Strickland’s transfer to the Leeward Islands was neither a concession nor a cure; it was one of the Colonial Office’s last moves in a concerted attempt to ensure that when the 1887 constitution was revoked the blame could be seen to have been entirely that of the elected members themselves. Chamberlain agreed with Grenfell that the constitution was ‘doomed to failure from the outset’ as the elected members could hamper the governor by exercising control over finances while they themselves complained that they had no real power. In accordance with Chamberlain’s view ‘the more they reject the better,’ in June 1903 the education estimates which the elected members had refused to pass in April were again brought forward: had the official members lost their senses, asked Azzopardi, or did they think that the Maltese population and their representatives were mad? With Strickland out of the way, a new governor in the person of General Clarke, and the Coronation festivities over, the last signs of resistance in the Council served as the immediate pretext for the Letters Patent and Royal Instructions of 3 June which abolished the elected majority in the legislature and the unofficial element in the executive, making Malta once again a Crown Colony as under the 1849 constitution. Such a forced and arbitrary return to the old order is an act without a parallel in twentieth century British imperial history: the case of British Guiana in 1928 was rather like that of Jamaica in 1866, that of Newfoundland in 1933 was hardly comparable since Newfoundland, being utterly bankrupt, surrendered its status voluntarily. Cyprus lost its 1882 constitution in 1931 following an open revolt (partly provoked by fears of an attempt at ‘dehellenisation’) in which Government House in Nicosia was burned down.

Under the administration of Governor Clarke and Strickland’s successor Lieutenant Governor E. M. Merewether, the Council very nearly ceased to function as a significant body. Clarke spoke at the inauguration of each
session then disappeared until the next session began, leaving the chair to Merewether, or the chief justice Sir Giuseppe Carbone, or, after Naudi's death in 1905, the new crown advocate Vincenzo Frenzo Azzopardi, or even a head of department. Sittings were short and monotonously quiet: ordinances passed without amendment, without discussion, even when new taxes were proposed. The crown advocate would have the honour to move that the ordinance in question be read a third time and passed; the Lieutenant governor would have the honour to second him; and all the official members would have the honour to do as they were told. Mizzi and his colleagues formulated a doctrine of total non-cooperation, which became known as Astensionismo, immediately boycotting all Council sittings:

How can an enlightened people who crave for political liberty and are conscious of their dignity as a civilized nation accept such a Constitution? And for what purpose? And what citizens could ever be induced to abandon their own affairs and accept the popular mandate to study and discuss the affairs of Malta, to sweat and create bad blood, to have their nerves continually harassed, to sicken and age prematurely in pursuit of the arduous task of persuading a Government whose interest it is not to listen to reason, to see themselves continually voted down by the official puppets, in a crushing majority, and to have to submit to all decisions, even the most odious ones, passed under the formula 'with the advice and consent of the Council of Government', and in return for all this, to find themselves insulted and maligned in the Government despatches? No! A people such as the Maltese, who have a secular name to cherish, and the sympathies of Europe to sustain them, will never accept such a Constitution.

In less than two years, six protest elections (elezioni protestatorie) were held: the candidates, now reduced to eight, led by Mizzi, were, every time, elected uncontested, submitted an eloquent protest demanding self-government, and resigned after a few days or the next day. After 1904, P.N. candidates would not even come forward for election unless contested by someone; so it was decided that no fresh election need be held before three years.

On 23 January 1905, at the Giovine Malta club in Valletta, the Associazione Politica Maltese was formed, under Mizzi's presidency, to elect a Consiglio Popolare by adult suffrage, every householder being entitled to vote. The A.P.M., which was to be run by a Comitato Popolare, could serve to question the government's legitimacy, and also the more easily to attract the support of all factions. Like the Comitato Nazionale of 1901, it was meant as a national endeavour to face an emergency situation.

There was a rather strained attempt to foster certain lingering differences of opinion or outlook among the various factions, for example by the barely read anglophile paper La Sede Del Papa. This paper's reference to 'clericals' and 'anticlericals' may be worth noting, if only because the labels employed to describe rival tendencies are not the more usual ones, i.e. 'pro-English' and 'pro-Italian'. Until much later (in the late nineteen twenties and nineteen thirties, and then again in the nineteen sixties) Maltese colonial politics were not polarised on the 'clerical' versus 'anticlerical' pattern; but no doubt such tendencies could not but have existed, to some extent, at least covertly, and they may perhaps have been more pregnant with
implications than may be scanned from what took place on the surface of political activity. Certainly during the marriage question, which had more or less come to an end a few years earlier, it was possible to identify an ideological, if not a dispositional, outlook in the two major parties: a 'clerical' or 'ultramontanist' stand on the part of the Savona-Panzavecchia alignment, on the one hand; and an 'anticlerical' or 'liberal' stand on the side of the Mizzi-Mifsud party. Thus although the Mizzi-led initiative of 1901 does not seem to have been any less populist or nationalist in inspiration and impact than the earlier Savona-led initiative of 1896 – in both cases too some minor violent incidents were reported – nevertheless it would seem that to be 'pro-Italian' was potentially to be 'anticlerical' in so far as both these positions implied a disposition that was likely to be critical of institutionalized authority and the abuse of power, whether from civil or ecclesiastical quarters; whereas on the other hand to be 'pro-English' seemed to imply a higher regard for hierarchy, officialdom and, generally, a more absolutist world-view. Of course such 'behaviourist' traits may be traced simply to educational standards which in turn could be seen to reflect financial and environmental conditions.

Employing a unionista reasoning similar to that used by Savona as P.U. leader,15 Mizzi stressed the need for unity, chastising those who tried to sow 'disunion' by talk of 'clericals' and 'anticlericals':

I beg to be allowed to address a word to all those whose sentiments happen to be too far advanced either one way or the other. We beg to remind everybody that the Maltese population is too small to suffer division into two or more parties . . . we are face to face with a common enemy.16

Among those returned in the keenly contested elections to the A.P.M.'s Comitato, there were prominent P.P. figures: Antonio Dalli, Francesco Wettinger and Panzavecchia himself; but Savona's name was conspicuous by its absence.17

Panzavecchia had started his political career as an Antiriformista in the early 1880s, and he had never quarrelled with the P.N. so strongly as Savona, whom he had befriended in 1893–1895 probably more out of a patriotic-religious than a strictly party political motive. His address as a P.U. candidate was clear:

As from 1880 I found myself among the nationalist ranks . . . I shall always be a nationalist, approving the conduct of those members – to whichever party they may belong – who show with facts that they desire the good of these Islands.18

Panzavecchia took an active part, with Mizzi and Azzopardi, in the well-attended meetings held to publicize the Consiglio Popolare project.19 In the subsequent Consiglio election, about 20,000 householders voted:20 twice the number of those normally entitled to vote in state elections; although the Consiglio was, at best, a moral force only.

This enthusiastic turnout may be partly accounted for by the clergy's
involvement in a specific patriotic-religious dispute that arose at the time. The Theatre Royal, where the P.N. had been prevented from singing their national anthem, was leased to a Protestant mission, led by a Scottish minister, John MacNeill. MacNeill’s lectures, advertised in Bartolo’s Chronicle, apparently attracted a number of Maltese; but, following strong protests from Pace and others, they were stopped by the governor. This action in turn raised many protests from the Evangelical Alliance and other Protestant bodies. Ulstermen such as T. H. Sloan (South Belfast) and T. L. Corbett (North Down) asked several questions in parliament. The governor’s policy of ‘surrendering’ when a great question of public policy was at stake, said *The Glasgow Herald*, tended ‘to perpetuate intolerance and to check the education of the Maltese people in the principles of freedom, which are the birthright of every independent people.’ MacNeill’s friend and fellow minister Jacob Primmer insisted that MacNeill’s evangelism was scriptural, not at all sceptical: ‘Wherever the British flag waves there ought to be the utmost freedom of thought and action’, he wrote; Rome was ‘as intolerant today as when she burnt the martyrs at the stake’.

All this again brought Panzavecchia to the forefront. Announcing a forthcoming meeting at which Panzavecchia was to be the main speaker, an A.P.M. brochure ‘Appeal to the Clergy and the People’ said:

> After having taken from us our national language in order to force its own upon us, after having burdened us with taxes, after having denied us all liberty, the Government now attacks the rights of our religion, and having recourse to the most cowardly despotism and threats in the name of the fundamental principles of British liberty, the Minister reduces us to the shameful condition of a people without Country, without language, without rights and without religion... Forward! God is with us!

Forced to campaign throughout the countryside, broadening its base by an appeal ranging from language, to taxes, to religion, the P.N. was, already by 1901, a mass party, but there were two distinct elements within it: one, the Mizzian, more secularist, bourgeois or elitist without being exclusive or aristocratic, Italianate, somewhat anticlerical, forcefully anti-British; the other, the Panzavecchian, clericalist, populist, anti-government rather than anti-British, moderately pro-English, staunchly anti-Protestant, more parochial and even more regionally based around the Senglea district rather than Valletta. Dr. Arturo Mercieca, president of the *Giovine Malta* club, spoke of ‘the sovereignty of the people’ as being to him ‘a still greater, a still more sacred principle’ than that of religious liberty. Panzavecchia, addressing the same meeting – greeted, interrupted and saluted with loud cheers – said that the Maltese quarrelled with the English government not with the English people, whom they loved and admired; he condemned ‘a despotism of the blackest dye’, but to him the single most important cause of all was the religious one. Referring to a despatch from the colonial minister, Earl Elgin, wherein, in connection with the MacNeill mission, it was stated that all creeds should be put on an equal footing, Panzavecchia
asked: 'How can you place truth and falsehood on an equal footing?... Why can’t they leave us alone?'

Panzavecchia’s resurgence may also have been due to the fact that in 1905 Malta bore the loss of Mizzi, who had been suffering from ill health for some time; he was given a hero’s funeral by the people. Mizzi’s ‘enemies’, said the popularly read Bandiera, could be regarded as ‘good, short-sighted people’:

Several of his party defected, but who could ever say that of him? We have seen neither him nor his children, who today mourn his death, enjoy any government job with hundreds of pounds a year. But we saw him – although ill, and shortly before the death of his beloved wife – out there in Floriana, on the rostrum, talking with the people in order to explain what they needed to understand.

Government pressures were strong indeed: suffice to note that of all His Majesty’s judges, only Zaccaria Roncali attended Mizzi’s funeral; and Pace, who personally disliked Mizzi, did not even send an official delegate. But Governor Clarke acknowledged that ‘notwithstanding his extreme views in politics’, Mizzi was ‘sincere in his opinions and actuated by honest motives’, which was more than could be said for ‘the majority of his associates’. At the time of his death, Mizzi was president of the Chamber of Advocates, besides being P.N. leader, A.P.M. president and Malta editor.

Mizzi’s immediate successor in these last three offices was Francesco Azzopardi. After twenty years in Mizzi’s shadow, Azzopardi was faced with the difficult task of trying to assert his own bearing without upsetting the fragile cohesion of a party that Mizzi had created out of nothing. Azzopardi, recalled Strickland, was ‘virulently opposed to the Church and to the Nobles and systematically hostile to English education and ideas’; but, curiously, although a ‘pro-Italian’ in politics, Azzopardi held, in a Savonian-Stricklandian vein, that the Maltese were Phoenician by descent. He was possibly more socially aware than Mizzi and in fact his legal procurator’s clientele was ‘of a rather low class’; his voting record since 1900 showed him to be on occasion no less opinionated than Mizzi. Although he obviously lacked Mizzi’s stature, Azzopardi had a firm grounding in politics, was a vigorous speaker, and had been Mizzi’s heir-apparent in the P.N. for some time.

Mizzi’s demise made an opening for Sigismondo Savona, who had continued to write in the Malta Times, and in 1903 indeed it had been rumoured that he might contest the Valletta district as an Anti-Astensionista, although, by now, he was apparently considered to represent ‘no one but himself’. But although Savona’s opinion was ‘not likely to carry very much weight’, the veteran campaigner returned to his old self with a Gladstonian flourish, expressing, or exploiting, the growing dissatisfaction with abstentionism, which Azzopardi had inherited from Mizzi. In 1905 Savona was in the news: it became known that the lieutenant governor, Merewether, had attempted to sequestrate a £100 gratuity, made to Savona in 1882, for a
similar amount due by Savona to Merewether as damages in a libel action.43 And Public Opinion reappeared also at this time. Opposing 'the existing monopoly of opinion', Savona advocated a reconciliation of the elected members with the government, saying this was desired by three-fourths of the population. He blamed the P.N. for wrecking the 1887 constitution and perpetuating the language question 'to keep alive the smouldering embers of political unrest', to encourage 'antipathy against the government'. Mizzi and his colleagues, he said, were 'not the men through whom we can ever hope to obtain better treatment at the hands of the Imperial Government, and therefore it behoves us to replace them by a different party'. With typical fatalism, or pragmatism, Savona suggested making a virtue of necessity - 'a timely awakening to a sense of our helplessness' - and compared abstentionism to the policy of the Italian clerical party who, not wishing to acknowledge the status of the Italian kingdom, had issued their famous formula 'nè eletti, nè elettivi'; but then they had to retrace their position 'in quiet submission to the inevitable'.44

The government had refused to recognize the A.P.M. 'or any other self-constituted body' as having 'any authority to question any action' of government, advising the Astensionisti to return to the Council if they wanted their views to be taken into consideration.45 As even the 'more moderate' politicians wanted at least an elected majority in the Council, there was 'little to choose between them and the extremists'.46

By 1907, after four years of seemingly ineffective abstentionism, Azzopardi was coming round to a Savonian logic. Exaggerating the import of a convergence of circumstances - Governor Clarke's untimely departure, a friendly interview with the acting governor Major-General Harry Barron, the return of a Liberal government in Britain - Azzopardi appealed for a 'practical' approach to politics:

When circumstances change, systems must always change, the principle of course being maintained, the realization of which is the goal ... unless we enter the Council, we shall obtain nothing ... we must remember that we are the weaker party, and that whether we wish it or not, we must, for the moment, submit, and we willingly make this sacrifice for the good of the country.47

Azzopardi's change of front, not approved by all his party,48 was strengthened by the hopes held out by Winston Churchill during his visit in 1907.

As colonial under-secretary, Churchill was not a Cabinet member and could not speak with too much authority, but he was obviously impressed by Malta's history as well as by the civility shown to him. Unlike his predecessor, Lord Onslow, who had refused to see a Maltese delegation during his visit in 1901,49 Churchill treated Maltese leaders respectfully and agreed to lunch with them.50 Churchill sincerely desired to do something about Malta's wretched constitutional impasse, but as he realised the colony's fortress condition, he limited himself to an oracular speech without binding
himself specifically to anything. He felt sure that if the ex-members took their seats in Council, this should lead to more consideration of their claims, saying that the last word had not been spoken on the constitutional question, that he would try to obtain some improvement:

We desire to associate the elected members with the Government of the Island; we desire them to lend us their support in carrying on a good administration for the welfare of the people; we desire that the wishes of the Government be the wishes of the people (hear, hear).\(^5\)

In his memorandum on the visit, Churchill dismissed as ‘an extremely inadequate argument’ the saying that Malta had no more right to a constitution than a battleship. The Maltese were an ancient and highly intelligent community of more than 200,000 Europeans who entered the British Empire of their own free will, who have been unquestionably loyal, and who support the whole burden of an elaborate administration from the resources of their own industry.

