the British empire.<sup>165</sup>

The P.N.'s chief propagandist, Antonio Cini, a poor and dedicated Gozitan, published four or five pamphlets about the language question in 1901-1903, one of which, at least, was distributed to Italian parliamentarians.<sup>166</sup> The party also used the services of Marchese Adriano Colocci. He was responsible for receiving and forwarding Italian press reviews, at least in connection with one Cini pamphlet, to which he wrote the preface.<sup>167</sup> Garibaldi's son, Ricciotti, wrote a strong letter to Lord Currie, Britain's ambassador in Rome, supporting Mizzi's proposal for a plebiscite on 'free choice'. Classifying Strickland with Levantine time-servers, and holding, inexacty, that Malta had never been comprised in the Italian irredentist programme,<sup>168</sup> Ricciotti Garibaldi referred to Italian public opinion so as to bring pressure to bear on the British Government:

It is worthwhile to prevent a hostile feeling to England taking consistency in the Italian popular mind - at an opportune moment in the future something might be done to neutralize the bad effect produced by the governor's (language substitution) proclamation . . .<sup>169</sup>

The historian Pasquale Villari, president of the *Società Dante Alighieri*, told Currie that Italian sentiment had been 'wounded' by Chamberlain's proclamation;<sup>170</sup> Marchesa Tartarini was sent out to Malta to lecture on behalf of the *Dante*.<sup>171</sup> Writing in the magazine *Nuova antologia*, General Luchino dal Verme, a Crispi follower, characterized British measures against Italian in Malta as worse conduct towards Italy than that of Austria. Dr. Napoleone Coljanni charged that Chamberlain was trying to force respect for the language of a few adventures with lyddite and dum-

dum bullets at the same time that he was suppressing the language of the 'sons of the soil' in Malta. *Il Secolo*, a radical paper, saw anglicization in Malta as intended 'to satisfy the greed of the trafficking Chamberlain not satisfied by laurels gathered in South Africa'.<sup>172</sup> When engaged in a lively debate on Malta,<sup>173</sup> Visconti-Venosta, Italy's foreign minister, said Italy could not intervene in a British colony's internal policy, but at least two deputies, Galli and Luporini, were dissatisfied by his evasive reply; and judging from the cheers they had more enthusiastic support.<sup>174</sup> The Italian consul in Valletta, who detested the nationalists as much for their 'jesuitical' ties as for their feigned 'irredentist' traits, modestly summed up the Italian government's policy in his advice: 'sympathy yes, but not help'.<sup>175</sup> But Visconti-Venosta's successor, Giulio Prinetti (1901-1903) and also King Vittorio Emanuele III complained bitterly about Britain's anti-Italian policy.<sup>176</sup> It was, to say the least, remarkable, Prinetti told Currie, that, considering the vast populations gathered under British rule, Chamberlain should have found time, in the midst of all the pressing preoccupations of recent years, to abolish the Italian language in the only British dependency where it was in use.<sup>177</sup>

In November 1900 Chamberlain visited Malta, where he made some sugary comments about the island's history;<sup>178</sup> and he also advised Mizzi 'not to agitate'.<sup>179</sup> He then proceeded to Rome where he was not too well received; but, on the initiative of *The Times*' Rome correspondent Wickham Steed, he did have a useful meeting with Visconti-Venosta and Baron Sidney Sonnino. Chamberlain almost spoilt everything, beginning the conversation with a reference to the Jews as 'physical cowards', in the presence of Sonnino who was a Jew, but Wickham Steed promptly kicked Chamberlain vigorously under the table and, after a long and agitated session, the meeting ended amicably.<sup>180</sup> Chamberlain was interested but not impressed; his language substitution proclamation, so far, remained. 'There is no doubt today that we was right on the merits of the case; and a later Government had to return to his policy', wrote Julyan Amery in a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* judgement which is also historically incorrect: the 'later Government' to which he refers is presumably that led by Strickland himself three decades afterwards, but, even so, Maltese, not English, eventually replaced Italian in the courts.<sup>181</sup>

In 1901 Strickland brought forward a Public Revenue Improvement Ordinance to introduce sweeping public works requiring the sum - enormous for those days - of £623,152: mostly for drainage extension (£308,118); water supply works (about £100,000); several minor projects (a leper asylum for women, a criminal lunatic ward in the lunatic asylum, a new hospital, a breakwater at Gozo's Mgarr harbour, extension of electric light works, a jetty at the Customs House wharf, better road communications); and, to make matters worse - indeed purposefully indigestible it would seem - £72,728 for constructing new schools and improvement of

existing schools.<sup>182</sup> Increases in duties on imported cattle and funds for providing a wheat reserve in case of war which had earlier been proposed for legislation by order-in-council<sup>183</sup> were omitted, but the new duties proposed were not simply on wine (20% increase) and beer (6½d more per barrel), but also on sugar (¼d per rotolo, on petroleum (1d per gallon), tobacco (cigars, cigarettes, snuff), an extended stamp duty, a new *ad valorem* duty on bills and other transactions.<sup>184</sup>

Taken at face value, judged by the standards of the welfare state, nationalist opposition to Strickland's projects appears ultra-conservative, indeed most reactionary: female lepers, said Strickland, were still allowed to run about the streets and to marry; streets in Sicily and Tunis were better than Malta; Gozo boats had no shelter; in Grand Harbour rough seas could prevent anybody from approaching the quay near the Customs House.<sup>185</sup> The drainage extension scheme, as now proposed, was primarily intended for the villages; the imperial interest was that better drainage would lessen the risk of an epidemic which could affect the troops (but also the Maltese). Would such public works not serve to generate work, to transfer earnings from the average tax-payer into the worker's pocket? The elected members rejected the ordinance unanimously.<sup>186</sup>