The British government had to remember, added Churchill, that although they could by brute force deny the Maltese all share in their island’s government, the Maltese, traders and travellers as they were, could give Britain a bad name, much to her disadvantage, from one end of the Mediterranean to another.\(^5\)

In 1907, hoping that, as a first step, the 1887 constitution would at least be restored, eight P.N. candidates returned to the Council uncontested, as nominees of the A.P.M.’s Consiglio Popolare.\(^5\)

One of the newly-returned councillors was the London-based lawyer Dr. Alfredo Mattei, who had taken a keen interest in the marriage question\(^5\) and in the quest for self-government.\(^5\) The grandiloquent, open-hearted marquis, an independent character not likely to take easily to Azzopardi’s headship, put forward a number of resolutions before the enlivened Council relating to the encouragement of local industries – lace-making, cotton-weaving, fruit cultivation, match-making, jewellery – and suggested a revival of the Maltese mint, and the attraction of tourists.\(^5\) Mattei also suggested taking steps towards abolishing the wheat duty – a proposal made earlier by Savona which had provoked a storm of protests from all sides.\(^5\) Mattei’s supporter in the Council in this matter was the young and alert Gozitan lawyer Dr. Arturo Mercieca, who had been instrumental in founding the Students’ Representative Council and the Young Malta.\(^5\) Mercieca was not, as he boasted, a ‘conservative’: ‘We should not leave things as they are’, he told the elderly Cachia Zammit, who had supported the abolition of capital punishment but opposed that of the wheat duty since the 1870s:\(^5\)

The population is not sufficiently educated to know what is good for it; the Maltese population is too good, and suffers the fiscal system just as it suffers the Government, with a patience, with a compliance which can only be the consequence of ignorance.\(^5\)

Apart from Dr. Andrea Pullicino, who voted with Mattei and Mercieca to
appoint a select committee regarding this problem, Azzopardi and the others, including the official members, held that it was not feasible to abolish or reduce the duty, however objectionable it appeared in principle. A great portion of the revenue from it, said Azzopardi, went in favour of the same class that paid it since the government spent £68,000 on charitable institutions. The yearly revenue from wheat and flour duties, over £90,000, was about 37% of total revenue. Malta, unlike Italy and Britain, had no taxes on property and income. In a long letter to Col. Seely, colonial under-secretary, Mattei outlined an alternative scheme of taxation. Questions in the Commons about this duty's repeal were probably the result of Mattei's lobbying. Many farmers, especially in Gozo, grew their own corn and made their own bread, but salaried employees in urban areas had no opportunity to do this; the duty weighed mostly on them. How to replace the duty without somehow affecting the lower paid by other means, in view of the relative poverty of the islanders, was problematical: in Corfu it had been found impossible to raise enough money from direct taxation in order to reform the fiscal system; the rice duty in Ceylon, also levied for revenue purposes, was defended on similar grounds. But this was essentially a conservative argument; some were poorer than others, in Malta as elsewhere. A petition started by the Malta Herald's editor, André Muscat, asking that the corn tax be abolished, and that duty be imposed on imported articles, was signed by about three thousand workers.

The elected members' constant preoccupation was obtaining a reform of the constitution. The one 'concession', made in 1909 shortly before the Malta elections, stipulated that it would be possible for the elected members to have two of their number appointed as unofficial members of the Executive Council. According to Col. Seely, these two unofficial members would be 'elected by their colleagues on behalf of what is known as the popular party'. At first, as in 1888, appointments were made considerately and in deference to the wishes of the majority. Azzopardi, as 'leader of the elected members', and Cachia Zammit, as the longest-serving councillor, were chosen; each to receive, as under the 1887 constitution, a £300 yearly salary. But the elected members stressed that they had resumed their seats in 1907, and had continued to occupy them, solely in consequence of the hopes of reform which General Barron and Mr. Churchill had given them: they expressed 'considerable disappointment' at the way in which their expectations had continued to be disregarded. In August 1909 Azzopardi and Mattei met the colonial minister, Earl Crewe, reiterating their claims for an elected majority, asking for the re-admission of ecclesiastics to the Council, and requesting pari passu instead of 'free choice' in education. Crewe listened to them, and Barron dined with Mattei at the Guildhall, but there never was any intention to alter the Crown Colony system. There was no foundation for Azzopardi's statement in
Malta that the request for an elected majority was still under consideration: on the contrary, Crewe had explained at length the reasons which made it impossible for him to grant this request in the circumstances. Azzopardi may have misunderstood what Crewe had told him – his knowledge of English was imperfect – because he gave the elected members the impression that reforms were on the way, while condemning the 'wicked intent' of 'our adversaries' (the small faction led apparently by Antonio Dalli, a Panzavecchian). So far Azzopardi’s P.N. or ‘popular party’ held their ground, the rebel faction being all defeated at the 1909 elections. But Azzopardi’s impossible position was underlined by the fact that even as the Letters Patent regarding the admission of unofficial members to the executive were being drafted, so too was an order-in-council being finalised to impose the duty on methylated spirits and varnish which the elected members had rejected. Crewe wrote to Governor Rundle making it clear that the British government were ‘not prepared to consider the question of giving the elected members a majority on the Legislative Council’. This despatch was a staggering blow to Azzopardi’s position; nor did the subsequent addition of the words ‘as at present advised’, on Azzopardi’s request, deprive Crewe’s despatch of its finality. Unless some hope was held out to the elected members on the question of an elected majority being re-considered, Azzopardi and his colleagues would have no option but to resign their seats.

Disagreements as to policy were compounded by a lack of confidence in Azzopardi. In 1908, before paid posts in the executive had been sanctioned, Governor Grant had observed that it was probable that Azzopardi was ‘acting principally in his own interests’ as he had heard for some time that Azzopardi was anxious to secure some settled and regularly paid employment than his legal procurator’s business. While most in his party would probably have given greater importance to having an elected majority rather than unofficial members on the executive, Azzopardi laid great stress on the latter reform. ‘The worst feature of the Constitution of 1903’, he wrote in 1908, was ‘that the Head of the Government has no chance of obtaining, nor the Elected Members of submitting, the people’s views and wishes on any question, before a decision on the subject is arrived at’.

By May 1910 the elected members were split three ways. Pullicino, who had joined the P.P. as a Panzavecchian in 1895, and Count Alfreo Caruana Gatto, who earlier had resigned his office as assistant crown advocate, were intent on resigning. Mattei was ambivalent; he strongly opposed the payment of unofficial members as there were gentlemen, he said, who were prepared to serve their country without being paid for it. In May 1910, Azzopardi, Cachia Zammit, Mercieca and the others, evidently under growing pressure from Mizzian-Panzavecchian elements, accepted to sign a declaration saying that unless matters improved they would resign their seats not later than October. Azzopardi inveighed against ‘the imprudent
and violent policy of our adversaries'. But then in June Azzopardi was forced to resign the editorship of Malta by Fortunato's son Giuseppe Mizzi, a proprietor of Malta through family inheritance.

On his return from Rome's Pontifical University where he read canon and civil law, Giuseppe Mizzi, much younger than Azzopardi, was more inclined to fight the government - a disposition he must certainly have admired in his father. Clamouring for a more vigorous opposition, 'an energetic policy', marvelling at Azzopardi's 'greatly reformed' ideas, critical of Azzopardi's approach with regard to the drainage flushing scheme which would cost Malta £50,000 for the entire benefit of the military authorities', Mizzi wished the elected members to resign immediately and possibly to present themselves for re-election a year later with a 'manly' electoral programme:

All that the Government says has become Gospel truth for him, and whilst he formerly criticized the Government all the time in everything, today he only criticizes us, solely because we criticize the Government in everything we consider detrimental to the Country. . . . We think that the duty of the elected members is to do their duty now, and leave the future in the hands of God. Their first duty is to resign . . .

Azzopardi started a paper of his own, L'Avvenire (The Future), which he subtitled, exactly like Mizzi's Malta, 'Organo del Partito Nazionale', so that the same party thus had two rival organs:

Our adversaries prefer a platonic policy, which indulges in all kinds of dreams, sentimentalism and poetry. We too have had our lyric moments, and have fought for ideals beyond our reach. What we deplore is that our dream has lasted too long, and only when the weight of responsibility was thrown upon us did we begin to realize our error. We can therefore excuse them, but we cannot follow them.

Political differences were fanned by an abundance of spite and recrimination; but Azzopardi had neither the resources nor the kind of support required to displace or seriously to rival Mizzi's well-established daily newspaper or his family's reputation for integrity. 'I assure you', Azzopardi told Dr. Giuseppe Mizzi, 'that all the good which your late lamented father did during his long political life, is not sufficient to compensate the evil which you have done'. Giuseppe Mizzi was accused of 'a violent propaganda' against Azzopardi's convictions and consequently of 'the split which you have caused in the Party'. 'I have already declared', concluded Azzopardi, 'that the resignation of my seat in the Council will mean my withdrawal from active political life'. But still Azzopardi clung to his seat; he certainly did not display any of that flamboyance with which Fortunato Mizzi had announced his retirement from politics in 1889:

What do I care if I am a humble soldier or a general? Has not the bayonet a point as sharp as the sword's?

There was a serious leadership crisis in the opposition's ranks. Politically, Giuseppe was hardly a reincarnation of his father, though he carried his surname well. Panzavecchia was excluded from the Council because he was
a priest. Pulicino might have made a good contender for the leadership, but he had never quite been a Mizzian, and he would probably have been challenged by Mattei. Governor Rundle had ‘good reason to believe’ that Mattei was ‘working secretly to overthrow Mr. Azzopardi’ but the party did not have sufficient confidence in Mattei to select him instead of Azzopardi.\footnote{92}

Azzopardi’s P.N. was in a position of ‘enslavement to reality’ similar to that of Mgr. Mifsud’s P.N. in the 1890s. But whereas Mifsud – with Fortunato’s backing, antagonised by Savona, suspicious of Strickland – had at least a constitution to preserve and seek to work out; Azzopardi had nothing to cling to except, perhaps, the two seats won in the Executive Council. The abstentionists were behaving rather like the P.N. or P.P. when in opposition, preferring to ‘spit on the deck’ instead of ‘counselling the man on the bridge’ (if, that is, he could be counselled at all); Azzopardi’s party, by contrast, wished to follow a policy of co-operation as recommended by Savona. On the other hand, nothing much had been obtained through ‘wallowing in the mire’: Azzopardi’s vacillating position was uninspiring, particularly if he was suspected of having ulterior motives. When October arrived, only Pulicino and Caruana Gatto resigned; Azzopardi and the other four (excluding Mattei who was in London) changed their minds and decided that it was better not to resign after all, ‘being ever more preoccupied at the incalculable harm which an inconsiderate resignation on their part would have on the popular cause’.\footnote{93}

Forfeiting the nationwide representation that the declining A.P.M. was supposed to express through its ephemeral Consiglio Popolare, Azzopardi, as head of the P.N. (but inviting all A.P.M. members) called a meeting of an Assemblea di Cittadini in October, at a Valletta hotel, to discuss problems of policy. It was a bitchy session, Azzopardi’s personal qualities being at least as much in question as his policy. The cries ‘resign, resign’ from the floor seemed to be directed at Azzopardi personally.\footnote{94} The editor of In Nahla review, Agostino Levanzin (erstwhile admirer of Savona\footnote{95} but a ‘pro-Italian’)\footnote{96} said that many of those against Azzopardi were ‘only his personal enemies’.\footnote{97} This view was confirmed by the architect Oliviero Borg Olivier who said it was ‘only a question of a change of persons’.\footnote{98} Probably intending to belittle Giuseppe Mizzi, and denoting the battle of generations that was a feature of this Assemblea, Levanzin said that the vote of an elderly man was ‘undoubtedly of greater value than that of a young man’.\footnote{99} The young lawyer Augusto Bartolo, the Chronicle editor’s son, spoke for a fresh election but was against abstentionism:

With us there are not, as in great countries, two or more well-organized political parties which exercise an efficacious control one on the other and which, in case of a change of public opinion, by means of votes of want of confidence, expressed or implied, provoke and cause the fall of the party which is in power . . . to us there remained no other means for consulting public opinion but a general election.\footnote{100}

Taking an independent line, but evidently well versed in the workings of the
party system in theory, Bartolo junior was a robust anglophile: as a student he had tried unsuccessfully to have the university of Malta honoured by the title ‘Royal’.

Azzopardi won the day, judging by the number of votes cast, but in fact the tempestuous Assemblea was a demonstration of how far Azzopardi’s P.N. or ‘popular party’, whichever it was, had lost popularity. Of the 150 or so persons who went to the meeting, 68 voted for Dr. Filippo Sceberras’ resolution that the elected members should continue with their work and not resign; but by that time most people had already left the hall; and of those who remained a dozen abstained. Neither Pullicino nor Mattei were present; Caruana Gatto professed loyalty to Azzopardi as the party leader but he obviously disagreed with his policy. Visibly shaken by constant heckling, Azzopardi did not cut a good figure: his jockeying at this stage was that of a man placed a notch above his capabilities, but vainly stretching his hands in the effort to take command of an unsurmountable situation. Azzopardi had neither the idealistic fervour of Mizzi nor the blistering delivery of Savona – although one supporter, Dr. Lorenzo Manché, did see him as having the better qualities of both:

for courage and ability, you are a second Savona; for patriotism and honesty, a second Mizzi . . . you will, I am convinced, be victorious in the struggle which unfortunately has been entered upon by the members of the Nationalist Party.

But Azzopardi tended to personalize conflict unnecessarily, rather like a De Cesare; this may explain how he came to have so many ‘personal enemies’. When under pressure he lost his composure, became vituperative, even illogical, making one feel that he was fighting to stick to his position rather than to rally the party behind a cause. Faced once by a heckler, Fortunato Mizzi advised his audience to ‘take no notice of the man’ as he was a government agent – an effective rebuff, the ‘spy’ shut up; but Azzopardi, once interrupted by a shout that the study of Italian was unnecessary, retorted that ‘ignorant and uneducated people’ did not understand the language question.

The crucial test for Azzopardi’s P.N. came in December 1910 when the elections were held to fill the Council seats vacated by Pullicino and Caruana Gatto. Dr. Lorenzo Manché, a former colonel and R.M.A. surgeon, and Baron Ugo Testaferrata Abela, C.M.G., onetime secretary of the Association of Maltese Nobility, designated as candidates of the ‘P.N. Azzopardiano’, were decisively beaten by Pullicino (Savona’s successor as representative of the Valletta district) and Marchese Paolo Apap Bologna, both designated as candidates of the ‘P.N. Mizziano’. Taking the result as a vote of no confidence, Azzopardi and his four supporters resigned – only Mattei remained.

Azzopardi stayed away from the next election. Led by Pullicino, supported by Giuseppe Mizzi’s Malta, a new batch of candidates came forward
successfully, pledged to resign unless the constitution was reformed and ecclesiastics re-admitted to the Council; Giuseppe himself, however, was defeated in Gozo by a local notable who stood as an independent.\textsuperscript{107} Azzopardi's retirement made way for yet another 'popular' committee, in whose name the candidates contested the election. This was the \textit{Comitato Patriotico}, constituted 'without distinction of class or parties', significantly enough 'under the distinguished presidency of Mgr. I. Panzavecchia'.\textsuperscript{108} In 1911, as in 1898, and before in 1888, it was the collaborationists who lost to the intransigents. The theory of alternating succession was still in full vigour: first there was Mizzi (1880–1889); then we had Savona (1890–1898); then came Mizzi again (1899–1905); and, once Azzopardi (1905–1910) was defeated, Panzavecchia became the 'national' leader of the movement against 'governo permanente'.

Less of a politician than Azzopardi but prudent and religious-minded, Panzavecchia was more respectable as a national figure: he could count on the allegiance of the parish faithful as well as the party pundits. His 'ideology' was succinctly stated in a typical address: 'we teach you to love your religion and to love your country'.\textsuperscript{109} Panzavecchia's ascendancy, however, could not but have left a strong imprint on those who continued to give him their constant loyalty. Panzavecchia was a moderate nationalist, patriotic and anti-racist but not anti-British or even anti-English:

There are certain persons who want to paint the Maltese people as anti-Imperialists and anti-British; we are not; but we want the rights that are due to us and that have been promised to us under the British flag.

A devout clergyman, who even believed compulsory education to be 'condemned by the Church'; a resolute anti-irredentist, who saw Maltese irredentists as 'a few young men who do not know the importance of life'; Panzavecchia, very much a Senglean, was in contact with workers especially those at the dockyard, noting that discrimination of race and wages 'em-bittered the minds of all the working classes': Maltese workers at Portsmouth dockyard, whom he had visited, received the same wages as British workers, he observed.\textsuperscript{110} With the emergence of Panzavecchia, it becomes almost impossible to separate the P.N. from the P.P. any more. In the minds of many followers the two parties were really one, personified by Panzavecchia himself. Dr. G. F. Inglott, onetime president of Senglea band club, described Panzavecchia simply as 'nostro capo-partito', 'il Capo del nostro partito'.\textsuperscript{111} A newspaper which described itself as the organ of the \textit{Partito Popolare}, fully supported Panzavecchia: 'the militant, uncompromising and iron leader of the P.N.'\textsuperscript{112} So long as Malta had a non-representative constitution, Panzavecchia was an \textit{astensionista} in the Mizzian tradition: abstentionist candidates nominated by his \textit{Comitato Patriotico} regularly described themselves in manifestoes as 'nationalists' and, not infrequently, as belonging to 'the Nationalist Party'.