The opposition, indeed alarm, with which these measures were met in the country at large, had many causes. First of all, the proposed taxes were not restricted to luxury goods; the tax on sugar was particularly unwise. In Malta, as Lieut. Governor W. C. F. Robertson once observed, where people were 'so largely of the poorer classes (the wages being generally low)', a slight increase in the cost of food was 'more felt than elsewhere'.<sup>187</sup> There was a deep-rooted hatred of taxes, partly the result of ignorance. There was a widespread suspicion – partly justified, partly not, but horn of a long experience of fortress-colony government – that works such as drainage, water supply and road-building were primarily intended to serve British interests. 'Why should the Imperial Government not pay this expense', asked an appeal by the newly-formed *Comitato Nazionale* under the presidency of Dr. Filippo Sceberras, 'if the soldiers and sailors require wide roads, water and drainage? Should Malta, so small and poor, pay for England, which is so great and rich?'<sup>188</sup> Strickland's school-building programme was, by itself, excellent, but not when the entire political nation seemed resolved steadfastly to oppose what was seen as the super-imposed transformation of the national culture; money for building more schools and improving existing ones, without any corresponding guarantee that anglicization would stop, was the last thing the representatives would ever vote for. Apart from this, there was Strickland's social engineering, which civic-minded people found loathsome. In his unanimously supported resolution for Strickland's dismissal, moved in December 1901, Mizzi derided 'this prime minister of our Government' who was educating the population in betraying the motherland, whose taxes had destroyed or

seriously damaged the local beer and tobacco industries: 'chi tradisce la propria patria tradirà un giorno il suo governo'.<sup>189</sup> Whoever pretended to show that he loved England more than Malta lied, said Mizzi: 'This is a sentiment which cannot enter the human heart'.<sup>190</sup>

It was this *cumulus* of circumstances and feelings that led to the impressive mobilization spearheaded by the P.N. in 1901. The two 'monster meetings' in May and August held on the greasy, uneven earth outside Floriana, in the scorching sun, at the open space known as Ta' Braxia, compared in size with Savona's marriage meetings.<sup>191</sup> Although this time religious questions were of secondary importance only, the clergy took an active part. The bishop disregarded the governor's advice to condemn priests for supporting the agitation in churches;<sup>192</sup> or to prevent the saying of prayers 'for the needs of the country' in St. Paul Church.<sup>193</sup> Pace on his part issued a pastoral criticising the King's accession oath, which Catholics found displeasing.<sup>194</sup> Although he was no longer allowed to be in the Council, (since he was an ecclesiastic), Panzavecchia assured a meeting that he would always be found with the people: 'the clergy were on the side of the people'.<sup>195</sup> Tension was increased between one meeting and the other by Chamberlain's despatch of 30 July, written after Strickland had visited London; a despatch, wrote Savona, that treated the Maltese 'as though they were slaves, or a people conquered by war, or as uncivilized savages'.<sup>196</sup> The 11 August meeting at Ta' Braxia, which like that of 5 May, protested against language substitution and imposition of taxes, also attacked Chamberlain's despatch. Francesco Azzopardi's speech, and the ejaculations interrupting it, captured the general mood:

Chamberlain – (much hissing) – says that the British soldiers and sailors require good drainage to keep them in good health – ('Let them go to the Transvaal') – that they require good water to keep in good health – ('whisky', 'bear'). He also says that our streets must be put in good repair and widened, so that regiments and artillery may pass without difficulty. – (Uproar) . . . After all, why should there be all this urgency on the part of the Government to turn us into Englishmen? What is the reason? The reason is that they want us to emigrate; they want to get rid of us – (prolonged cries of 'This is our land!') – so that Englishmen may come here to take our place.

'Malta belongs to the Maltese', declared Cachia Zammit to cheers: 'we do not want to be slaves in our own country, and we will not allow anybody to treat us with contempt'.<sup>197</sup>

Called by the *Comitato Nazionale* which had been formed 'to defend the rights of the Maltese', the Ta' Braxia meetings were canvassed and publicized in advance by impassioned manifestoes and leaflets in Maltese, distributed profusely all over the towns and villages,<sup>198</sup> as well as by public meetings in Qormi, Żebbuġ, Birkirkara, Żejtun, Cospicua, Gozo.<sup>199</sup> 'If we have no guns', said Dr. Filippo Sceberras at one earlier meeting, 'at least we have a heart! (Applause). 'And if it must be our fate to succumb to this despotism, let us die like men, and let our descendants say that we were assassinated, but were not assassins' (loud cheers).<sup>200</sup>

Working class elements were obviously present at the meetings: when, for example, it was alleged that Strickland had told Chamberlain that Maltese workers earned 3s. 4d. to 6. 8d. a day, there were long interruptions and cries of 'liar'.<sup>201</sup> Several middle class women attending the meetings were conspicuous by their parasols and long dresses. 'The participation of women in political activities (noted also at the 1879, public meeting)<sup>202</sup> was a distinctly European as opposed to an Arab quality in social life; and it served as a boost to the morale of husbands who were engaged in a difficult political situation: when, after the second Ta' Braxia meeting, the legal procurator Paolo Reynaud was arrested, his wife told an interviewer that next time she would go marching by her husband's side.<sup>203</sup>

The 11 August meeting, better attended and more virulent than the first, ended in an anti-British demonstration as the crowds, in defiance of the ban on meetings in cities, entered Valletta. Some sung the *Marseillaise*; others tore up a union jack; the French and American consulates were cheered, as were some Austrian officers who happened to be present; and then a few days later the statue of Queen Victoria in the city centre was found besmirched with an acid solution of nitrate and silver. There were 23 arrests.<sup>204</sup> Weeks later the governor reported that some 'fort record books' containing important secret information had been stolen; a 'position finding station' had been broken open; and efforts had been made to induce non-commissioned officers to betray their trust.<sup>205</sup>

The 1901 campaign saw the beginnings of organized student participation in public life. The students' representative council (*Comitato Permanente Universitario*) and the *Giovine Malta* club, which was also linked to the *Società Dante Alighieri*, were founded at this time and henceforth took a prominent part in political activities. The first *Giovine Malta* meetings were held at the *La Valette* band club: Mizzi was made honorary president; his son Enrico became an active member.<sup>206</sup> As anti-British feeling intensified, irredentist leanings re-appeared among the student body. Some contact was made with the irredentist *Corda Fratres* association, as this society expected Maltese delegates to attend an international meeting together with students from Trieste, Innsbruck and Gratz universities.<sup>207</sup> Comparing the government of Malta to that of Poland and Armenia under the Czar, Edoardo Semini predicted that irredentism, 'which really never existed', would 'sooner or later spring up and menace, perhaps at a critical moment' the island's security.<sup>208</sup>

In a petition to Edward VII, Savona said Malta was 'in a state bordering on Revolution'; but Lord Congleton, acting governor, said this was 'a gross exaggeration'.<sup>209</sup> Savona raised a significant constitutional point, quoting Judge Stephen's commentaries on the laws of England to the effect that, according to the Renunciation Act (18, George III, chap. 12, sect. 1), the general right of the mother country to legislate for colonies,



recognized by the Colonial Laws Validity Act (1865) *excepted matters of taxation*; hence, in view of the Malta Letters Patent of 1887 (clause 29) the July 1899 order-in-council was null and void.<sup>210</sup> The Renunciation Act applied strictly only to British provinces and plantations in North America and the West Indies, but it was classified as one of the imperial statutes relating to the colonies in general.<sup>211</sup> The law officers of the Crown, however, held the act to be applicable to North America and the West Indies, and, further, that the right to levy taxes depended on the 1887 constitution itself.<sup>212</sup> Savona in dismay referred to Earl Grey's despatch of 23 January 1852 which, he said, was recognized as 'the Magna Carta of the Representative rights of all the British Plantations, the Colony of New South Wales included, though it was neither in North America nor in the West Indies'; did the imperial parliament have the right to impose taxes on the Australian Commonwealth for the purposes of raising a revenue?<sup>213</sup>

In September 1901 a third order-in-council was passed, sanctioning, with certain modifications, most of the provisions contained in Strickland's Public Revenue Improvement Ordinance: works with regard to drainage (£300,000), schools (£35,000), waterworks (£20,000), roads (£10,000), female lepers' hospital (£8,000), improving the Central Hospital (£5,000), criminal lunatics' ward (£2,500). The governor was also empowered to issue warrants under his hand, chargeable to Malta's public revenue, for expenditure, not otherwise provided for, for amounts up to £9,000 yearly. The order-in-council provided further that no one who was not a Malta university graduate could be appointed to any judicial or magisterial office. This was a meaningless sop, because the next paragraph contained the most determined approval of the 'free choice' scheme at all levels of public instruction with regard to teaching, admissions, examinations and preferment; the governor could change university and lyceum practically at will, provided only that in the Faculty of Theology instruction would continue to be in Latin or Italian. In the Council, elected members who disregarded the authority of the Chair could be suspended for up to ten sittings.<sup>214</sup>

Obviously less restrained than Savona in their views about the British, the Mizzian press indulged in a litany of curses, siding with the Boers and claiming that Britain's enemies would now be Malta's friends:

God will hear the malediction of a people so barbarously oppressed. Every affection we could feel for her, all loyalty we sincerely professed for her, should now be banished from our hearts. . . . Let us curse her! Let us hate her . . .<sup>215</sup>

'I have to deal', complained Grenfell, 'with a hostile population within the walls of the Fortress. The agitation is increasing, and will further increase under priestly influence'.<sup>216</sup> Tighter security became necessary since now 'all classes' had turned against the government.<sup>217</sup>

Early in 1902, in a vocabulary well chosen to tickle the pride of 'our good allies, the Italians', Chamberlain agreed to withdraw his 1899 language substitution proclamation, which had been slightly modified in 1901 to extend the use of Italian until 1919.<sup>218</sup> The Commons accepted Chamberlain's decision, although Campbell Bannerman did notice that Britain ought also to keep 'on good terms with the people of Malta, with whom we are more closely connected after all'.<sup>219</sup> Apart from discussions going on about the future of Tripoli, and some concern over Franco-Italian relations in the Mediterranean, there was Britain's failure, at this time, to secure an understanding with Germany: had Chamberlain reached agreement with the Kaiser, noted Amery, 'there would have been no need for concessions to Italy'.<sup>220</sup> But Chamberlain would not modify the 'free choice' policy:

at all hazards and against all opposition we are determined to preserve the freedom of choice. For we will not at the dictation of a small minority take away from 80% of the population of Malta their right to learn English and force upon them the necessity of learning a language which they do not wish to learn.<sup>221</sup>

Restated and intensified, 'free choice' ensured a continuing anglicization because it was now 'no longer a question of language, of Italian culture, but simply of the personal interest of youths and their future'; hence parents felt 'this sentiment of practical utility, rather than a pure historical sentiment': the government had made it well known that without a perfect knowledge of English, no one could aspire to a civil or military job, or even to the exercise of a liberal profession.<sup>222</sup>

'Sir, we have an easy remedy. We have the old remedy', said Chamberlain referring to the elected members' objections to the education votes: 'We had better do without the Constitution at all'.<sup>223</sup> By now the constitution was almost worthless. 'If the Council should not have an effective voice in the question of public education', said Azzopardi, 'I do not know what other right it would have left':

If this Constitution is to serve only so that the elected members say 'Amen' to everything that the Government wants, the best thing would be not to inconvenience any of the citizens to come here, and to leave matters in the hands of the six infallible ones of the Executive . . .<sup>224</sup>