143
Astensionismo was soon resumed as the Comitato Patriottico nominees realised that the administration did not intend to consider their wishes at all. Immediately there was trouble. Pullicino’s party nominated Joseph Howard and Ruggero Muscat as unofficial members; but the governor only appointed Howard, offering the other seat to Mattei (who, like Vincenzo Bugeja in 1884, and Captain Cooper Kirton in 1886, had retained his seat when everybody else had resigned). The colonial minister, Harcourt, was at a loss when asked why the majority party’s advice had been disregarded. There were ‘two parties among the elected members’, he said: ‘I do not know that one has more claim to be called the popular party than the other’. As definitions of popularity were always difficult, the Maltese government had advised that ‘one member from each party’ should be appointed. Questioned further, Harcourt said there were ‘two popular parties’. Mattei, who frequently travelled to Malta from London with the air of emissary extraordinary, liked to think he was a party by himself – his electoral agents distributed a leaflet, in the name of an imaginary committee, trusting in Mattei’s ‘knowledge of English’ and ‘his friends in London’. He accepted a seat on the executive provided that he would not receive any salary. But at the next election Antonio Dalli beat Mattei by 141 votes to 11. At the following election, the abstentionists were again returned, six of them, including Dalli and Giuseppe Mizzi, unopposed. They resigned, were all returned unopposed, and they all resigned. All this went on while major works relating to electric lighting and the drainage flushing scheme were being undertaken; still the government would not budge on the fundamental issue of constitutional reform.

It was a stagnant, if formative, period. The unrepresentative character of the constitution, the absence from the scene of Fortunato Mizzi and Sigismondo Savona, the apathy evident in voting at elections, all had the effect of alienating politically conscious elements from the administration, leading to a greater mistrust of government and multiplying grievances that could find no suitable channel of expression. It becomes very difficult now to keep trace of a linear development of the parties, as it was possible to do in the days of Mizzi and Savona, although certain personalities and factors clearly continued to have determining functions. Family traditions and rivalries were personified not only by newspapers such as the ‘pro-Italian’ Malta and the ‘pro-British’ Chronicle, but also in the younger generation of politicians, such as Dr. Giuseppe Mizzi, on the ‘extremist’ side, and Dr. Augusto Bartolo, on the ‘moderate’ side, with whom the ideologies of these rival newspapers could easily be identified. As in 1886–1887 and later, the constitutional preoccupation shifted attention away from the language question, the former being a necessary prerequisite for a solution of the latter; but the Mizzian banner of cultural nationalism was still fluttering. Pricked by comments in Chronicle, Malta made it clear that before a good constitution was given it would not be possible to reform ‘the present...
horrible system of Public Instruction and consequently to resolve the vital question of languages':

The struggle for the Italian language is at present in the doldrums, but its defence constitutes, always, one of the pillars of the nationalist programme.\(^{120}\)

Meanwhile, however, Strickland's 'free choice' anglicization policy was proceeding apace; many were obviously coming to accept this as inevitable or irreversible. One correspondent summed up the years 1903–1911 as four years of abstentionism by the elected members and four years of systematic victories for the official members in the Council of Government;\(^{121}\) the years from 1911 to 1914 saw merely a return to abstentionism.

This constitutional impasse coincided with a hard-hitting depression, following on the completion of the urgently required public works embarked upon at the turn of the century in connection with harbour and docking improvements. The breakwater construction and dock extension for the Admiralty had created, overnight, a situation of full employment, so much so that foreign labour had to be imported; after three or four boom years there was then an economic collapse. 'We are already spending £1\(\frac{1}{4}\) m. on dock expansion; let us finish that expenditure on the docks and see how that looks before we spend this million on the breakwater', one M.P. had advised, speaking during the naval works bill debate in 1901:

at the present moment Malta is seething with discontent, brought to the front by over-taxation, and yet we proceed to spend £2\(\frac{1}{2}\) millions on a harbour before their very eyes, but we cannot find time to alter the state of things under which they suffer.\(^{122}\)

Wages soared, prices rose, consumer goods multiplied, tenants paid higher rents, people switched jobs, built houses, married at a younger age - in the decade 1901–1911 the civil population increased by 14.52\% (26,822) - and local industry was seriously prejudiced by the scarcity and high price of labour.\(^{123}\) After 1905, suddenly, unemployment loomed ahead, there was a frantic rush to emigrate, but without assistance or plans -- 'the only remedy for unemployment', said Governor Rundle, 'is emigration'\(^{124}\) -- standards fell, wages crashed: a chief stone mason's wage went down from six shillings a day to half-a-crown.\(^{125}\) Ordinary revenue for the year 1904–1905, the largest on record at £467,335, exceeded expenditure by £8,679; but in the following year there was a deficit of £14,330; there was a higher deficit the year after that (£17,592); a higher deficit in 1909–1910 (£24,842); and a still higher one in 1910–1911 (£26,246).\(^{126}\)

Malta's economy depended largely on the injection of outside capital, directly or indirectly, particularly from the expenditure of the garrison and fleet. As the sources of wealth were external and uncontrollable locally -- total exports in 1912 were estimated at only £200,000\(^{127}\) -- this made for a sporadic development. Poor and undeveloped, with a client economy geared to cater chiefly for imperial requirements, social conditions fluctuated
dangerously between booms and slumps in a black-and-white cycle, depending on circumstances often determined by British needs which in turn were usually tied, as at this time, to international relations. The years 1901–1905 brought prosperity; the years 1906–1913 brought poverty. The expenditure on naval services went up from under £300,000 in 1896–1899 to over £700,000 in 1905–1906, but was close to the £300,000 mark again by 1910–1912.128 War Office expenditure diminished from £719,383 in 1902–1903 to £510,933 in 1910–1911. In 1896–1897 the fleet based on Malta was under 40 ships with complements of less than 12,000; in 1902–1904 there were over 50 ships with complements over 16,000; after 1907 there were 28 ships with less than 10,000 men.129 It was estimated that the absence of the fleet based on Malta during cruises and manoeuvres meant a loss to the island of at least £1,000 a day, while the reduction of the garrison meant a loss of about £400,000 a year.130 Battalions created because of the Anglo-Boer war had to be reduced: two of the nine regiments of the line were therefore withdrawn, a reduction of about 1,600 men.131 In accordance with the new naval policy based upon the principle of concentration, the number of battleships stationed in Malta was reduced from 13 to 8 and in 1905 to 6.132 As a consequence of improved technology (triple expansion engines and more bunkering room) steamers could bypass Malta en route to India stopping to re-coal at Alexandria or Port Said. Growing competition from other Mediterranean ports, including Algiers and Tunis, affected Malta's trade adversely. The French and Italian occupations of North Africa left not much room for further Maltese emigration: the repatriation of distressed Maltese in North Africa and the Levant increased.133 Local entrepreneurs, desiring, for example, to build a first class hotel in Valletta, found no government assistance.134

The depression was also a result of political decisions and an administration unchecked by the representative element. The colonial minister, Lewis Harcourt, felt that the imperial government was 'in no small degree responsible for the present crisis' and urged the War Office to let Malta discontinue her military contribution.135 There could be no hope for better times, observed Evaristo Castaldi, unless the system was changed: 'unless independent, able and technical persons have a share in framing or criticising the estimates, and establishing what works are most useful, which are necessary, which are urgent'.136 Just as you could not have a company that was not responsible to the shareholders, said Joseph Howard, so you could not have a government that was not responsible to the people.137 Dr. Benjamino Bonnici recalled how at the time of Strickland's administration the elected members had warned against extensive public works as they realised that soon they would have to suffer for such 'years of abundance'138 – what Howard called 'a fictitious prosperity'.139 Sir Francis Mowatt, Russell Rea, M.P., and Sir Mackenzie Chalmers, the royal commission appointed in 1911 to investigate Malta's economic state,
concluded that military and naval considerations had given rise to a system of public works on a scale far more extensive and costly than would have been justified if the Government had been administered solely in the interests of the Maltese. An illustration of this was to be found in

the expenditure of 20,000 l. on an extension of two-thirds of a mile of a railway at Notabile for the convenience of the troops occupying the barracks at Imtarfa; in the construction of roads which, though open to use by the native population, are understood to have been planned mainly to meet the requirements of the garrison; in the water supply; and, most of all, in the drainage system of the Island.\textsuperscript{140}

Partly as a result of increased customs duties, the ‘drawback’ (the refunding of the duty on articles of consumption imported for the army and navy) – the abolition of which, ‘considering the poverty of the island’, Julyan had recommended in 1879\textsuperscript{141} – had increased from about £6,000 in 1903 to nearly £10,000 in 1904–1905 and it was over £22,000 in 1910–1911.\textsuperscript{142}

The Mowatt Commission made some valuable suggestions with regard to developing agriculture and irrigation; economising on public expenditure; either discontinuing the military contribution or else charging rent for all sites or buildings occupied by the army and navy for purposes other than fortifications; an increase of the imperial contribution towards the construction and maintenance of public works directly or indirectly affecting the health and comfort of the forces. They also advocated compulsory elementary education; a simplification of school curricula; a reduction by half of the tax on imported grain and – instead – higher duties on imported tobacco, beer and sugar, higher liquor license duties, the imposition of a general \textit{ad valorem} duty on imported articles so far untaxed, a house tax and the succession duty. Emigration to areas other than the Mediterranean, particularly the U.S.A., was advised, preferably with some financial assistance being made available to the emigrant; and tourism was to be encouraged. Finally, the royal commission made several suggestions regarding judicial procedure, recommending that oral proceedings in the inferior courts should be conducted in Maltese; that in the superior court a Maltese accused should be entitled to have his case tried in Maltese if he wished; and that ‘any English-speaking person, whether born in Malta or not’, could have his case tried in English; it would also be necessary to consider ‘reverting to the former practice of appointing one or more English judges to the Maltese Bench’.\textsuperscript{143}

‘The snare is obvious’, Professor Ramiro Barbaro told a \textit{Pro Lingua Italiana} meeting at the Manoel Theatre: ‘they put before us the Maltese dialect, otherwise very congenial, to make of it a stool for another language’; he asked if eventually even the bishop would be expected to deliver his homilies in the language of the slums.\textsuperscript{144} In the two meetings organized by the \textit{Pro Lingua Italiana} committee, formed to combat the royal commission’s recommendations with regard to language changes, there was one con-
spicuous dissident, Dr. Augusto Bartolo. He caused a row first by asking Dr. Arturo Mercieca if he was reciting ‘a poem’ when the latter was comparing ‘the blue sky of the Mediterranean’ to ‘the constant fog in London’; then by taking offence at a description of his Chronicle as ‘the barrack newspaper’.

As a result of these meetings and other remonstrances, however, no change in language procedures in the courts was made. The government agreed that the translation of all judicial acts into English, introduced earlier, was unnecessary and should be stopped, and was satisfied also that bench and tried to ensure that a Maltese accused had every assistance in understanding the oral proceedings in his case. Governor Rundle, fully supported by the lieutenant governor Sir John Clauson, laid down the maxim of ‘giving free scope to both the Italian and English languages in the directions in which each is of the most practical service, without impairing the use of either or both by controversial considerations’. Rundle’s remedy, intended as a mild compromise between pari passu and ‘free choice’, was brought into effect in 1914. Clauson compared English and Italian to Siamese twins in a manner that, in the opinion of one commentator, ‘produced an excellent effect without really conceding anything’. A reversal, essentially, of Strickland’s ‘free choice’ policy, and a modification of Savona’s teaching method, the ‘Siamese twins’ approach adhered closely to the principle that reading and writing would be taught ‘through Maltese rather than in Maltese’ (thus reducing grammatical complications) while English and Italian were to be started earlier at the primary school: particularly to enable the intending naval reservist or bandsman, dockyard worker or emigrant, to attain ‘a sufficient smattering of English for practical purposes’ but without excluding the teaching of Italian from the upper classes of the primary schools, so as not to hinder the promising village schoolboy from going on to a professional career. All lyceum boys would be compelled ‘to acquire a thorough mastery of both the languages’; teaching in the elementary schools, rural and urban, would be such as ‘to erect an effective educational ladder from the village school to the Lyceum’. ‘The local difficulties’, said Clauson, ‘require local remedies’: melius est petere fontes quam sectari rivulos.

1911, with its economic hardship and political discontent, was a good year for the foundation of a politically-minded workers’ benefit society. On returning from a prolonged stay in northern Italy, Emanuele Dimech (1860–1921) revived the paper Il Bandiera tal Maltin which he had published from 1898 to 1905, and soon afterwards founded a ‘Society of Enlightened’ (what he later called Xirka Maltia). This was essentially a mutual self-help organization, not unlike a share-holding company, but with a civic purpose and a para-military touch. Believing individual self-respect to be inseparable from progress, Dimech wanted to encourage the citizen of the dreamed of république to behave patriotically and altru-
tically; his message was that political liberation could not come about without intellectual emancipation, hence education in citizenship was a *sine qua non* for the new Malta. Faithful Dimechiani embarked on a crusade against obscurantism, intolerance, discrimination and exploitation. The *Xirka* emblem’s loaded imagery conveyed the message: a well-dressed man, book in hand, pruning the old tree, scotching the evil snake, with the sun rising over the dark clouds in the background.\(^{152}\) Admission to Dimech’s *Xirka* was open to all, except blasphemers, prostitutes, beggars, band club partizans and other fanatics, and also those who could not at least read Maltese, or did not wear shoes and a jacket. The mention of a knowledge of the *Internationale* in connection with *Xirka* membership indicated Dimech’s socialist inclinations; but it is unclear if he was not thinking more of an anti-colonialist than of an anti-capitalist ‘beginning of the end’. A staunch protectionist, urging those with money to contribute to the national welfare through investment especially in industry, wishing to tax or ban all imported goods that could just as well be manufactured in Malta, Dimech also had the idea of importing a flour-making machine to evade alleged profiteering in bread sales.\(^{153}\) Calling on ‘the people’, ‘the youth’, ‘the women’ of Malta to ‘awake’, to ‘arise’, ‘workers of Malta’, Dimech implored, ‘who takes any care of you?’ Favouring trade unions, castigating servilism, he appealed to the poor not to exchange a loaf for their dignity when approached by some government official: ‘tell those who come to give you a loaf that you are not slaves or beasts, that what you want is not the loaf of charity, but the loaf by the sweat of your brow’.\(^{154}\) For all his revolutionary rhetoric, however, Dimech never attempted any uprising, as, for example, Papineau did in Lower Canada in 1837, or Urabi in Egypt in 1882: he directed the instincts of rebellion of his followers, whose numbers he estimated in thousands, against the colonial government, mounting economic grievances onto political grievances.

Extremely and consistently nationalistic in his approach, Dimech, more decidedly than Savona, identified Maltese with nationhood:

A nation and a language are one and the same thing; if one is lost so will the other be lost. Let us therefore cultivate our language, let us not insult it by using some other language instead of it... when we insult the nation we insult ourselves.\(^{155}\)

An arch-enemy of collaboration, Dimech respected Mizzi highly;\(^{156}\) his anti-British sentiments were rather violent. In thus uniting love for the native tongue with opposition to the colonial system à outrance, Dimech made the classic nationalist:

Show in everything that you are Maltese,  
Bear the name of Malta in your heart;  
Forgive your brother who mocks you,  
But never forgive the foreigner.\(^{157}\)

Substituting a more authentic ‘Malta Maltia’ for Mizzi’s *italianità*, and a
self-reliant citizen for Savona’s messianism, while describing Strickland as ‘the greatest enemy that Malta has ever had’, Dimech, although he himself held no prospect of office, was possibly the first public figure determinedly to express the desire for total independence from Britain. ‘We want to be what we are: Maltese and Maltese only’ he wrote. His series of pro-independence articles ‘Should Britain Leave Us’ were probably written in reply to, and in rejection of, the ‘irredentist’ answer given to the same question by Fortunato Mizzi’s son Enrico. A ‘Lord Jim’ figure, who spent the early part of his life in prison (where he learned Italian, English and other languages sufficiently well to earn a living teaching them afterwards) Dimech – a craftman’s son – was right to believe in the perfectibility of man: he was a phenomenal specimen of conversion, well suited to assume the role of champion of the underdog. Dimech was made famous, or rather infamous, by Pace who in 1911 excommunicated him, his Bandiera, his Xirka, for illuminismo and disrespect of authority. Dimech and his followers (who came to be known notoriously as Dimechiani) regarded patron saint feasts – celebrated enthusiastically throughout Malta – as distractions from the country’s needs, if not, at worst, as pagan idolatry. Maltese culture in this sense smacked against Dimech’s unorthodox faith – a kind of chiliasm such as Thomas Müntzer’s anabaptist school represented (what Mannheim called ‘the spiritualization of politics’); mixed with eighteenth century ideas relating the abstract individual to the foundation of political life: traceable, perhaps, to Rousseau’s general will theory. The hero’s words in Dimech’s anti-czarist novel expressed the utopian mentality well: there were to be no masters and no slaves; everybody was to be free in equal measure; wherever a state of tyranny existed ‘the people’ had ‘every right’ to rise ‘as one man’ to overthrow the ruler. Literally portrayed to common people as ‘the devil’, the excommunicated ‘Professor’ was so ostracized that on one occasion he was stoned and wounded by a band of Qormi parishioners, whom a correspondent in the church newspaper complimented as ‘warriors of the faith’; and Dimech begged the bishop’s pardon. But in examining Dimech’s socio-religious views one had better keep in mind Kedourie’s advice with regard to the Oriental sage Jamal al-Din al-Afghani: ‘what is said in public may be quite different from what is believed in private’.

In two drafts of a letter in Italian intended for a friend, Dimech wrote he was ‘fully convinced of the gross errors’ into which ‘the church of Rome’ had fallen, of ‘the immense evil’ that it had done to ‘the followers of the Nazarene, making them deviate from the right path’:

I have this day resolved to abandon once and for all a religion that teaches doctrines opposed to the Holy Scripture, doctrines contrived and spread by poor minds, such as ours are, and that transform God’s truth into a lie.

One of the very few to take up the case of Dimech’s persecution, Pastor
Jacob Primmer\textsuperscript{168} of the Protestant Alliance (which, ironically, believed Protestantism to be ‘the secret of England’s greatness’), read out a letter, in Queen’s Hall, Edinburgh, ‘from an esteemed correspondent in Malta’, which showed ‘the intolerant spirit of the Papacy in this British island’. The Protestant correspondent referred in particular to a flysheet, which had been addressed by Dimech to the police superintendent ‘who was taking no notice of threats against Dimech’s life appearing in the church paper Il Habib, edited by Giuseppe Muscat Azzopardi). ‘If anything happens to either Dimech or the printer, England should make short work of the Church in Malta’, he wrote:

Until recently he was satisfied to attack the chief sins and faults (of the Church) through his paper, showing instances of priests refusing to baptize children, unless first being paid, while the parents were starving, and other gross acts of injustice. For his audacity his paper was denounced from all the Church pulpits; and from it being the largest read paper published in the Maltese language, it has ceased to exist.\textsuperscript{169}

By now, Dimech’s Xirka had, as paying subscribers, only its anticlerical core of some two dozen, mostly dockyard workers from Senglea.\textsuperscript{170}

In September 1914, shortly after the outbreak of world war one, Governor Rundle expelled Dimech from Malta, under clause 3 (iii) of the order-in-council of 26 October 1896 by which the governor could practically do what he liked in an emergency: Dimech was interned, with prisoners of war, in an Egyptian camp where he died in 1921,\textsuperscript{171} after so many thousands of war prisoners had all been repatriated or domiciled.\textsuperscript{172} ‘Rightly or wrongly’, wrote Governor Plumer in 1921 – of rebutting the insistence of Lord Allenby the British High Commissioner in Cairo, of the Foreign Office, and of the Colonial Office, for Dimech’s repatriation – ‘Dimech is regarded in Malta as a dangerous enemy of the Roman Catholic Church’; his readmittance to Malta would ‘for that reason’ be most undesirable.\textsuperscript{173} Plumer labelled Dimech as ‘a clever and dangerous criminal’,\textsuperscript{174} but he himself admitted that after the commencement of hostilities in 1914 Dimech’s presence in Malta was considered a danger to the state ‘although there was not sufficient evidence to warrant criminal prosecution’. Dimech’s Xirka was considered to be propagating ‘socialistic and revolutionary principles among the labouring classes’, and Dimech was said to have made attempts ‘to tamper with the loyalty of the employees of His Majesty’s Dockyard’.\textsuperscript{175}

The pre-war period also saw the emergence of Dr. Enrico Mizzi (1885–1950), Fortunato’s son, Giuseppe’s younger brother; Enrico was reading law at Urbino university at about the same time that Dimech was living in the Genova area.\textsuperscript{176} Enrico Mizzi was interested in a variety of subjects, but he made far the most controversial proposition of his life in an article (prompted by the Asquith-Churchill-Kitchener meeting in Malta in 1912) first published in the respectable Rome monthly Rassegna Contemporanea, wherein he suggested an Italo-Maltese federation:
I say that, if Britain in Malta were granted full right to berth her war and merchant ships, to repair at the dockyard, to coal, equality of port facilities, exemption from certain customs and sanitary formalities, etc., etc., – which, after all, would also be of economic advantage to the island – what would she care about political dominion, especially since this, from thirty years ago to the present, has changed into an acute and wrathful conflict with the Maltese population.177

Realising that no radical transformation of Malta’s political status was possible without international diplomacy but eager, at the same time, that Malta should not merely change masters, Mizzi proposed that Britain and Italy should negotiate the exchange of Malta for the Italian colony of Eritrea. Malta in turn would have special guarantees regarding internal self-government, be represented in the Italian parliament, enjoy municipal autonomy, and have her coat-of-arms included in the tricolor. Maltese were to be treated on an equal footing with Italians in Italy and her colonies, in all jobs, including the army and navy. According to the Hon. Adriano Colocci,178 with whom Mizzi discussed this ‘pactum foederis’ in a Rome hotel, Malta would not go over to Italy unless she was given strong guarantees of ‘independence’ and a special franchise. The transfer would confer on Maltese ‘the dignity of a free people’. Malta would get free higher education; scholarships; certain exemptions from Italian laws regarding taxes and the clergy; special arrangements as to conscription; and ‘a generous contribution’ towards local needs. Libya, which Italy had just occupied, was supposedly to attract the Maltese diaspora throughout the Mediterranean littorel by serving as a haven for Maltese emigration and settlement. ‘Economically speaking’, Colocci told Mizzi, ‘Malta had no other prospect but that of “pouring out” her superabundant population and commercial activities onto the neighbouring Tripolitania’; this would give ‘cohesion’ to, and release the Maltese race from their being ‘suffocated on their small archipelago by a regime of strict military servility, constrained to shattering their own energies in a wandering and fragmentary life, whose sons were dispersed from Gibraltar to Port Said’.179 This was an ‘imperialist’ idea similar to that expressed by Mattei earlier. Calculating that by 1990 the Maltese population in the Mediterranean would be about one million, as already there were more Maltese outside Malta than there were in it, Mattei observed that all this Maltese ‘vitality, power, wealth of labour’ was being spread about and wasted for lack of organization, ‘like seed scattered to the wind’. The Maltese as ‘a Mediterranean people’, he believed, should secure ‘that place in the Mediterranean’ to which they were entitled:

We Maltese have now been nearly one century members of the Empire – we have done our share of the bargain – the Empire has had our harbours and forts – the Maltese are now morally creditors of the Imperial Government and are entitled to call on it to do their share by providing for them outside of Malta what has become so necessary for them.180

Mattei was a P.P. nationalist, strongly patriotic but favourably disposed
towards the British; Enrico Mizzi, on the other hand, saw Britain’s rule over Malta as an evil.

Mizzi looked to Italy – ‘the mother of civilization and the cradle of the sciences and of the arts’ – as Malta’s true ‘Mother Country’. The Maltese, he wrote, would ‘work eagerly’ so that the Italian and Maltese peoples would remain ‘united in fact’, expecting and hoping that, in a foreseeable future era, they would be ‘united in law’.181

Malta’s political and economic crisis made the soil fertile for extremist remedies. Besides, Chamberlain’s withdrawal of the 1899 language substitution proclamation in deference to Italian pressure in 1902,182 and also the Vatican’s intervention in the marriage question,183 made Italy seem a useful ally to the Maltese nationalist party. Malta would stand to benefit through Italy acting as a broker to the extent that a new balance of power was created in Europe strengthening Italy in relation to Britain. ‘The stronger Italy will be’, said Mizzi, ‘the more will Britain heed us, respect our italianità and give us civil liberties’:

Whatever our future political order may be, we feel that the development of our national life is anyway intimately connected with the fortunes of Italy; and a strong Italy cannot but exercise a beneficial influence on the intellectual and economic prospects of the sons who live beyond the Kingdom’s boundaries (figli che vivono oltre i confini del Regno).184

If Malta looked to a lighthouse in the future, thought Mizzi, she could only turn to the Capitol, ‘and we Maltese rely on the Italian people, if not on the Italian government, for support..185

Mizzi’s federation proposal was influenced by the changing international situation. In view of Italy’s occupation of Libya, Malta now could be ‘the pillar of the bridge’ connecting the European and African shores.186 Mizzi sought to apply to Italy’s role in the Mediterranean, indeed to future Anglo-Italian relations, the principle of concentration in naval policy, being negotiated in 1912 by Britain and France. In view of the growing German strength and the armaments race, Britain – concerned mostly with defending her own shores – decided to reduce the British presence in the Mediterranean, to concentrate the navy in the North Sea, and to come to an understanding with France whereby the burden of defence could be shared between these two powers: Britain in the North, France in the South. Britain could not, in Admiral Fisher’s words, ‘have everything or be strong everywhere’187 One eccentric journalist, Lucien Wolf in the Daily Graphic (quoted triumphantly by Mizzi) even suggested that Britain should abandon or sell Malta and Gibraltar.188 Mizzi held that Britain could not rely on the French navy because, in a war, France would have interests outside the Mediterranean to protect. In case of a German invasion, France would need soldiers not ships, but Britain’s army was relatively small. It was ‘a terrible moment’ for England, wrote Mizzi, but she would do well to consider that, ‘sooner or later, the natural mistress of the Mediterranean must necessarily be Italy’; only the naval forces of Italy would
always be in the Mediterranean: 'all reunited at the centre of it, in a for­midable position from which to guard the route to India'. As it was no longer possible for Britain 'to keep her foot in many stirrups and to prevail in all the seas', she badly needed Italy's friendship, which English people did not appreciate sufficiently. If Malta went to Italy, Britain, besides having all the advantages of 'most favoured nation' status, would stand to win the alliance of a strong Mediterranean power such as Italy, as well as to supple­ment her African empire by the possession of Eritrea and she could then liquidate Ethiopian feudalism. Cyprus – considering Turkey's impotence and the resurgence of panhellenism – was a problematical base to the East; Gibraltar – once Morocco had passed to France – was an academic toy to the West; and Malta – given Italian moves in the area – changed aspect (although continuing to be a strong naval station, in the Mediter­ranean chess game):

To England, direct, political, territorial dominion of these points represents only a classic tradition and not a real modern force. It is the nobleman who does not renounce to the ceremonial stage-coach, with so many armorial bearings in the old and guilded curtain, when he would be rather more comfortable in a fast motor-car; but he is unable to give up the old coach in the shed for fear that he would be disqualified in the world's estimation . . . Britain would free herself of the territories, retaining the advantage.

Sensitive, refined, intelligent, and thoroughly Italianate by education and upbringing, Enrico Mizzi loved Malta deeply, romantically, and he could write about it with the idyllic inspiration of a pastoral poet, but maybe be loved Italy no less. The son of a nationalist leader who had heroically (but, ultimately, without too much practical effect) upheld Malta's civil and constitutional rights through *italianità* and by pacifist means, Enrico desired ingeniously to remove that exasperation and disillusionment with a long, seemingly fruitless struggle, which his father had expressed in an interview with a leading Italian newspaper in 1903:

For the moment we are striving to make our unfortunate political lot known to the world. We trust in the ultimate victory of our cause, because it is absolutely impossible for a people, right in the twentieth century, to remain deprived of their liberty, and because the people are determined to conquer that liberty.

Enrico's disposition towards Italy may be compared to Strickland's disposition towards Britain. The maternal influence on Enrico – the language commonly spoken at home was Italian – may have, in a way comparable to the paternal influence on Strickland, unduly influenced the son's disposition; although Enrico, unlike Strickland, married a Maltese lady and spoke Maltese. As in Malta Britain was the dominating power, Mizzi was the one who suffered for his ideas, Strickland the one who was promoted; but did not Enrico, like Strickland, conceive of Malta as a separate nation, yet not as potentially an independent state? As a country
that would be better off – politically, or economically – as part of a larger, sovereign whole? This recurring ‘apron-string’ theory, that Malta was small enough to cohere as a nation but not strong enough to subsist as an independent state, that the island had a unique nationality but, equally, a strategic importance and a military impotence that so required to be defended from a position of strength, could lead to a comparison between Enrico Mizzi’s proposal for Malta’s federation with Italy to Dominic Mintoff’s proposal for Malta’s integration with Britain nearly half-a-century later. How far, if at all, was Mizzi’s federation plan what Dennis Austin wonders that Mintoff’s integration plan may have been; ‘that like Mrs. Todgers’ embracing of the Miss Pecksniffs “there was affection beaming in one eye and calculation shining out of the other”?’

In Enrico Mizzi, *italianità*, nationalism and irredentism were moulded together and almost indistinguishable as separate aspects of his thinking. Following in his father’s footsteps, he was enthusiastic about celebrating the *otto settembre* (the date marking the 1565 Great Siege) as Malta’s national day. And he held the Maltese race to be superior to the English, as well as – it would seem – to the Italian (unless the two were the same): quoting approvingly the German naturalist Rudolf Virchow (1821–1902) as saying, at an international congress in Strasbourg in 1887, that the Maltese race possessed ‘an overwhelming superiority over all the Oriental and Latin races’. not unlike his father, Mizzi the younger apparently viewed the Mediterranean as one ethnic-cultural entity, inhabited by peoples sharing a common affinity. *Italianità*, in this sense, could be seen to include – ‘in the classic island of the Knights’ where ‘every persecution of the Nordic stranger’ would always be resisted – all that which seemed un-English or non-British; and so to extend to such qualities of Latinity as were usually identified, in Malta, with Italy or the Mediterranean region: ‘that serene melancholy of the Orient, such as could not be hidden in the passionate looks of the Spaniards, the Greeks and the Sicilians’, the traditional women’s costume *faldaetta* which ‘those who had travelled in the Mediterranean, in Barbary, in the Orient’ so liked, and which could be seen ‘in a street in Tunis or Tripoli or by the pier in a Sicilian village’, the dark complexion reflecting ‘the great sun and the great sea’, the sea breeze, the moonlight, ‘the characteristic life of the *Mezzogiorno*, in the open air and communally (*in comune*). But Italy was more to Enrico than it had been to Fortunato – Italy to him was not only the fountain of culture in Maltese civil life, nor just a political lever with which to win concessions from Britain, but a spiritual mother, perhaps like his own mother, a magnetic caress without which, he felt, the Maltese people could not move towards their natural destination. Malta was ‘the furthermost fringe of Italy (*l’ultimo lembo d’Italia*)’; the Maltese were by ‘natural attachment’ linked *alla gran madre Italia*. ‘The soul of a people’ was not transformed in a year, wrote
Mizzi:

Centuries of tradition are not cancelled. A mother language is not abandoned for another, like a change of clothes. Certain mental habits, certain social customs, are the outcome of a long and slow elaboration.

The patriotic principles and sentiments of the Maltese, he wrote, should serve as an example to many of ‘our brethren across the sea and beyond the boundaries’ (nostri fratelli d’oltremare e d’oltre confine).

In utilising this conspicuously irredentist jargon, whether to command attention in Italy rather than out of full personal conviction or vice versa, Mizzi may well have been influenced by the Italian nationalist party, founded in Florence in 1910 by Enrico Corradini (1865–1931). Corradini’s nationalists, supported by syndicalists were not so much irredentists as empire-builders. They had a pseudo-Marxist ideology of ‘the proletarian nation’, ‘the collective man’, which gave priority to the provision of emigration facilities for Italian workers, hence the necessity of occupying Libya. They also strongly opposed people such as the anthropologist Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) and the sociologist Guglielmo Ferraro (1871–1942) tended to praise the superiority of Anglo-Saxons to Latins. Mizzi’s article ‘La lotta per l’italianità di Malta’ was published in the second issue of Corradini’s Idea Nazionale, organ of the Italian nationalists.

There is a paradox in Mizzi’s militarism: denouncing it in British Malta, he seems to have closed one eye with regard to the Italian civilizing mission and expansionism. He attempted to reconcile nationalism with imperialism, describing the Arabs as ‘masts in their own home’ (gli arabi, i soli padroni in casa loro), thus portraying the occupation of Libya as a liberation from the Turkish yoke: the Maltese, he wrote in Malta, were pleased ‘above all’ because the occupation of Tripoli did not constitute ‘a true and proper usurpation on the part of Italy’; it had been the Arabs themselves who had ‘almost requested’ the Italian protectorate. A salient feature of Italian propaganda which Mizzi, living in Italy, may have believed, this was a reference to Hassuna Pasha, the Tripolitanian head of the Karamanli family who had long preferred to have the Italians rule Tripoli instead of the Turks; both Crispi and Giolitti in their memoirs referred to Hassuna’s co-operation. But Hassuna did not represent ‘the Arabs’ of Tripoli, and even less those of Cyrenaica, whose leaders Enver Bey and then Sayid Ahmed el-Sherif resisted the infidel invader fiercely and rather effectively. Mizzi opposed those who criticized ‘every hint of virile action on the part of the Italian State’ on the grounds of internal colonization and capitalist exploitation:

We Maltese would rather wish that the Italian nation should know how to accomplish an energetic act worthy of her traditions, her world role and future; and we ardently hope for a greater Italy.