The government's threatening policy of closing schools unless the representatives accepted language changes – schools were in fact closed for a few days on two or three occasions<sup>225</sup> – did not make the representatives budge with regard to essentials: in February 1902 they resigned *en masse*; in March they were all returned uncontested.<sup>226</sup> 'We will not give in', declared Mizzi, 'not only if you take away the constitution, but not even if you take away our life':

under no circumstances will we say 'yes' to what the Government wants in the question of public instruction: all we want is that our descendants will know that we did not fail in our duty when our compatriots sent us here to defend the country's interests. This is our only

ambition, the only scope for which we labour – that of fulfilling our duty towards ourselves and towards the country.<sup>227</sup>

In a petition to Edward VII supported by over sixty thousand signatures, and similar petitions from the clergy, Pace said Italian was 'indispensable to these Islands, and strictly bound up with the social and individual interests of the Maltese'; the new taxes directly or indirectly fell on 'the lower classes, whose condition cannot stand any further impoverishment'.<sup>228</sup> Parents were being forced to choose English 'not to compromise the prospects of their families', Pace told the Rome newspaper *L'Italie*; and as a result of the P.N.'s call for a boycott of the Royal Coronation festivities, Pace foresaw that in the *Te Deum* ceremony, which he would have to perform in his official capacity, there would be nobody but soldiers, sailors, and some employees.<sup>229</sup>

Strickland's ambition, a colonial governorship, was fulfilled some months before the 1887 constitution was withdrawn. He had tried first for the Windward Islands,<sup>230</sup> then for Newfoundland;<sup>231</sup> he now wished to become high commissioner of Cyprus, refused to go to Fiji, and was finally made governor of the Leeward Islands; after his suggestion that he might be designated as an additional or supernumerary 'Under-Secretary of State' to Chamberlain had been turned down.<sup>232</sup>

Looking only at the political spectrum, it is easy to underestimate, or miss altogether, such support or admiration as this 'Maltese' chief secretary may have enjoyed among people not electorally represented or unwilling publicly to express 'unpatriotic' views. Apart from those indebted to Strickland's patronage in the government service, in the university, in the militia, in the police force, certain constituted bodies, such as the Chamber of Commerce, and the Association of Maltese Nobility (founded in 1876) were inclined to be anglophile and to sympathise with or support the government. A useful side-window from which to observe political allegiances at the popular level were the band clubs (philharmonic societies) of which, by 1916, there were in all twenty-seven<sup>233</sup> – one or more in every town and also several in the villages. Certain band clubs were very loyal to the Crown, and Strickland knew how to attract personal loyalty. When, in celebration of Britain's victory at Ladysmith in Transvaal, the Birkirkara band *Filarmonica Sant'Elena* (founded in 1865) went playing triumphal marches before Strickland's villa, Strickland presented the band with a silver cup, a proudly treasured gift with this inscription: 'Sir Gerald Strickland to St. Helena Band – Ladysmith's Relief. 28-2-1900'.<sup>234</sup> It was said that on Ladysmith's relief nowhere was their wilder enthusiasm than in Malta. In his memoirs Grenfell recalled how Valletta was beflagged, bands played, streets were crowded:

A band and large crowd serenaded my palace, and later my horses were taken out and I was dragged to the opera by the Maltese. I said a few words of thanks to the crowd for their loyalty

outside the Opera House, and said I should communicate their loyal and patriotic feelings to Her Majesty the Queen.<sup>235</sup>

But the scenes following the Ta' Braxia meeting of 11 August 1901 showed that mass hysteria was not reserved exclusively to imperial celebrations nor were loyalism and patriotism synonymous: either the popular mood underwent change in response to different situations, or else different sectors of the population participated on such occasions; it was of course far safer to demonstrate for the government than against it. Busuttil's *Malta Tagħna*, still really a Savonian paper, was sorry, in 1901, that 'we have so much rejoiced when the English entered Ladysmith, and we even went so far as to unharness the horses. . .'.<sup>236</sup> But the love of spectacle characterizing the Maltese life-style must have found a natural, joyful expression in the whole pagaentry of empire – the trooping of the colour, the drills and gun salutes, the dazzling parades and marches with hundreds of soldiers, sailors, cavalymen, in their multi-coloured uniforms, which blended so well with the boisterous atmosphere of the *fešta* with its petards, fireworks, decorations, processions, band marches, nougat, cheesecakes, ribaldry all over the parish.<sup>237</sup> D. H. Lawrence, sitting in a Valletta café in 1920, captured this spirit:

A military band went by playing splendidly in the bright, hot morning. The Maltese lounged about, and watched. Splendid the band, and the soldiers! One felt the splendour of the British Empire, let the world say what it likes.<sup>238</sup>

Certain band clubs competed fervently with each other for royal honours: thus partisan rivalries in the political sphere may easily have been channelled through existing parochial rivalries especially in a city which had more than one parish, or in a parish which had more than one band club. Valletta had two parishes: St. Paul and St. Dominic; and two band clubs: both founded in 1874. The *La Valette* band was closely associated with the P.N. – Mizzi was its president in 1897–1898<sup>239</sup> – and consequently also with St. Paul Collegiate Church, which tended to support the P.N. Close by in Strada Reale was the *La Stella* band, which later changed its name to Prince of Wales Band Club, then to King's Own Band Club, representing 'a considerable section of the middle and working classes of the city' and always 'prominent in demonstrating devoted attachment to the Throne'.<sup>240</sup> The *La Valette* was probably more respectable but the social composition of the bands does not seem to have been much different. For instance, the Valletta-born Emanuele Dimech, an exponent of working class nationalism who discouraged petty parochial quarrels and opposed Strickland, rather admired *La Valette*,<sup>241</sup> so it is easy to see how the King's Own partisans could have tended to sympathize with Strickland, if only because the other band would have backed Mizzi. In asking to be allowed to re-name *La Vincitrice* as the 'Queen's Own Band Club', the Senglea band club committee, describing themselves as 'mostly servants of the Crown, being respectable

artizans, employed in Your Majesty's Royal Dockyard', mentioned the King's earlier favour to the King's Own band.<sup>242</sup> When in 1901 Cospicua's anglophile *San Giorgio* band was to play at the invitation of *La Valette*, its partisans were 'determined to retaliate should the "God Save the King" be hissed' (as nationalist *La Valette* supporters might have done).<sup>243</sup>