This fervent hope for a larger Italy, if interpreted to read as an invitation
to Italy to occupy Malta, would have rather spoilt Mizzi’s own plea for Anglo-Italian friendship. An oracular pronouncement, perhaps a suppressed yearning comparable to the _Diritto’s_ ‘approaching dawn’ in 1880, support for Italian imperialism contradicted the liberal doctrine of national self-determination. In this case, nationalism and imperialism were not necessarily incompatible: Mizzi clearly was opposed to Italian anti-imperialists (such as the socialists Leonida Bissolati and Benito Mussolini) but in Italy the socialists, republicans and radicals all split over the Libya occupation issue; in Britain moreover Fabians were socialists and imperialists at the same time. Mizzi may possibly be classed with the so-called _literati_, a small movement of mostly young intellectuals influenced by Gabriele D’Annunzio, who, until 1911, were regarded as ‘a lunatic fringe of the literary avant-garde’.

Mizzi is only partly understandable if placed in an Italian shell: trapped in a difficult situation, carrying the family burden, he had Malta on his mind, however much Italy may have occupied his heart. If he is to be judged by his actions, rather than by his words, he cannot be identified with Corradini’s political ideology as this developed: that nationalism was the antithesis of democracy, that without an authoritarian state there could be no true freedom, that the ideas of liberty and equality were to be replaced by discipline and obedience; or with that other precursor of fascism, Georges Sorel, advocating the political uses of violence. It was precisely against a system of government that was authoritarian, militaristic and anti-democratic that the Maltese nationalists, whom Enrico Mizzi joined and subsequently led, were fighting; yet they may not be said to have resorted to – or effectively incite – violence for political ends. It is true that, for example, the _Comitato Patriottico’s_ electoral manifesto of 1915 (signed, and probably influenced, by Mizzi) showed a marked emphasis on party discipline, order, coherence of ideas and action, but, even so, the point was clearly made that, were it not for ‘the hard necessity of the historic moment’, public contests, programmes, principles and ideas would be desirable as ‘civil manifestations of the education of the people’. The ‘epic struggle’ of the Maltese nationalist party since 1880 owed ‘its origin and _raison d’être_ above all to the struggle for two great principles: those of Liberty and Nationality, which resolve themselves in the noted questions of Constitution and Language’. Enrico Mizzi was an irredentist at heart partly because he was a nationalist in the Mizzian tradition; he was not, so far at any rate, a fascist. How could the sophisticated Enrico, basing his political aspirations on Malta’s Italianate heritage, ever sympathise with such extreme ‘futurist’ writers as Giovanni Papini (1881–1956) who wanted to burn all libraries and museums, to end the vacuous adulation of Dante and Giotto, to throw away the traditions of university academics represented by Carducci and Pascoli? In 1911 Giovanni Pascoli actually wrote a poem ‘To Maltese Comrades’, all about Malta’s traditional _italianità_:
Even his article in Corradini’s *Idea Nazionale*, in fact, Mizzi gave the history of *italianità* in Maltese culture, education and politics, arguing against Britain’s ‘tyrannical assimilation’ but stressing the need of Anglo-Italian friendship. Malta, he said, was too weak to be suspected of separatism; and too small to accept a large immigration, whether Italian or British. Thayer concluded that the motivation behind the public demand for Tripoli in 1911 was more psychological than material; and the same probably may be said for Mizzi’s irredentism. In Malta, where Dante Alighieri was a star that lit up the literary and the nationalist horizon, Mizzi’s outlook may be explained by a well-worn cliché in the language of Maltese politics – that quotation from the *Divina Commedia*’s first canto about the wolf that was more hungry after its meal than before: the wolf was Britain; the meal Malta.

Mizzi’s pipe-dream of an Italo-Maltese federation (which was to serve the colonial regime and his political opponents as a stick for decades) was an amalgam of old, deep-rooted feelings in Maltese educated society, and new, tentative ideas, influenced by Italy’s changing role in international relations, and by Malta’s worsening colonial condition. Enrico forgot, it seems, that occupying powers have silver tongues: that the descendants of Maltese who had risen against ‘liberté, égalité, fraternité’ were now singing the *Marseillaise*; that *patres nostri peccaverunt et non sunt*. Italy’s economic condition was so bad that the number of emigrants, especially from the South, quadrupled from the end of the nineteenth century to 1914; in no other country except Ireland was there such an exodus of population. As the royal commissioners found out, the French and Italian occupations in North Africa ‘seriously narrowed’ these areas as an outlet for Maltese emigration – an effect opposite to that intended by Mizzi and Colocci, and a consequence that would hardly have been resolved to Malta’s favour had any negotiated agreement with Italy been reached. Malta had no means for freeing herself from Britain, but what resources could she muster then to free herself from Italian hegemony, if
this became established in a way displeasing to the Maltese? Mizzi condemned British militarism in Malta – everywhere, he wrote, there were ‘arms and armed men’ – but would Italian militarism have been any better? What need would Britain have had of Eritrea, when she already controlled the Red Sea through Port Said and Aden? In 1890 Britain had exchanged Heligoland for Zanzibar with Germany; but in 1888 Salisbury had rejected Crispi’s offer to abandon Massowa, in Eritrea, to Britain, in exchange for Zeila, in Somalia. Unknown to Mizzi, Asquith, Kitchener and Churchill in their Malta conference had discussed, among other things, ‘The Attack on Malta by Italy’ and ‘The Defence of Malta against Deliberate Invasion’. For many years to come, there was as much chance that Britain would consent to exchange any territory, with any power, for Malta, as there was that Britain would grant Malta independence.

Seen by many as an extremist, Mizzi the younger made an uneasy début in Maltese politics. Enrico Mizzi was not one of the delegation (comprising Panzavecchia, Giuseppe Mizzi, Augusto Bartolo, Arturo Mercieca, André Muscat) who met the British prime minister Lord Asquith when he visited Malta in May 1913; nor would his criticism of this event be published by any of Malta’s three daily newspapers (Malta, Chronicle and Herald), whose editors had been among the delegates. As Asquith had merely stressed Malta’s strategic value – asking sceptically how could local and imperial interests be separated, without making any commitment with regard to the language question – Mizzi, in his first letter to the Colonial Office, claimed that the Panzavecchia delegation ‘did not represent the views of the inhabitants’, condemning ‘that continuous service and exaggeration in referring to the greatness and liberality of the British Government’ which he found ‘really sickening’. Describing the language question as ‘the first and foremost cause of our Constitutional struggle’, he wrote that the majority of Maltese were loyal to the Crown because ‘their conscience as citizens and the strength of the Government’ exacted such loyalty, but they did not ‘for one moment feel proud to belong to Great Britain’. Mizzi founded a Malta branch of the Società Dante Alighieri, as much a centre of culture as a hive of dissent; it was seen in government quarters as ‘the foundation stone’ of his ‘pro-Italian and anti-British campaign in Malta’. In June 1913 Pace denounced Mizzi’s organization, advising all good Catholics not to join or associate with it, on the ground that freemasons and heretics were among the society’s members in Italy – the bishop’s condemnation was similar to that of his predecessor Buhagiar with regard to a Malta branch of the Primrose League. Enrico Mizzi’s friend, Colocci – the honorary president of the Dante branch, who later represented it at the society’s congress in Italy – suggested ‘filling with portraits of Pius X and Pius IX all the rooms of the Dante Alighieri headquarters, protesting devotion to the Archbishop, and trying to make him go back on his hasty and mistaken judgement’.
But the Italian senator F. D. Santini associated the Malta government with ‘Papal Temporalists’ and described the attempt to ostracize Mizzi’s club as ‘this enormous injustice and barbarous outrage to public freedom’.\footnote{221} Several Italian subjects resident in Malta and loyal to the colonial government resigned their membership of Dante Alighieri club, but Mizzi’s committee (opposed even by Giuseppe Mizzi’s Malta) merely changed the name of the club to Lega Nazionalista Maltese ‘Dante Alighieri’, thus making the local branch independent of the central committee in Italy. This deprived them of the little financial assistance they had received but secured a greater independence of action.\footnote{222}

Standing as a nationalist candidate nominated by Panzavecchia’s Comitato Patrioti in the first election he contested in 1915, Mizzi ‘scornfully’ repelled ‘the accusation of disloyalty’ moved against him by his opponents, saying that his ideas were ‘not incompatible with the loyalty that every one of us professes and should profess to his lawful Sovereign’:

A good Government must render the interest of the people identical to its own, so that every patriot will understand that in order to defend his Motherland it is necessary above all to defend the flag that protects her. The struggle which for over one hundred years we have waged for our imprescriptible rights consists precisely in trying to solve this sole national problem: to live, but with dignity and profit, under the shadow of the protecting flag for the common and great ideal of civilization and well-being.\footnote{223}

In what was possibly a crystallization of earlier feelings about italiano, Mizzi presented a theory of subjective nationality – a national consciousness that went beyond and against ‘objective’ requirements of nationality, such as language.\footnote{224} Natioanlity, he said, was made up of factors and elements which responded to the title of territory, race, language, religion, law, customs, history and ‘above all conscience! (e sopratutto coscienza!)’; these ‘natural and moral’ elements showed that

our nationality is neither English nor African, but simply and uniquely Italian . . . we want to admit neither the prescription of our right nor the apostasy of our nationality for the same moral reasons that will have us admit neither desertion nor suicide! (né la diserzione né il suicidio!)\footnote{225}

Nevertheless, Mizzi’s irredentist plea, coming shortly before a world war in which Italy (for long a member of the Triple Alliance) at first preserved her neutrality, gave added emphasis to the anti-abstentionist standpoint of those, such as Francesco Azzopardi, who favoured co-operation with the government, particularly in time of war. The prospect of world war was enough to induce Giuseppe Mizzi to reassess his own position and to decide to abandon abstentionism for the time being.\footnote{226} Reviving his paper L’Avvenire, subtitled now ‘Foglio Settimanale degli Indipendenti’, Azzopardi, not without reason, called Enrico ‘the Italo-Maltese laywer’:

In Italy he is introduced, or introduces himself, as the Leader of the Maltese People. He is President of the Malta branch of the Dante Alighieri Society, and he loves Italy so much that he would willingly donate to her this gem of the Mediterranean, which is our Island, to adorn
the iron crown of King Emanuele... is it not so Dr. Enrico Mizzi, Abstentionist, anglophobe, 
*Italianissimo* candidate of the ‘Dante Alighieri’, or rather, of the Panzavecchian Committee?\(^{227}\)

Panzavecchia’s *Comitato* reaffirmed their position: ‘now more than ever the Nationalist Party’ required ‘a perfect union and coherence of ideas and action’ to maintain and show that obligation of continuity which was ‘the sole discipline of every ideal’, ‘the sole method’ which imposed on the government ‘if not the duty of favouring us, at least that of respecting us’.\(^{228}\)

Francesco Azzopardi, the former P.N. leader who had adopted a Savonian approach and quarrelled with Giuseppe Mizzi,\(^{229}\) made a spectacular return in the electoral field in 1915, beating both the veteran Panzavecchian nominee Dr. Pullicino in the Valletta district, and the young Enrico Mizzi, contesting his first election in his father’s stronghold of Gozo. ‘Let not my person be considered’, said Azzopardi’s manifesto, ‘but the idea which I represent and which is epitomized in the necessity which we now feel, of putting an end, especially in these abnormal times, once and for all, to a passive and sterile popular attitude’.\(^{230}\) In the bye-election for Azzopardi’s Gozo seat, the ‘extremist’ Enrico beat the ‘moderate’ Giuseppe, resigned his seat – as all the other elected members, except Azzopardi, had already done – and called on Azzopardi to resign ‘to comply with the will of the people’.\(^{231}\) Azzopardi however was appointed an unofficial member of the Executive Council.\(^{232}\)

Anti-abstentionism was gaining ground. Six of the eight seats in the 1915 election were contested, the defeated candidates in the Senglea and Notabile districts both obtaining a sizeable proportion of the votes cast.\(^{233}\) The war diverted the public’s attention and effected the economy. The recrudescence of Malta as a naval station rather counterbalanced the economic damage done by the war;\(^{234}\) but certain commercial activities, including exports, were stopped, interrupted or otherwise hampered.\(^{235}\) One leading merchant, Icilio Bianchi, was court-martialled for allegedly trading with the enemy.\(^{236}\) Public opinion was much influenced by propaganda in favour of Britain and her Allies. Bishop Pace’s successor, the British-educated Mgr. Mauro Caruana (1867–1943), together with all the island’s parish priests and band clubs, joined the governor publicly to wish for victory; at a large public meeting a resolution denouncing the Kaiser’s slogan *Weltmacht oder Niedergang* (world power or annihilation), moved by the governor, was seconded by the bishop.\(^{237}\) Italy’s entry into the war on Britain’s side in 1915 made Maltese support for the Allies practically unanimous. Enrico Mizzi’s request however, that Maltese should be allowed to enlist in the Italian army and navy (just as they were serving in or with the British forces was unsuccessful).\(^{238}\)

Sensing the public mood and eager to make his mark on the Council, Mizzi veered tactfully towards an Azzopardian position. In a polite letter full of understatement addressed to the new governor, Field-Martial Lord Methuen (1915–1919), Mizzi said he had undertaken ‘to reconcile
the dissentient tendencies and to bring back unity in our domestic policy', partly because of 'the new international situation'; he asked if Methuen was ready to give an assurance that the elected representatives 'would be treated and regarded consistently with their delegation, that is to say as the legitimate exponents of public opinion'. Methuen played the game with gusto: his lieutenant governor H. A. Byatt answered that he wished the ex-members would take their seats in the Council; they could be 'assured' that their views would not fail to receive such consideration as was due to 'the representatives of the people'. Armed with this 'assurance', Mizzi obtained the Comitato Patriottico's blessing to organize a reunion or 'fusion' of the two sections of the P.N. Panzavecchia's committee, hitherto dominated by abstentionists, consented to nominate six members to approach an equal number of anti-abstentionists with a view to formulating an agreement. At the reunion meeting on 28 January 1916, held under Cachia Zammit's chairmanship at the offices of Mizzi's Lega Nazionalista Maltese (not, it is worth noting, at the Comitato Patriottico's premises) abstentionist delegates, including Panzavecchia, Pullicino, Dalli and, so far, Enrico too, conferred with anti-abstentionists, including Azzopardi (who had temporarily resumed editing *Malta*), Giuseppe Mizzi and Cachia Zammit himself. A four-point programme of 'principles and aspirations', compiled and proposed by Enrico, was discussed and accepted as a basic formula to which both factions subscribed. In substance merely a tailored version of the 1915 abstentionist manifesto, this defined, rather vaguely, the party's stand on the constitution and language questions as well as on the financial and socio-economic, including those caused by the war. The parties agreed on the policy of making incentives available to local industrialists (by the grant of 'temporary monopolies' or patents) and to seek to implement 'an equitable distribution of taxation in accordance with local exigencies'. But there was not much agreement with regard to tactics. Panzavecchia refused to accept Enrico Mizzi's idea that at the forthcoming elections 'coalition' candidates would be nominated if elected, would retain their seats—a device, it seems, to ensure that non-abstentionists would contest elections under the Comitato Patriottico's umbrella but still retain their seats, without any provision being made to respect the will of the majority of all those voting at elections.

At the 1916 election some distinction could possibly be made between the Mizziian P.N. and the Panzavecchian P.P., since both the Mizzis and Azzopardi were now committed to accept seats in the Council: Azzopardi in fact still retained his seat for the Valletta district. In Gozo Enrico Mizzi beat a strong challenge, won a larger majority than that obtained by any of the other candidates and emerged as leader of the national poll by a handsome margin. In the Notabile district, the legal procurator Giuseppe Zammit, an 'old guard' Mizzian, beat the incumbent abstentionist, formerly a Savonian. The Panzavecchians, led by Antonio Dalli,
won four of the seven seats contested, but the overall vote given to the other candidates was somewhat higher. Because of Giuseppe Mizzi's changed editorial policy, the Panzavecchians were, since 1914, deprived of the support of the daily newspaper *Malta*. They did best, as usual, in the Three Cities (especially Senglea): Gachia Zammit and Dr. Serafino Vella (who had acted as chairman and secretary respectively to the 'fusione' meeting) were both decisively beaten by abstentionists. In their resignation address, the abstentionists attacked the Mizzis for abandoning the Panzavecchian committee, insisted on the Council's dissolution, the grant of self-government and the abolition of the £300 salary paid to unofficial members of the executive (i.e. to Azzopardi). Enrico Mizzi came in for special abuse as 'someone who is deeply mistrusted and deplored not only by the country but by the Secretary of State himself'. Enrico's personal triumph in the same district (Gozo) but with a different programme (anti-abstentionist instead of abstentionist) indicated the changed public mood no less than the magnetism of his personality. As probably had been the case with Giuseppe Mizzi and Azzopardi in 1910, differences between Enrico and Mgr. Panzavecchia could be traced as much to the clash of personalities as to ideological leanings or tactical approaches.