Strickland left Malta in 1902 reasonably prosperous, as Grenfell noted: by reason of the breakwater and dock extension works undertaken by the imperial government, and other enterprises, work was 'plentiful' and wages 'higher than they have hitherto been in Malta'; the state of 'our finances' could be considered flourishing.<sup>244</sup> Those who cared little or nothing about politics, or had no 'national' political consciousness, might well have felt thankful to Strickland, and to the imperial government. Commemorating Edward VII's visit to Malta in 1903 in a special number, Bartolo's *Chronicle* gave this version of Maltese faithfulness:

England! What can we do for thee  
We that are few, that are small?  
We may be brave, may be true for thee  
Give thee our little, our all.<sup>245</sup>

Strickland's influence was to be as great as Mizzi's, but in a different direction altogether.

## NOTES

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- 3 A. R. M. Lower: *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Longmans, 4th edn., 1964), pp. 434-447.
- 4 Chamberlain min. 3 Aug. 1900 on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 22 June 1900, 158/332/20497.
- 5 *Memoirs of Field-Marshal Lord Grenfell, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.* (Hodden & Stoughton, Lond., 1925), p. 156.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 159.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 157.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 168.
- 9 Cox min. 4 Apr. 1901, 158/335/7213.
- 10 Harris min. 29 Jan. 1901, 158/335/3179.
- 11 Read min., 19 Nov. 1902, 158/338/39977.
- 12 Cox min., 11 Feb. 1899, on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 30 Jan 1899, 158/328/3316.
- 13 Harris min. on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 22 June 1900, 158/333/20497.
- 14 Harris min. on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 27 Apr. 1901, 158/336/15255.
- 15 Wingfield min. 11 Feb. 1899, 158/328/3316.
- 16 Lucas min., *ibid.*
- 17 Wingfield min., *ibid.*
- 18 Chamberlain min., *ibid.*
- 19 Cox min., *ibid.*
- 20 Chamberlain min., *ibid.*
- 21 Chamberlain/Grenfell, no. 199, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 22 Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ciii.615-616.
- 23 C.G., 6 Apr. 1899, 2.26.

- 24 Chamberlain min. 29 June 1900, 158/332/12507.
- 25 Onslow min. 27 Feb. 1901, 158/335/6480.
- 26 Chamberlain min. 18 Apr. 1901, 158/335/7213.
- 27 C.G., 14 June 1899, 11.478.
- 28 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 Mar. 1899, 158/328.
- 29 Strickland/Crewc, 23 July 1908, 158/360.
- 30 C.G., 6 Apr. 1899, 2.25.
- 31 enc. 10 Sept. 1901, no. 30, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 32 G. Strickland: *Malta and the Phoenicians*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 33 *Supra*, ii.49-50.
- 34 Strickland comment on Mizzi speech, enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 16 Dec. 1902, 158/338/45108.
- 35 Strickland/C.O., 30 Nov. 1901, 158/338/43061.
- 36 Grenfell/Chamberlain comment on Mizzi speech, 158/338/45108.
- 37 Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ci.1187-1188, 1196, 1205.
- 38 Simmons/Derby, 30 Aug. 1884, 158/269.
- 39 Naudi rep. (1901), enc. 2, no. 72, 883/5.
- 40 C.G., 12 Apr. 1901, 25-797.
- 41 e.g. Malta Police Interior Branch rep., enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 28 Nov. 1901, 883/5/42576.
- 42 Chamberlain/Grenfell, 2 Jan. 1902, conf., no. 110, 883/5/40855.
- 43 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 24 Dec. 1901, no. 105, 883/5, 158/338/45851.
- 44 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 17 Aug. 1901, 158/337.
- 45 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 2 Apr. 1901, 158/336.
- 46 Grenfell/Chamberlain tel., received 7 Oct. 1901, 158/338.
- 47 Chamberlain/Grenfell, 18 Feb. 1901, no. 157, 883/5.
- 48 In Transvaal the Aliens Immigration Act imposed in Nov. 1896, restricting press liberty and public meetings, was repealed, on Chamberlain's instructions, in 1897, as it violated an 1884 convention.
- 49 'Appello ai Maltesi', *Malta*, 26 Dec. 1901, enc. 1, no. 111, 883/5.
- 50 Proclamation no. XXIII, M.G.G., 27 Dec. 1901; enc. 1-3, no. 113, 883/5.
- 51 Onslow memo., Dec. 1901, no. 109A, 883/5.
- 52 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 13 Jan. 1902, no. 122, 883/5, M.G.G., 6 Jan. 1902, enc. 1, *ibid*.
- 53 e.g. 'The National Anthem', *Malta*, 27 Oct. 1901, enc. 6, no. 66, 883/5.
- 54 Chamberlain min., 2 Nov. 1901, on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 14 Oct. 1901, 158/338/36662.
- 55 'Memorandum by Admiral Sir John Fisher. The Navy and Malta', enc. 3, no. 109A, 883/5.
- 56 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 13 Nov. 1901, secret, 28 Nov. 1901, 158/338, nos. 68, 90, 883/5.
- 57 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 30 June 1898, 25 Sept. 1898, 158/324; Chamberlain/Fremantle, 24 Dec. 1898, 158/326. Ecclesiastics had been prohibited from Council once before, but in the 1879 referendum on this subject an overwhelming majority of electors had voted in favour of their re-admission; *Parl. Papers 1870*, xlix, p. 610.
- 58 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 27 May 1899, 158/328.
- 59 Strickland/Naudi, 30 Nov., 14 Dec. 1901, Strickland/Grenfell, 6 Dec. 1901, Strickland/Mercieca, 9 Dec., 13 Dec. 1901, Naudi/Strickland, 30 Nov. 1901, 3 Jan. 1902, enc. 1-2, no. 127, 883/5/3635.
- 60 Mercieca/Strickland, 13 Dec., 14 Dec. 1901, *ibid*.
- 61 Onslow min. on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 22 Jan. 1902, 158/340/3635.
- 62 enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 7 May 1902, no. 197, 883/5.
- 63 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 18 May 1899, 158/328.
- 64 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 23 May 1901, 158/336.
- 65 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 4 June 1901, 158/336.
- 66 Onslow memo, Dec. 1901, no. 109A, p. 148, 883/5/21878.
- 67 'Indirizzo dei Gozitani', *Malta*, 24 Aug. 1898.
- 68 *Malta*, 29 Aug. 1898.
- 69 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 Mar. 1899, 158/328.
- 70 *Malta*, 18 June 1900, enc. 158/332/20496.
- 71 enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 May 1901, 158/336/18366.

- 72 C.G., 7 June 1899, 10.403.
- 73 C.G., 14 June 1899, 11.482, 16 June 1899, 12.489.
- 74 C.G., 14 Apr. 1899, 4.179.
- 75 C.G., 23 Nov. 1898, 6.315.
- 76 C.G., 7 June 1899, 10.407.
- 77 Essentially the same question that had confounded F. W. Rowsell (*supra*, i.8) was at issue, whether bread prices depended on import duties or profits; it was generally agreed that the duty was necessary and prices would have to be otherwise regulated, but Darmanin (and Strickland) argued that it was the individual importer, not the state, who should pay for analytical tests as to the quality of imported flour, that costs should not be charged on consumers. C.G., 17 June 1899, 10.417, 21 Feb. 1900, 20.838-847.
- 78 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 8 Feb. 1899, 158/328.
- 79 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 18 Oct. 1898, 158/326.
- 80 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 4 Oct. 1898, 158/325.
- 81 M.G.G., no. 4050, 19 Sept. 1898, p. 719, 162/32.
- 82 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 Mar. 1899, 158/328; Grenfell/Chamberlain, tel., received 12 Mar. 1902, *Parl. Papers 1902*, xlv (Cd. 1660), p. 24.
- 83 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 25 Oct. 1900, *Parl. Papers 1901*, xlv (Cd. 715), no. 17.
- 84 C.G., 27 Feb. 1901, 21.710-712, 13 Mar. 1901, 23.764.
- 85 C.G., 23 Feb. 1898, 61.936-937.
- 86 *Malta*, 13 Jan. 1896, enc. Fremantle/Chamberlain, 16 Jan. 1896, 158/315.
- 87 C.G., 12 Feb. 1892, 50.606.
- 88 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 25 Nov. 1899, 158/330.
- 89 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 16 May 1902, no. 202, 883/5, 158/342/19760.
- 90 Clarke/Lyttelton, 30 May, 13 July 1904, 158/346.
- 91 This was published contemporaneously with a rival pamphlet in Maltese, by the *Malta* press, signed 'A Maltese Patriot'; enc. 158/336/17582.
- 92 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 Mar. 1899, 158/328.
- 93 Agius/Blizzard, 3 Sept. 1901, enc. 158/338/43061.
- 94 Butler min. on Clarke/Chamberlain, 11 July 1903, 158/344/26953.
- 95 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 25 Nov. 1899, 158/330.
- 96 *Malta e Sue Dipendenze*, 13 Mar. 1902.
- 97 Police estimate 2 Nov. 1901, enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 11 Nov. 1901, no. 66, 883/5.
- 98 G. Tanti Bellotti: *The Prevailing Terrorism in Malta* (Valletta, 1902).
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- 100 C.G., 13 Mar. 1901, 23.760.
- 101 C.G., 15 Dec. 1897, 54.555.
- 102 enc. Fremantle/Chamberlain, 11 Mar. 1898, 158/323/5872.
- 103 C.G., 24 Nov. 1897, 50.249-250.
- 104 C.G., 19 Apr. 1899, 5.189.
- 105 C.G., 26 Apr. 1899, 6.325.
- 106 *Ibid.*, col. 237.
- 107 *Ibid.*, cols. 239-240.
- 108 *Ibid.*, col. 235.
- 109 *Ibid.*, col. 242.
- 110 *Ibid.*, col. 237.
- 111 C.G., 19 Apr. 1899, 5.187.
- 112 C.G., 31 Oct. 1900, 4.3.
- 113 C.G., 12 Feb. 1902, 47.375-376.
- 114 C.G., 6 Apr. 1899, 2.27.
- 115 C.G., 28 Apr. 1897, 42.1148.
- 116 Report of the Select Committee on the Education Department (M.G.P.O., 1897).
- 117 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 11 June 1898, 158/324.
- 118 University Council sitting no. 40, 4 Apr. 1902, enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, no. 188, 883/5/15159.
- 119 Chamberlain min. 1 Feb. 1901, 158/335/3179.
- 120 C.G., 14 Apr. 1899, 4.179.
- 121 Police rep. enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 May 1901, 158/336/18366.