The government was becoming wary of the growing influence of this pugnacious politician whose anti-government (and anti-British) outbursts – even in the Council – were earning him popularity, and who expected, even in wartime, that Malta should be given a better constitution. The 'impertinent' Enrico Mizzi, with his 'very flamboyant manifesto', was seen in London as 'the general firebrand in Malta' who 'should be snubbed'. In 1917 Methuen decided the time had come to apply what he called 'a sharp curb to Dr. Mizzi's behaviour'.

On 7 May Mizzi was arrested; and then court-martialled for sedition under the Malta Defence Regulations of 1896, as amended in 1916. By a pertinent coincidence Mizzi's arrest took place on the very same day that dockyard workers went out on their first strike ever: they wanted, and they got, higher wages to meet the rising food prices.

The incident that allegedly led to Mizzi's arrest was a speech made in the Council on 29 March 1917, as this appeared in the stenographer's report of the sitting, and subsequently in a section of the press. Mizzi was speaking on the education vote against the highly controversial teaching of the scriptures in English at the lyceum when the director of education Enrico Magro apparently sneered or laughed at him. Mizzi, possibly not quite understanding the nature of Magro's comment (as he was short of hearing due to an accident he had suffered) intensified the attack he was making on British hypocrisy and absolutism in conjunction with his typical defence of Malta's 'Italian' nationality:

The British Government, which in this war and for this war trumpets to the four winds in all tones the principle of nationality and of the freedom of peoples, attacks the nationality and
strangles the liberty of the peoples who are subject to it – especially when they are small and helpless as we are. The only reason therefore which accounts for that odious measure is the proverbial English hypocrisy, but this the Hon. gentleman (the Director of Education) has not sufficient courage to proclaim, but we say it in his stead giving the lie once more to the boasted English fidelity.253

At a later sitting, on 5 May, the crown advocate and vice-president of the Council, Dr. M. A. Refalo, alleged that Mizzi's speech as it appeared in the stenographer's report did not correspond exactly to the speech which had actually been delivered; but Mizzi denied having changed anything in the customary proof-reading of speeches; he adhered to every word.254

Two days later soldiers under the command of Capt. Charles Scott Lindsey raided Mizzi's residence in Strada Zecca, Valletta, arresting Mizzi immediately. They sent out Mizzi's two sisters who lived there, searched and took and retained possession of the premises while they continued their investigations for nearly two months. Meanwhile Mizzi was detained in a barracks until, on 25 June, the charge sheet against him was finally served; but the court-martial, which lasted over three weeks, did not begin until 16 July.255

Mizzi was charged that he had, without lawful authority or excuse, on premises in his occupation, documents containing statements the publication of which would be likely to prejudice His Majesty's relations with foreign powers; and that he had, in writing the report of a speech purporting to have been delivered by him in the Council of Government, embodied therein statements likely to cause disaffection to His Majesty.256 The maximum penalty for this charge was penal servitude for life.

Mizzi's defence counsel was his uncle, Fortunato's brother, Dr. Lewis F. Mizzi, later one of Enrico's most bitter opponents.257 Noting now and again before the British military court that he disagreed with his nephew's views, Lewis did his best to show that the prosecution had not proved that by his earlier writings or by his parliamentary speech Enrico was guilty of the charge, or indeed that the charge itself was a proper one in the circumstances. 'This is not a prosecution but a persecution', he said; 'you choose the youngest amongst all the elected members and say: “you are the scapegoat”.' This was an allusion to the crown advocate M. A. Refalo who, in prosecuting, had tried to portray Enrico Mizzi as a madman: first referring to him as 'a harmless crank in peacetime', then saying that his papers indicated a 'lack' of, then an 'absence' of, 'mental equilibrium'.258

The prosecution had a weak case in right but a strong one in law. Defence was impossible: under clause 39 of the Malta Defence Regulations (1916) Methuen could do as he wished, irrespective of any laws, customs or procedures to the contrary. Many of the documents produced by Refalo, confiscated from Mizzi's study, were to or about Mizzi, not written by him. Where Mizzi was himself the author, all Refalo had were articles and reprints that had been published in Italy and reported in the Maltese
press years earlier, before the war had started. And even so, Italy was an ally. Mizzi had nothing to say in Germany's favour. Germany, he had written, 'was courting our rocks, not our hearts'.

One document, by Giovanni Giglio, a Maltese irredentist living in Italy, denounced the Malta government's 'corruption', described the problem of 'intellectual irredentism' as 'the collision between Maltese religious sentiment and Italian secular thought' and praised Fortunato Mizzi as 'a man of pure heart and stout faith in the justice of his aim and in the grandeur of his ideal'.

In a private letter, Giglio had encouraged Enrico to take more energetic action in the political sphere. Another document — an interview with Enrico in a Sicilian newspaper seven years earlier, signed by Guido Lucente — bore a striking resemblance to a speech made by Enrico in the Council in 1917: Mizzi had declared that 'liberty' was not an article that could be 'exported' from Great Britain. The court, presided by General Hunter-Blair, found Mizzi guilty of all charges and sentenced him to one year's imprisonment. Methuen commuted the sentence to 'a severe reprimand' because, he said, the British empire was 'powerful enough to be generous'. As a consequence of his conviction, Mizzi was to be disallowed from sitting in the Council and, according to law, following a declaration by Methuen, 'perpetually disqualified to exercise his profession of advocate'. Mizzi and the elected members repeatedly petitioned Methuen to grant a complete rehabilitation but the Army Council agreed with Methuen that Mizzi should not be shown 'any further leniency during the war'.

Meanwhile, as prices rose, food became scarce, censorship was tightened, the abstentionists won back lost ground. In the partial elections in May 1917, only one of the five districts was contested by an anti-abstentionist, who was defeated. In their resignation address, they protested vigorously against the study of sacred history in English, new requirements as to holding examinations in English, 'senseless and anti-social' changes in the university statute, and against the recently imposed taxes (about £23,000 yearly). In their electoral programme, they recalled Governor Rundle's suggestion that constitutional reform might be attained if there were no political parties, but reaffirmed the necessity of political parties 'to the constitutional spirit of free and enlightened peoples and to social rights'. The absence of electoral programmes, said the abstentionists, 'would substantially destroy such social rights and the Constitution itself, inasmuch as the elected members would, especially in small countries like Malta, be reduced to petty tyrants and dictators, holding the people underfoot and in enslavement'. To justify abstentionism, Panzavecchia's party quoted the remonstrance in 1903 by 'the great and fearless patriot Fortunato Mizzi', thus indicating that it was they, rather than the Mizzi brothers themselves, who truly responded to the P.N.'s calling.

At the general election in October 1917, Panzavecchia's party won six
of the eight seats, with Antonio Dalli (in the Floriana-Hamrun district) and Dr. G. F. Inglott (in the Cospicua-Vittoriosa district) unopposed. They were obviously the political party, but, as in 1916, they did not obtain an overall majority of the votes cast. This was partly because of Enrico Mizzi who, notwithstanding the legal impediment arising out of his recent conviction for sedition, contested Gozo district, his majority over Azzopardi (398) being larger than the highest number of votes (353) polled by a candidate elected in this election (Pullicino in Valletta district): leading the national poll for the second time in succession, Mizzi got 560 of the 1,749 non-Panzavecchian votes cast. In the ‘explanation of this phenomenon’, Methuen tried to minimize Mizzi’s merits, saying that he had taken the credit for policies regarding the export of Malta and Gozo lace, and assistance for emigrants going to Australia; but Mizzi’s success was a popular vote of censure on the regime and a personal triumph for the son of Fortunato Mizzi who, as Methuen reported, had left ‘a great name as an incorruptible patriot’. The persistent invocation, in manifestoes by rival candidates, of the ‘true’, the ‘pure’, the ‘ancient’ principles of Maltese nationalism, accompanied by a reverential lineage to Fortunato Mizzi, were noteworthy features of electioneering. The memory became nearly a myth: Fortunato Mizzi was looked up to as a father figure by opposed factions in the nationalist camp. Candidates who were neither Panzavecchians nor Mizzians – best represented by the Herald editor Dr. Giorgio Borg with his motto ‘A free Malta under the aegis of a liberal Great Britain’ – were however united by their scorn for ‘the comedy’ of abstentionism and also by a certain regard for progressive legislation and ‘the lower classes’: two of them mentioned the need for introducing compulsory education.

As Malta was still critical of the abstentionists, La Voce del Popolo, edited by Giovanni Bencini (who was elected to the Council), was started by the Comitato Patriotico during this election campaign in order to defend the Panzavecchians against ‘the monopoly of the press’ and ‘the sophisms of the Mizzis and Azzopardis’. Yet now the two distinguishable P.N. factions were closer to each other than before since at a plenary meeting the Comitato had decided to adopt a more flexible abstentionist policy whereby, instead of immediately resigning, its candidates would attend Council sittings intermittently: should they be returned in a minority they would resign in deference to the will of the majority of the electorate. This principle was also accepted by Enrico Mizzi ‘for the sake of the union and reconciliation of the Nationalist Party and for the supreme exigencies of the country and the common nationalist ideals’: although not an abstentionist, he was pledged to follow the majority verdict.

When the election result became known, Azzopardi contested the legal validity of Mizzi’s election. Azzopardi may himself have been entitled to Mizzi’s seat at law, but the concluding words of his address ‘To the
Electors of Gozo’ were: ‘I have no personal interest in the matter; without ill-feeling I shall bow to your sound verdict’. The court of appeal, presided by Sir Vincenzo Frendo Azzopardi, found for the plaintiff, permitting Azzopardi to take the Council seat for which Mizzi had been elected. Azzopardi, who consequently became notorious, was again appointed an unofficial member of the Executive Council; but the non-abstentionist elected member Giuseppe Zammit, closest to the Mizzi party, turned down a similar offer. ‘This imposition’, protested the seven elected members ‘is the absolute negation of every civil liberty’. Azzopardi neither had nor deserved the public confidence, they held. From now on, Azzopardi became (like Savona in the 1880s, and Strickland after him) the pet hate of the nationalist opposition.

Soon, however, another figure appeared, like a phantom, on the Maltese scene: Count Sir Gerald Strickland. After four governorships (Leeward Islands, 1902–1904; Tasmania, 1904–1909; Western Australia, 1909–1912; New South Wales and Norfolk Island, 1912–1917), Strickland desired to retire in the island of his birth and preferably to become, as he confided to an acquaintance, the ‘Civil Governor’ there:

as Chief Secretary he opposed and insulted the elected members in every way – so that he had to be removed by the then Secretary of State and given Governorships elsewhere. Now in 1918 he returns to Malta as he practically told me with the intention of playing the same game again and getting himself appointed Civil Governor of Malta.

Strickland said that ‘he would do nothing till after the war’, but he made ‘no secret of his intention to agitate against the Government in Malta whither he was returning with the intention of getting himself re-appointed as Chief Secretary or even as Civil Governor’.

‘HE!!’, exclaimed the Panzavecchian paper: ‘He has come back! He has come back again! . . . brought back by a southerly wind which has hurled him against this unfortunate rock, and on to his old villa, in the midst of the perfume of orange blossoms.

Strickland immediately set to work to re-establish a position of authority using (as in 1886–1888) his contacts with the aristocracy. The onetime apostle of enlightened taxation took the lead, with families representing the principal landed interests in the island, to oppose the proposed succession duty. Whether due to the war or to the government’s maladministration and irresponsibility (as claimed by the elected members), Malta in 1918 was in a crisis worse than that for which Strickland’s administration had been blamed earlier. The great mass of the population had ‘little or nothing to eat’, nor, if petroleum could not be obtained, had they ‘means to cook food’; the reduced consumption of foodstuffs could not be maintained ‘without entailing starvation to the general population’. Political discontent was such that the government were afraid to present any additional taxation while Mizzi was under arrest. The import duties ordinance of 1917 served mainly to increase wages of low paid employees;
the finances continued to show a deficit. The population were thought to be too poor to bear any more taxes; so finally it was decided to move a bill introducing succession duty as 'the most acceptable form of direct taxation' – hitting wealth at a moment (death) when this reached hands that had neither worked for its production nor paid anything for its acquisition. It was not fair, protested Strickland – writing directly to the C.O. – to tax so heavily a few families who have been conspicuously loyal: when the church and government lands were exempt. Blaming Azzopardi for the succession duty, Strickland also criticised Refalo's 'socialistic speech in the Council on this Bill, setting class against class, which is certainly wrong in time of war ... and when the Government is so large an employer of labour'. At the assembly of citizens held at the Sant Fournier residence in Valletta, under the auspices of the Committee of Privileges of the Maltese Nobility, and attended by the highest ecclesiastical authorities, Strickland took a leading role in opposing the proposed measure. Not only does this man take part in the assembly', reported the Voce with stupor, 'but he actually succeeds in convincing its members by his arguments'. Instead of the succession duty, Strickland suggested that the government should raise an emergency public loan at 5% interest. He was ready to contribute £5,000 and his wife, Lady Edeline, another £500. Although he was not the largest contributor to the proposed loan, his name featured at the very top of the list of contributors, just after Marchesa Corinna Scicluna who offered £30,000. Objections to direct taxation came (as in 1878) from the church hierarchy, partly because the church was as large a landowner as the government and was similarly bound by various administrative and philanthropic obligations. The proposed law, said Bishop Caruana, was 'very harmful' to the interests of the church as it would hit benefices, chaplaincies, ecclesiastical pensions, legacies for Masses, usufructs: it would 'impoverish the Church and might end in the confiscation of her goods'. The succession duty bill became law after it had been modified especially with regard to church property; Strickland's request for a commission of inquiry before the ordinance would come into force was unheeded. The elected members, who usually opposed any taxation on principle, were not keen to side with the Sant Fournier-Strickland assembly. Only five abstentionists (Dr. Pullicino, Dalli, Dr. G. F. Inglott, Giovanni Bencini and the chemist Giuseppe Vassallo) signed the assembly's memorandum; but they did so conditionally, disagreeing with those clauses which proposed either a public loan or else an increase in indirect taxation. Of the contributors to the proposed loan a tiny minority belonged to the bourgeoisie – only one was a priest – and – apart from the Stricklands – the other 'political families' who offered some money were the Caruana Gattos and the Bencinis. Robert Bencini, Giovanni's brother, put up £300 on behalf of his widowed mother; leading
millers, including A. Cassar Torregiani (chairman of the Flour Control Office) and L. Farrugia, tendered large sums.²⁹⁹

Opposition to direct taxation somewhat boosted Strickland’s re-entry into Maltese public life, but it also led to countless protests in the nationalist press, not so much against the succession duty bill itself as against Strickland’s interference. The Mizzian Malta and the Panzavecchian Voce favoured taxing war profits: ‘there are people who have grown rich enough to leave three or four generations after them in plenty’.³⁰⁰ It was firmly believed that social rights could not be achieved outside a reformed constitutional framework:

We know and desire the benefits of social progress, but we equally understand that the first element of progress is that of liberty, that liberty which Strickland and his satellites have done their very best to retard, by painting us in the darkest colours in the eyes of those who could and should appreciate us better.³⁰¹

Strickland was variously described as ‘a feudal lord’, ‘the Count of Chains’, ‘Satan’, ‘a certain old wolf’. Giuseppe Mizzi’s Malta sarcastically recalled Strickland’s statement in 1899 for ‘direct taxation upon the landowner’, which the P.N. had criticised.³⁰² Both the public loan and the tax on property, said Malta, ‘would after all hit the middle and poorer classes’; the increase in house-rent, for instance, would hit the poor.³⁰³ If Strickland had changed his views, Malta had not. Guglielmo Arena’s Hmar (The Donkey), started in 1917 instead of M. A. Borg’s Giahan and having a largely working class readership, thought differently. Hmar noted with some satisfaction that the nationalists had not encouraged the Sant Fournier group,³⁰⁴ but launched an attack both on wealthy landowners and the ecclesiastical hierarchy:

now that a tax hitting the wealthy is proposed, they have protested against it and are trying to avoid it. . . . They asked that landed property should not be taxed, and that instead those taxes already imposed should be increased. What impudence! Not only did they fail to protest against all taxes but they asked that the tax hitting them may not be imposed, whilst increasing those that did not hit them.

It was the duty of the clergy, continued Hmar, ‘to protect not only the wealthy, but all classes’:

This is egotism, and in such an impudent egotism the clergy cannot have any part. These are not the principles of our Religion. Our bishops and clergy do not and cannot have but one principle, i.e. to defend everyone, without any class distinction . . .³⁰⁵

By the summer of 1918, owing to ‘the strict enforcement of the Malta Defence Regulations, the increased cost of living, and the heavy additional taxation’, there was ‘a spirit of discontent that might easily be augmented’.³⁰⁶ The blackmarket during the war had suddenly enriched a few profiteers, while the monopolies enjoyed by certain importers were blamed for the rising price and deteriorating quality of foodstuffs, bread especially.
The popular feeling was expressed succinctly by the architect Oliviero Borg Olivier: ‘an egg-seller who charges 1d a dozen more for eggs is heavily fined by the Court, whilst importers who make thousands of pounds of profit get scot free’. Against our will and in spite of our protests, said Pullicino and his colleagues, ‘taxes, laws and expenditure’ were imposed by the government ‘as if this population, instead of human creatures having a will, rights and aspirations, were composed of beings destitute of reason, ideas and sentiments’. Placing their trust ‘in God alone’, they felt sure of the triumph of ‘our cause’, being confident in ‘the high destinies of the Motherland’. War bonuses to minor grade employees brought misery into sharper focus by creating anomalies in relation to other grades of employees. Thus when the Admiralty in 1918 gave dockyard workers a reasonable war bonus, a similar bonus on the same scale had to be given by the War Office to employees in the military departments. The dockyard police were better paid than the civil police: a constable with the former earned as much as a sub-inspector in the latter, a sergeant as much as an inspector; on 14 October 1918 the civil police went out on a day’s strike. One obvious factor combining social with political discontent was discrimination in wages earned by Maltese and British doing the same work: there were repeated protests against ‘the humiliating differential treatment to which our countrymen are asked to submit, even on the battlefield, tantamount to an odious distinction of race and nationality’. Except for the ill-fated experiments by Azzopardi in 1907–1910 and Mizzi in 1915–1917, abstentionism had been going on, in one form or another, for sixteen years. The press ceaselessly described Malta as ‘groaning under the oppression of a military despotism, and of the tyrannical bureaucracy of the official members’. The interest taken in the political movement was ‘not very wide until the circumstances of the war’, observed Lieutenant Governor W. C. F. Robertson, that is, the general distress that was introduced by the war and the taxation introduced by the Government to meet the increased expenditure, were felt. The circumstances caused people to imagine that they were being unfairly treated in other ways, and the interest in the political question extended. What was a narrow circle before, became a wider one, so far as we could judge.

Throughout the 1918 Council session, the six abstentionists, led by Pullicino, insistently petitioned for a new constitution. In their fifth protest, they said that the government’s ‘disregard of the popular will’ was bound sooner or later to produce ‘grave consequences’. In their seventh petition, they appealed to President Woodrow Wilson’s ‘fourteen points’ (8 January 1918) in support of their demand for self-government. Maltese demands for constitutional reform found a better response in London after the war but, in view of the overriding military interests in the fortress, there was still a marked reluctance to advance too far or too fast in a progressive direction. Malta, however, was expectant and impatient. In a memorandum addressed to Lloyd George, all the representatives,
except Azzopardi, noted the British prime minister's recognition of the valuable services rendered during the war by the Maltese 'for the redemption of humanity' and expected, in return, tangible proof of Britain's gratitude: the putting into practice of 'the principles of Liberty and Nationality for which they had fought and suffered'.

On 23 November 1918 Dr. Filippo Sceberras issued an appeal inviting all constituted bodies to send delegates to a representative assembly to be convened for the purpose of asking for a new constitution. On 25 February 1919 the Assemblea Nazionale held its first meeting, under Sceberras' presidency, at the Giovine Malta club (of which Enrico Mizzi was the president). At this meeting, which attracted the crowds to Valletta, Sceberras' original motion was withdrawn in favour of a bolder one, presented by the Panzavecchia party, asking for complete autonomy in local affairs. The resolution was adopted unanimously, with only Augusto Bartolo dissenting on certain points.

In March one British M.P., an admirer of Lord Fisher, said that now the real base of British ships was in Britain: 'Malta is an enervating station'. In April, W. C. F. Robertson presented a memorandum noting the desirability of a reform in Malta's constitution. The colonial under-secretary, Amery, suggested as a first step that a commission should be formed to inquire into the Malta constitution 'and indeed all Crown Colony constitutions'. With regard to Malta he believed that the 'real crux', in the long run, was the language question: he would be prepared to make almost any constitutional concession, including the appointment of a civil governor, if the Maltese would accept, in return, 'the principle that English and Maltese were to be the future official languages'. Early in May the colonial minister, Lord Milner, told Methuen to inform the Assemblea Nazionale that he would ask the new governor, on his arrival, 'to consider how far it may be possible' to give the Maltese people 'a greater share in the Government, without impairing the interests of the Imperial garrison'. This delay and half-hearted disposition on the British side increased tension in the island. There was no enthusiasm to celebrate the peace, even less to vote the money for the expenses. In May also the university students went out on strike against pro-English changes in the university statute: there were boisterous street demonstrations and some minor incidents of violence. The Assemblea Nazionale met again on 7 June, in the wake of massive discharges, given or anticipated, especially from the dockyard. The crowds thronging Valletta's main streets were more restless, and easily provoked — by, for a start, the exhibition of a union jack, with a Maltese flat at its centre, outside the shop-window of a pro-British merchant.

Violent rioting broke out, leading to a bloody confrontation with armed troops. The actions of the populace were highly indicative. The premises of millers were invaded, much of their property destroyed, articles of
furniture thrown out of balconies and windows, one mill being burnt, the horses released from its nearby stable. Azzopardi's house was broken into, his private papers (including some erotic pictures) strewn over the street. Union jacks were hauled down from masts on public buildings and ritualistically torn up or set on fire. The all English Union Club was attacked, the exclusive Casino Maltese jeered. The Chronicle's press was largely destroyed, and nearly set on fire. As the Maltese police and militia rather kept back from attempting to control effectively the upsurge of popular discontent that seemed to erupt from every corner, British troops were called in to restore order — firing on the crowds, who were only armed, at best, with sticks and stones. Three Maltese were shot dead on 7 June. Another bayoneted the next day. Two more died later from injuries suffered during the outrage; and dozens were wounded in the fracas or treated for shock. No British soldier or sailor was killed or seriously wounded. The sentiment of that day was expressed by one Assemblea Nazionale delegate who touched his white handkerchief to the blood of a wounded man and held it up: 'these', he cried, 'are our national colours'. The dead were buried like heroes; and there was a generous response to fund-raising activities to assist the families of the dead and wounded.\textsuperscript{325}

A unique episode in Malta's colonial history, the genesis of Maltese nationalism, the Sette Giugno rising brought mourning to every Maltese home and heart, sealing Malteseness in the blood that was shed. The Sette Giugno also brought internal self-government.

'I have no doubt', reported the officer administering the government General Hunter-Blair, in connection with Sette Giugno, 'we shall have to give way and go back on our attitude that until the present Constitution had been tried it would be idle to agitate for a new one'. The war had 'changed people's outlook'; he was sorry that it would look 'as if we gave in to the riot'.\textsuperscript{326} Amery also changed his mind:

It might be possible in the grant of self-government to make certain stipulations in the interests of the fortress and, still more important, in the interests of the English language. I don't believe the fortress argument is an insuperable objection.\textsuperscript{327}

General Plumer, the newly-arrived governor, invited expressions of opinion from all the leading people of every faction in connection with the constitutional problem.\textsuperscript{328} The Assemblea Nazionale meanwhile was drafting an elaborate constitutional document for transmission to London. In November, Amery and Plumer announced that the time had come 'to entrust the people of Malta with full responsible control of their purely local affairs'. Amery hoped too that Britain would grant a measure of financial assistance to enable the new system of government 'to start with a fair and reasonable chance of success'.\textsuperscript{329} The news was received in Malta with a great demonstration of enthusiasm and loyalty.\textsuperscript{330} Amery in November and Milner in December 1919 were heartily greeted when they
visited Malta. ‘We are giving you the engine’, said Milner; ‘you are to find the engineers’.331

Replying to an accusation in parliament that the Colonial Office were ‘reactionary’, Amery mentioned the grant of self-government to Malta as evidence of ‘democratic, progressive action’, and referred to this as ‘the great advance, the unsolicited advance, which we have taken’. ‘Was it unsolicited?’, interrupted Col. Wedgwood; ‘was there not a riot in Malta before you granted the constitution?’332

Under the 1921 constitution, Malta would have a Cabinet including a head of the ministry (or prime minister); the Legislative Assembly would also elect a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker. Each of the eight electoral districts was to return four members to the Assembly by a considerably extended franchise: male British subjects of the age of twenty-one or upwards who were able to read and write or who were in receipt of a yearly income or paid a yearly rent of at least £5 were entitled to vote. The Senate, a corporate body, was to consist of ten ‘special members’ (representing the clergy, nobility, graduates, merchants and a hastily improvides Trade Union Council), and seven ‘general members’ to be returned on a more limited franchise. Malta was to be a diarchy. A ‘Maltese Government’ had to deal with purely local affairs; a ‘Maltese Imperial Government’ to see to ‘reserved matters’, which were extensive, since anything vaguely connected with naval, military or air forces was beyond the Maltese Government’s jurisdiction; there were also restrictions on trade, harbours, treaties with foreign states, and one or two clauses, relating especially to the language question, which were destined to be explosive.333

Malta in 1921, like Southern Rhodesia in 1923, jumped to semi-responsible government from an official majority without going through the intervening stage of representative government; although, of course, the 1887-1903 experiment was remembered. Malta, observed Martin Wight, ‘whose constitutional history had been a barometer of European politics, was the first British colonial dependency to profit from the creed of national self-government that inspired the peace of Versailles’.334 Malta had been much affected by the course of European politics: including the Napoleonic wars; the Risorgimento; the Crimean war (1854–1856); the Russo-Turkish war and Congress of Berlin (1877–78); the Italo-Turkish war (1911); conflicting interests in international relations involving powers such as France, Britain, Italy, the Vatican; cultural stereotypes relating to the ‘European’ or ‘Oriental’ strains in Maltese culture; indirectly related movements – the rise of Italian irredentism, and later fascism; possibly even Ulster unionism – and two world wars, in which Malta featured in a measure far disproportionate to her size, strength or population. Romantically and patriotically, Maltese liked to see their home as Malta piccola fior del mondo, or, as someone said, la piccola isola delle grandi eccezioni. Gladys Peto, visiting Malta in 1927, offered a rather different interpretation:
Malta, as is generally acknowledged, is not part of Gibraltar, although I once heard this assertion made in such a commanding and ferocious tone that nobody found courage to contradict it.

According to some people, she said, Malta was 'the one perfect place in the whole world'; others however found it 'a sort of waiting-room for emergencies'.

In 1921 Maltese politicians could, for the first time, start working in a more or less responsible capacity; they could stop protesting and start thinking out their electoral programmes and prospects in the knowledge that they might be called upon to implement their promises: there was power now to be won as well as honour.

NOTES

1 Chamberlain min. on Grenfell/Chamberlain, 28 Apr. 1903, 158/344.
3 C.G., 17 June 1903, 90.4057.
4 Parl. Papers 1903, xlv (Cd. 5217), pp. 115–128. The Letters Patent were proclaimed on 22 June, coming into effect on 25 June 1903.
5 Supra, iii.62.
7 R. Stephens: Cyprus, a Place of Arms (Lond., 1966), pp. 110–111.
8 C.G., 13 June 1906, 82.146.
10 enc. 1, Kelly/Chamberlain, 15 Sept. 1903, 158/345/35170.
12 Ordinance VII (1904), C.G., 22 Nov. 1905, 58.
13 Clarke/Lyttelton, 28 Feb. 1905, 158/348; Malta, 7 Feb. 1905, enc. 1, no. 2, Med. 60, 883/6; Progetto per la Costituzione di un Consiglio Popolare (Malta press, Valletta, 1906).
14 Read min., 20 Aug. 1903, 158/345/30418.
15 Supra, iii.70.
16 Malta, 29 Aug. 1903, enc. 158/345/33524.
19 enc. 31 May 1906, 158/351/20135; enc. 20 Oct. 1906, 158/353/29188.
20 Clarke/Elgin, 7 Dec. 1906, 158/353.
21 Supra, iv.101–102, 116.
22 D.M.C., 5 May 1906, Sim/Clarke, 22 May 1906, enc. A, 158/354/22791.
26 ‘Malta and the Bible’, Daily Record 21 May 1906, enc. ibid.
28 Police rep. enc. ibid.
29 Dimech’s Bandiera was, by 1905, ‘quel foglio che viene letto avidamente dal popolino’, ‘un giornaleto in vernacolo che corre per le mani di tutti’; ‘Una Questione Morale’, Malta, 7 Jan. 1905, Supra, iv.105.
30 Bandiera, no. 344, 27 May 1905, p. 3, col. i.
31 Ibid., col. ii. Koncali was made a judge (after having been twice passed over) by Fremantle in 1895, when Strickland was on leave. Fremantle/Chamberlain, 22 Aug. 1895, 158/312; Strickland/Chamberlain, 30 Nov. 1901, 158/338.
32 Supra, iv.102.
33 Bandiera, no. 344, 27 May 1905, p. 3, col. ii.
34 Clarke/Lyttelton, June 1905, 158/348/20308.
35 Strickland/Ellis, 10 Sept. 1918, enc. 158/407/45777.
36 C.G., 17 June 1903, 90.4058.
37 Supra, iv.109–110.
38 Grant/Hopwood, Aug. 1908, conf., 158/359/28556.
40 Compared to Cachia Zammit, he was 'a person of no social standing whatever'; Clarke/Elgin, 22 Apr. 1907, 158/355.
41 Clarke/Chamberlain, 14 July 1903, 158/344.
42 Clarke/Lyttelton, June 1905, 158/348/20308.
43 Clarke/Lyttelton, 30 Nov. 1905, 158/350.
45 e.g. Clarke/Elgin, 15 May 1906, 158/351.
46 Clarke/Lyttelton, June 1905, 158/348/20308.
47 enc. 2, no. 35, Med. 60, 883/6; Malta, 23 May 1907; Barron/Elgin, 31 May 1907, 158/355; 'General Barron's Speech at Chamber of Commerce Dinner', D.M.C., 7 Nov. 1907.
48 Barron/Elgin, 31 May 1907, 158/355.
50 Barron/Elgin, 12 Oct. 1907, 158/356.
51 enc., ibid.
52 Jan. 1908, Med. 66, 883/6; enc. 158/358/3351.
53 Clarke/Elgin, 10 May 1907, 158/355.
54 Supra, iii.75.
55 C.G., 8 Nov. 1895, 4.173–174, 209; supra, 118, 131, 133.
57 Supra, ii.18.
58 Supra, iv.120.
59 e.g. C.G., 28 Apr. 1909, 59.1088–1091. (Mattei was not against capital punishment.)
60 Ibid., col. 1338.
61 Ibid., col. 1342.
62 Rundle/Harcourt, 2 Nov. 1910, 158/367.
63 Seely min. to Harcourt, 10 Nov. 1910, 158/367/34139.
64 Hansard, 4th ser., 1910, xv.4, xvi.596.
67 Hansard, 4th ser., 1910, xvi.596.
68 Minutes of Evidence, op. cit., p. 476.
69 Crewe/Grant, 19 July 1909, Parl. Papers 1910, lxvi (Cd. 5217), no. 25.
70 Hansard, 4th ser., 1909, viii.1066.
72 Parl. Papers 1910, lxvi (Cd. 5372), enc. 26 May 1909, no. 21; Malta, 17 Oct. 1908, enc. 1, no. 17, ibid.
74 Crewe min. 10 Aug. 1909, on Mattei/Hopwood, 18 July 1909, enc. 158/364/24167.
77 The governor used the terms 'Liberals' (evidently intending Azzopardi's anti-abstentionist party) and 'Nationalists' (presumably Dalli's rebel faction who upheld the Mizzian-Panzavecchian policy of Astensionismo; Rundle/Crewe, 16 Oct. 1909, 158/363/34652; Parl. Papers 1910, lxvi (Cd. 5217), no. 27.
80 Crewe/Rundle, 23 Nov. 1909, tel., ibid., no. 31.
81 enc. Rundle/Crewe, 15 Nov. 1909, ibid., no. 30.
82 Grant/Hopwood, Aug. 1908, conf., 158/359/28556.
83 enc. Grant/Crewe, 24 Sept. 1908, Parl. Papers 1910, lxvi (Cd. 5217), no. 16.
84 Rundle/Crewe, 7 June 1910, 158/366.
85 Malta, 31 May 1910, enc. ibid.
87 Rundle/Crewe, 31 Aug. 1910, 158/367.
89 'Practical Politics', L'Avenire, 10 Aug. 1910, enc. ibid.
90 Azzopardi/Mizzi, 2 June 1910, Malta 2 June 1910, enc. 158/366/17863.
91 'Indirizzo ai Gozitani', Malta, 1 Jan. 1889.
92 Rundle/Crewe, 7 June 1910, 158/366.
93 enc. 4, 4 Oct. 1910, 158/367/32552.
95 When Savona died, Levanzin published and distributed an autographed picture of him, organized the funeral ceremony and set up a commission to raise funds to erect a monument; In Nahla, 5 Dec. 1908. The members of Levanzin's commission were all leading P.P. figures: Panzavecchia, Dalli, Pullicino, Dr. Gian Felice Inglo.
96 'L'Isien Taljan f'Malta', In Nahla, 7 Jan.-2 Sept. 1911.
100 Malta, 11 Oct. 1910.
101 Bartolo/Pousont, 16 Apr. 1907, enc. 158/357/15662; Bartolo had given the Chronicle office as his address.
104 enc. 3, no. 4, Clarke/Lyttelton, 10 Nov. 1904, Parl. Papers 1910, lxvi (Cd. 5217), p. 9.
106 Rundle/Harcourt, 9 Dec. 1910, 158/368.
107 Rundle/Harcourt, 23 Feb. 1911, 158/370.
108 'To the Electors of Malta and Gozo', Malta, 26 Jan. 1911, enc. ibid.
109 P.O., no. 1214, 5 May 1891, p. 2, col. ii.
110 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.
111 C.G., 1 June 1918, 27.288.
112 La Voce del Popolo, 19 Mar. 1919, formerly 'Organo del Comitato Patriotico'.
113 Rundle/Harcourt, 4 Mar. 1911, 158/370. Joseph Howard, who as a Panzavecchian representative became Malta's first prime minister in 1921, was Maltese. The managing director of a cigarette manufacturing firm (A. G. Cousis & Co.), he was also president of the La Valette band club 1909-1917.
116 Rundle/Harcourt, 4 Mar. 1911, 158/370.
119 Rundle/Harcourt, 18 Dec. 1913, 158/381.
120 'Per La Lingua Italiana', Malta, 3 Aug. 1910.
121 Malta Herald, 12 Aug. 1912.
122 Hansard, 4th ser., 1901, xcix.762.
124 C.G., 16 Nov. 1910, 29.4.
125 Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the Finances, Economic Position and Judicial Procedure of Malta, op. cit., p. 857.