- 122 *Ibid.*
- 123 'We both hold the same opinion on political matters', said Mizzi, who was too indisposed to address this 1904 meeting at length; *Parl. Papers 1910*, lxvi (Cd. 5217), enc. 3, no. 4, pp. 9-10.
- 124 Police rep. enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 May 1901, 158/336/18366.
- 125 A. Mercieca, *op cit.*, p. 30.
- 126 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 Jan. 1901, Chamberlain/Grenfell, 13 Feb. 1901, 158/335.
- 127 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 2 July 1901, 158/337.
- 128 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 17 Mar. 1902, no. 175, 883/5.
- 129 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 8 Feb. 1899, 158/328.
- 130 enc., no. 93, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 131 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 12 Oct., 25 Oct. 1898, 158/326.
- 132 Ordinance III (1896); enc. 1-2, Fremantle/Chamberlain, 1 Dec. 1898, *Parl. Papers 1899*, lix, pp. 262-264, Fremantle tel., 8 Dec. 1898, *ibid.*, no. 3.
- 133 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 12 Oct. 1898, 158/326.
- 134 Chamberlain min. on Fremantle/Chamberlain, 13 May 1898, 158/323.
- 135 Chamberlain/Fremantle, 31 Oct. 1898, *Parl. Papers 1899*, lix, enc. 1, p. 257.
- 136 Wingfield min., 18 June 1898, on Fremantle/Chamberlain, 13 May 1898, 158/323.
- 137 *Malta*, 25 Feb. 1898, enc. 158/323/5897.
- 138 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 15 Mar. 1898, 158/323.
- 139 *Il Bandiera tal Maltin*, 5 Mar. 1898.
- 140 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 21 Mar. 1899, 158/328; M.G.G., 22 Mar. 1899, Grenfell/Chamberlain 24 Mar. 1899, *Parl. Papers 1899*, lix, enc. 2, no. 7.
- 141 Chamberlain min. on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 8 Feb. 1899, 158/328.
- 142 F. Mizzi and S. Cachia Zammit, *op. cit.*, appendix 15.
- 143 Fremantle/Chamberlain, 14 May 1898, 158/324.
- 144 Semini/Chamberlain, 8 Aug. 1901, no. 4, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 145 C.G., 2 Dec. 1896, 31.357.
- 146 *Ibid.*, col. 365.
- 147 *Supra*, iv.111.
- 148 *Census of the Maltese Islands* (M.G.P.O., 31 Mar. 1901).
- 149 *Malta*, 23 Mar. 1899, enc. 158/328/8677.
- 150 Harris min., 28 Mar. 1901, 158/335/10509.
- 151 *Malta*, 23 Mar. 1899.
- 152 C.G., 19 Apr. 1899, 5.207.
- 153 E. Rossi: *Lingua Italiana, Dialecto Maltese e Politica Britannica a Malta* (Leghorn, 1929), p. 45.
- 154 *Supra*, ii.28.
- 155 F. Mizzi and S. Cachia Zammit, *op. cit.*, p. 8, para. 22.
- 156 Report of interview held on 31 July 1899, enc., conf., Med. 49, 883/5.
- 157 F. Mizzi and S. Cachia Zammit, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6, para. 6-10.
- 158 *Ibid.*, p. 6, para. 13, 15.
- 159 *Ibid.*, para. 15.
- 160 *Ibid.*, para. 11.
- 161 enc. Chamberlain/Grenfell, 20 July 1899, *Parl. Papers 1899*, lix, nos. 18-19.
- 162 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 8 June 1899, *ibid.*, no. 13.
- 163 'Constitutional Absolutism', *Malta*, 31 July 1899, enc. Gwen/Chamberlain, 5 Aug. 1899, 158/329. Editor of *Labour World*, organ of the British labour movement (1890-1891) who visited Russia to show sympathy with the revolutionary party (1903-1905), Davitt (1846-1906) was accused by *The Times* of wanting complete independence for Ireland by violent revolution collectivist and secularist, Davitt stood for reconciliation of extreme with constitutional nationalism, and of democracy with nationality.
- 164 Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ci.1173-1174.
- 165 *Malta*, 11 Sept. 1902.
- 166 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 24 Jan. 1902, no. 129, 883/5/3919.
- 167 A. Cini: *Origine e Progresso della Lingua Italiana in Malta* (Catania, 1904.)
- 168 *Supra*, ii.29-30.
- 169 Garibaldi/Currie, 11 Jan. 1901, enc. 158/339/4518.