176
131 Hansard, 4th ser., 1905, cxliii.217, 221, clxi.941; 945, 974, 986.
132 Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission, op. cit., p. 76.
133 Report of the Royal Commission, op. cit., p. 11.
134 Hansard, 4th ser., 1912, xxxviii.1006.
136 Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission, op. cit., p. 11.
137 Ibid., p. 10.
138 Fluctuations in drawback figures depended on various other factors besides fiscal changes.
139 Ibid., pp. 42-43.
141 Police rep., enc. Rundle/Harcourt, 9 July 1912, 158/375; Malta, 3 July 1912.
143 Hansard, 4th ser., 1912, xxxviii.1006.
146 E. Rossi, op. cit., pp. 45-46.
148 Malta Herald, 3 July 1912.
149 Pro Lingua Italiana memorandum, Malta Herald, 3 July 1912.
150 C.C., 29 Aug. 1914, 158/380.
152 H. Frendo: Birth Pangs of a Nation (Valletta, 1972), photograph, p. 185.
154 Bandiera, no. 365, 24 June 1911.
156 Supra, v.135.
157 'Lit-Tarbia Fil Benniena', Bandiera, no. 291, 1 Aug. 1903.
158 Bandiera, no. 344, 27 May 1905.
159 Bandiera, no. 389, 18 Jan. 1913.
163 Ioan u Prascovia, serialized in Bandiera in 1905, then published as a book, was reprinted with updated orthography by Union Press, Valletta, 1972; see esp. pp. 212-213.
164 Rev. P. P. Galea: Il Kerk ta' d-Demoniu micxuf f'Malta (Valletta, 1912), dedicated to and sanctioned by Pace.
165 Is Salib, 3 Feb. 1912.
167 Dimech M.S., n.d., priv. coll.
168 Supra, v.134.
170 H. Frendo, op. cit., pp. 141-146.
172 In Malta Dimech's wife and children had been reduced to poverty and ignominy.
174 The superintendent of police, La Primaudaye, had also thought of Dimech as 'a criminal', enc. 2 Nov. 1901, Grenfell/Chamberlain, 11 Nov. 1901, no. 66, 883/5.
175 Plumer/Milner, 29 July 1920, F.O. 371/5028.
176 Supra, v.150, ix.120.
177 E. Mizzi: Il Convegno di Malta e una nuova soluzione della questione maltese (Rome, 1912), pp. 17-18, extract from Rassegna Contemporanea, 1912, v.7.
178 Supra, iv.116.
179 Colocci/Mizzi, 26 Sept. 1911, ibid., pp. 13–16.
180 La Voce del Popolo, no. 234, 27 Nov. 1896, enc. 158/317/25690.
181 Il Convegno, op. cit., p. 19.
182 Supra, iv.122.
183 Supra, iii.86.
184 Ibid., p. 13.
185 Ibid., p. 18, ftn.
186 Colocci/Mizzi, 26 Sept. 1911, ibid., p. 15.
188 Il Convegno, op. cit., p. 18, ftn. Such comments could be taken as seriously as those by La Stampa’s editor Alfredo Frassati in 1899 – that Italy should offer to garrison Malta, Gibraltar and Egypt – or the liberal F. A. White’s suggestion in the Westminster Review in 1901: he was so upset by the Boer war that he advocated Malta’s surrender to ‘its original owners’ and cessation of the claim that the Mediterranean was a British lake; J. L. Glanville, op. cit., p. 86. See also ‘British Foreign Policy’, National Review, 1901, xxxviii.356.
189 Ibid., pp. 11–12.
190 Ibid., p. 18.
191 Ibid., pp. 17–18.
192 Il Corriere della Sera, 21 June 1903.
193 Supra, ii.23.
194 enc. 2, Methuen/Long, 3 Sept. 1917, 158/398.
195 Supra, ii.47, iii.65–66.
197 E. Mizzi: Per il VIII Settembre, 1565; Lampi e frentili di Vita Nuova (Valletta, 1908).
198 E. Mizzi: Malta Italiana (Turin, 1912), extract from the monthly review Italia! (fasc. 8), published under the auspices of the Società Nazionale Dante Alighieri, p. 8. Virchow was a Liberal member of the Reichstag (1880–1893) where he strenuously opposed Bismarck
199 Ibid., p. 4, p. 6, p. 8.
200 Ibid., p. 6, col. ii.
201 Ibid., p. 8, col. ii.
202 E. Mizzi: La lotta per l’italianità di Malta (Rome, 1911), extract from L’Idea Nazionale, 8 Mar. 1911. L’Idea Nazionale, a weekly, first appeared on 1 Mar. 1911, the fifteenth anniversary of Italy’s defeat at Adowa.
203 Il Convegno, op. cit., p. 12.
204 G. Seton–Watson, op. cit., p. 372, ftn. 3.
206 Supra, ii.27.
207 C. J. Lowe and F. Marzari, op. cit., p. 113.
209 ‘Giovanni Pascoli all’italianità di Malta’, Il Giornale d’Italia, no. 199, 19 July 1911, p. 1, enc. 158/373,24137; the poem was called ‘Ad Sodales Melitenses’.
210 La lotta, op. cit., p. 10, p. 12. ‘Quale sospetto di separatismo puo mai suscitare una popolazione che e in tutto poco piu di 200 mila anime?’
211 J. A. Thayer, Italy and the Great War (Wisconsin, 1964), quoted by C. J. Lowe and F. Marzari, op. cit., p. 115.
213 Supra, v.146.
214 Malta Italiana, op. cit., p. 1.
216 D.M.C., 26 May 1913, Malta, 26 May 1913, enc. 158/379/18512.
217 Mizzi/Harcourt, 8 June 1913, enc. 158/379/20683.
218 enc. 2, Methuen/Long, 3 Sept. 1917, 158/398.
219 Simmons/Holland, 20 July 1887, 158/283.
220 Colocci/Mizzi, 8 July 1913, enc. 2, Methuen/Long, 3 Sept. 1917, 158/398. Mizzi’s letter to Augusto Bartolo’s Chronicle rebutting Pace’s censure was not published; D.M.C., 30 June 1913, ibid.
221 Santini/Mizzi, 9 July 1913, ibid.
222 Malta, 9 Sept., 11 Sept. 1913; see the letters to Malta branch from central committee sec., Sig. Zaccagnini, 25 June 1913, 22 July 1913; the branch was re-named Lega Nazionalista Maltese in Dec. 1913; ibid.
225 C.G., 28 Oct. 1916, 100.365.
226 Malta, 1 Aug. 1914, 25 Sept. 1914.
227 L’Avvenire, 10 Jan. 1915.
229 Supra, v.136–143.
230 ‘The Programme of Mr. F. Azzopardi, L.P.’, enc. 158/389/7367.
233 Flood min. on Rundle/Harcourt, 19 Dec. 1916, 158/394.
235 Bianchi was about to be deported when the Army Council quashed the conviction owing to an irregularity in the trial; W.O./C.O., I June 1916, 158/395/25933.
236 Methuen/Bonar Law, Aug. 1916, 158/393.
237 Mizzi/Methuen, 3 June 1915, enc. 158/389/28385.
238 Mizzi/Methuen, 14 Jan. 1916, enc. 1, 158/392/9382.
239 Byatt/Mizzi, 19 Jan. 1916, enc. 2, ibid.
241 Ibid., col. 511.
242 Methuen/Bonar Law, 16 Feb. 1916, 158/392.
244 Enc. Methuen/Bonar Law, 6 Apr. 1916, 158/392.
245 Cachia Zammit, whose stronghold was Żejtun, probably suffered from the re-arrangement of electoral districts in 1903 by which this town was included with Senglea in the fifth district.
246 Dalli et al., 3 Apr. 1916, enc. Methuen/Bonar Law, 6 Apr. 1916, 158/392. ‘I do not know whom the abstentionists mean’, minuted W. D. Ellis, removed as he was from the piquant character of Maltese party politics. 3,490 out of 6,443 electors voted in this election.
247 Methuen/Long, 15 May 1917, 158/397/26443.
248 The strike, which threatened to involve labourers in the employ of the military as well as of the civil government, lasted from 7 to 14 May; Methuen tel., 15 May 1917, 158/397/25245, Methuen/Long, 7 Jan. 1918, 158/401.
249 Supra, iv.102.
252 J. E. W. Flood min. 21 June 1915 on Methuen/Harcourt, 10 June 1915, 158/389/28385.
253 Methuen/Long, 15 May 1917, 158/397/26443.
254 Supra, iv.191
255 Infra, vi.191, 193.
256 Methuen/Long, 3 Sept. 1917, ibid., para. 3.
258 Il Convegno, op. cit., p. 18, fn.
260 Giglio/Mizzi, Rome, 11 May 1916, ibid.

263 As Malta had hitherto ‘always so mismanaged its Court-Martials on civilians’, the C.O. took care to ascertain that the court’s findings would be confirmed by the Judge Advocate General; min. 12 Sept. 1917 on Methuen/Long, 3 Sept. 1917, 158/398.

264 Methuen/Mizzi, 10 Aug. 1917, enc. 1, ibid.


266 enc. 2–3, Methuen/Long, 7 Dec. 1917, 158/399; art. 100a of the laws of organization and civil procedure was later amended.

267 W.O./C.O., 7 Nov. 1917, 158/400, Methuen/Long, 21 Feb. 1918. Mizzi was eventually granted a ‘full pardon’ in Nov. 1918.

268 He was Dr. Giorgio Borg, the new editor of the Malta Herald; see ‘To the Electors of the VI District’, 2 May 1917, enc. Methuen/Long, 31 May 1917, 158/397.

269 Dalli et/Methuen, 22 May 1917, enc. ibid.

270 ‘Electoral Programme of the Abstention Candidates recommended by the Comitato Patriotico presided over by Mons. I. Panzavecchia’, 3 May 1917, enc. ibid.; supra, v.132.

271 enc. Methuen/Long, 15 Nov. 1917, 158/399/58740.

272 Ibid.

273 ‘Electoral Address of Dr. Giorgio Borg; To the Electors of the I and VI Districts’, 19 Oct. 1917; ‘Electoral Address of Mr. Gaetano Lanzon, P.L.; To the Electors of the V District’; ‘Electoral Address of Mr. Lorenzo Falzon; To the Electors of the II District’; enc. ibid.


276 ‘Nationalist Programme of Dr. Enrico Mizzi; To the Electors of the VIII District’, 19 Oct. 1917, enc. ibid.

277 ‘Electoral Address of Mr. F. Azzopardi, P.L.’, 19 Aug. 1917, enc. ibid.


280 Pullicino et, 20 Nov. 1917, enc. 1, ibid.

281 Ellis/Fiddes min. 8 June 1918 on Methuen/Long, 30 May 1918, 158/403/7716.

282 Ellis/Read min. 15 Jan. 1918 on Methuen/Long, 21 Dec. 1917, 158/399/323.

283 Voce, 22 May 1918.


286 Methuen/Long, tel., urgent, 4 Jan. 1918, 158/401.

287 Methuen/Long, 7 Jan. 1918, 158/401.

288 Hewins memo ‘on the financial situation in Malta’, 28 May 1918, 158/403.

289 Long/Methuen, 5 Jan. 1918, 158/399/63630.

290 Refalo rep., enc. 2, Methuen/Long, 30 Apr. 1918, 158/402.

291 The duty was, so far, only intended to raise about £5,000 yearly.


293 Strickland/Ellis, 10 Sept. 1918, 11 Sept. 1918, enc. 158/407/45777.

294 Voce, 22 May 1918.

295 Sant Fournier et al., 25 Apr. 1918, enc. 158/402/23290; enc. 2, Methuen/Long, 7 May 1918, 158/403/24311.

296 Caruana/Methuen, 15 Apr. 1918, enc. 1, 158/402/23290.

297 Methuen/Long, 7 Sept. 1918, 158/405.

298 Sant Fournier et al., 25 Apr. 1918, enc. 8, 158/402/23290.

299 enc. 2, Methuen/Long, 7 May 1918, 158/403/24311.

300 Voce, 15 May 1918.

301 ‘Vox Populi’: ‘Neminisse Juvabit’, Voce, 8 May 1918.

302 Supra, iv.107.

303 Malta, 21 May 1918.

304 Hmar, 11 May 1918.


306 Methuen/Long, 19 June 1918, 158/404.
307 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. Borg Olivier accused the government of 'favouritism' and 'nepotism'.

308 Pullicino et al., 1 June 1918, enc. 158/404/32402.

309 Methuen/Long, 19 Oct. 1918, 158/406.

310 Methuen/Long, 16 Oct. 1918, 158/406.

311 Pullicino's party in this case were objecting to Methuen's comments about the two battalions of the King's Own Malta Regiment of Militia; enc. Methuen/Long, 8 May 1918, 158/403.

312 Robertson memo, 17 Apr. 1918, enc. 158/409/25806.

313 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.

314 Pullicino et al., 26 July 1918, enc. 158/405/41269.

315 enc. Methuen/Long, 7 Dec. 1918; C.G., 30 Nov. 1918.

316 Pullicino et al., 14 Feb. 1919, enc. 158/408/14056.


319 Hansard, 5th ser., 1919, 113.1343.

320 Robertson memo, 17 Apr. 1919, enc. 158/409/25806.

321 Amery/Milner min. 15 Apr. 1919 on Methuen/Milner, 14 Mar. 1919, 158/408.

322 Milner/Methuen, 9 May 1919, doc. e, enc. Methuen/Milner, 10 Apr. 1918, 158/409.

323 C.G., 31 May 1919, 65,598-600.

324 Plumer/Milner, 13 June 1919, 158/409.


326 Hunter-Blair/Milner, 13 June 1919, 158/409.

327 Amery min. 28 July 1919 on Plumer/Milner, 9 July 1919, 158/410.

328 Pall Mall Gazette, 13 June 1919, enc. Hunter-Blair/Milner, 13 June 1919, 158/409.

329 Hansard, 5th ser., 1919, 121.909-910.

330 Hansard, 5th ser., 1919, 122.1314-1315.

331 A. V. Laferla, op. cit., ii.226.

332 Hansard, 5th ser., 1920, 133.491.


334 M. Wight: The Development of the Legislative Council 1606-1945 (Lond., 1945), pp. 91-93.

335 G. Peto: op. cit., p. 3.