- 170 Currie/Lansdowne, 8 Nov. 1900, enc. 158/334/37329. See L. Villari, 'Pasquale Villari e Joseph Chamberlain sulla lingua italiana a Malta; Carteggio inedito', *Rassegna di Politica Internazionale*, Milan, Nov. 1934, pp. 540-549.
- 171 Grande/Visconti-Venosta, 20 Nov. 1900, D.D.I., 3rd ser., iv.317.
- 172 J. L. Glanville: *Italy's Relations with England 1896-1905* (Baltimore, 1934), p. 88.
- 173 *Camera dei Deputati*, Sessione 1900-1901, II, p. 1277 sq, D.D.I., 3rd ser., iv.322.
- 174 Currie/Lansdowne, 12 Dec. 1900, 158/334/41745.
- 175 Grande/Visconti-Venosta, 20 Nov. 1900, D.D.I., 3rd ser., iv.317.
- 176 J. L. Glanville, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
- 177 Lansdowne/Currie, 31 Jan. 1902, enc., no. 148, 883/5/6272.
- 178 A. V. Laferla, *op. cit.*, ii.150-151.
- 179 Semini/Chamberlain, 12 Aug. 1901, enc., no. 10, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 180 W. H. Steed: *Through Thirty Years* (Lond., 1924), i.159-165.
- 181 J. Amery: *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain* (Lond., 1951), iv.177; *infra*, vii.
- 182 C.G., 13 Feb. 1901, 17.637-639.
- 183 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 30 Jan., 8 Feb. 1899, 158/328.
- 184 C.G., 13 Feb. 1901, 17.643-649.
- 185 *Ibid.*, cols. 641-642.
- 186 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 12 Apr. 1901, 158/335.
- 187 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Commission of Enquiry into the Events of the 7th and 8th June 1919', enc. Plumer/Milner, 25 Sept. 1919, 158/412.
- 188 enc. 2, no. 13, 13 Aug. 1901, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 189 C.G., 4 Dec. 1901, 40.40.
- 190 *Ibid.*, col. 47. In making this last statement, Mizzi said 'loved England more than Italy', promptly correcting himself: 'I mean to say, Malta'.
- 191 Photo, 5 May 1901, enc. 158/336; photo, 11 Aug. 1901, enc. 158/337.
- 192 enc. 20 Aug. 1901, 158/337/29912.
- 193 Congleton/Pace, 12 Aug. 1901, enc. 5, no. 13, 883/5.
- 194 enc. 12 Apr. 1901, 158/336/13554.
- 195 enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 10 Apr. 1901, 158/336, *Parl. Papers 1901*, xlvii, no. 32.
- 196 enc. 3, no. 13, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 197 enc. 7, no. 13, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 198 Congleton/Chamberlain, 16 Aug. 1901, 883/5.
- 199 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 19 June 1901, 158/336.
- 200 Police rep. enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 10 Apr. 1901, 158, 336/13141.
- 201 enc. 7, no. 13, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 202 R. De Cesare, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
- 203 *La Dépêche Tunisienne*, 22 Oct. 1901, enc., no. 68, Med. 52, 883/5.
- 204 Congleton/Chamberlain, 16 Aug. 1901, Grenfell/Chamberlain, 26 Oct. 1901, *ibid.*
- 205 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 7 Nov. 1901, secret, 158/338/39851; no. 68, 883/5.
- 206 A. Mercieca, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-33.
- 207 'Agli Studenti degli Atenei Italiani', enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 1 Mar. 1902, 158/341.
- 208 Semini/Chamberlain, 6 Aug. 1901, enc. 4, 883/5/27983.
- 209 Congleton/Chamberlain, 31 Aug. 1901, no. 27, 883/5.
- 210 Savona/Edward VII, 28 Aug. 1901, enc., no. 27, *ibid.*
- 211 C. J. Tarring: *Chapters on the Law relating to the Colonies* (Lond., 1893, 2nd edn.) p. 233, quoted in Naudi memo., 30 Aug. 1901, no. 27, *ibid.*
- 212 Chamberlain/Congleton, 25 Sept. 1901, *ibid.*
- 213 Savona/Chamberlain, 1 Oct. 1901, no. 46, 883/5.
- 214 Order-in-Council, 26 Sept. 1901, Med. 51, 883/5; Proc. XIX of 1901, M.G.G., 7 Oct. 1901.
- 215 *Malta*, 8 Oct. 1901, enc., no. 51, 883/5.
- 216 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 14 Oct. 1901, *ibid.*
- 217 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 9 Oct. 1901, no. 49, 883/5.
- 218 Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ci. 1204-1205.
- 219 *Ibid.*, col. 1206.
- 220 J. Amery, *op. cit.*, iv.178.
- 221 Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ci.1199.

- 222 Grande/Visconti-Venosta, 26 Jan. 1901, D.D.I., 3rd ser., iv.453.
- 223 Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ci.1202.
- 224 C.G., 12 Feb. 1902, 47-374.
- 225 e.g. Chamberlain/Grenfell, 1 May 1902, tel., 883/5.
- 226 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 18 Feb., 29 Mar. 1902, 883/5.
- 227 C.G., 30 Mar. 1903, 79-942-943.
- 228 enc. Grenfell/Chamberlain, 25 Apr. 1901, 158/344/15937; Hansard, 4th ser., 1902, ci.1170.
- 229 'La situation à Malte devient de jour en jour plus grave'; 'La Question de Malte', *L'Italie*, 28-29 May 1902, enc. Rodd/Lansdowne, 29 May 1902, 158/342/22538.
- 230 enc. Smyth/Ripon, 1 July 1893, 158/304.
- 231 enc. Fremantle/Chamberlain, 9 July 1895, 158/312.
- 232 Strickland/Ommaney, 13 Oct. 1901, enc. 158/338/36336.
- 233 Metheun/Bonar Law, Aug. 1916, 158/393.
- 234 *B' Tifkira ta' Gheluq il-Mitt Sena tas-Socjeta Filarmonika 'Duke of Connaught's Own Band' B' Kara* (Valletta, 1965), p. 19.
- 235 *Memoirs of Field-Marshal Lord Grenfell, op. cit.*, p. 158.
- 236 *Malta Ghada Taghna*, no. 762, 12 Oct. 1901, enc. 8, no. 66, 883/5.
- 237 See J. Boissevain: *Saints and Fireworks. Religion and Politics in Rural Malta* (Lond., 1965).
- 238 D. H. Lawrence, 'Introduction to *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*, in *Phoenix II* (ed. T. H. Moore, Lond., 1968), p. 348.
- 239 *Tifkira ta' Gheluq il-Mitt Sena mit-Twaqqif tas-Socjeta Filarmonika Nazionale 'La Valette'* (Progress Press, Valletta, 1974), p. 10.
- 240 Grenfell/Chamberlain, 9 Feb. 1901, 158/335.
- 241 e.g. *Bandiera*, no. 256, 29 Nov. 1902, p. 3, col. ii.
- 242 Canon F. Marengo *et al.*, 13 Mar. 1903, enc. 158/344/18089.
- 243 Curmi/Strickland, 11 Nov. 1901, enc. 5, no. 72, 883/5.
- 244 C.G., 5 Nov. 1902, 1.2.
- 245 G. Brook-Shepherd: *Uncle of Europe: The Social and Diplomatic Life of Edward VII* (Lond., 1975), p. 175.