Suppliment tal-Gazzetta tal-Gvern ta' Malta, Nru. 13,481, 7 ta' April, 1978

Taqsima C

65

Nru. 144

7. 4. 78

MALTA

KAMRA TAD-DEPUTATI

ABBOZZ ta' Liġi mressaq mill-Onorevoli Joseph Cassar, M.P., Ministru tal-Ġustizzja, Artijiet, Djar u Affarijiet tal-Parlament, u moqri għall-Ewwel darba fis-Seduta tat-8 ta' Marzu, 1978.

ATT biex jipprovdi dwar Suppliment għall-Pjan ta' Żvilupp għall-perijodu 1973-80.

C. MIFSUD
Skrivan tal-Kamra tad-Deputati

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

A BILL introduced by the Honourable Joseph Cassar, M.P., Minister of Justice, Lands, Housing and Parliamentary Affairs, and read the First time at the Sitting of the 8th March, 1978.

AN ACT to make provision in respect of a Supplement to the Development Plan for the period 1973-80.

C. MIFSUD
Clerk to the House of Representatives

ABBOZZ TA' LIĠI

msejjaħ

ATT biex jipprovdi dwar Suppliment għall-Pjan ta' Żvilupp għall-perijodu 1973-80.

IL-PRESIDENT, bil-parir u l-kunsens tal-Kamra tad-Deputati, imlaqqgħa f'dan il-Parlament, u bl-awtorità ta' l-istess, ħareġ b'liġi dan li ġej: —

Titolu fil-qosor. **1.** Dan l-Att jista' jissejjaħ l-Att ta' l-1978 dwar Suppliment għall-Pjan ta' Żvilupp.

Suppliment għall-Pjan. **2.** Minkejja d-disposizzjonijiet ta' l-artikolu 2 ta' l-Att ta' l-1976 dwar Pjan ta' Żvilupp, is-Suppliment għall-Pjan ta' Żvilupp għal Malta 1973-80 li hemm fl-Iskeda li tinsab ma' dan l-Att għandu jservi ta' bażi għall-programmi ta' investiment u bħala strument għat-tmexxija tat-tkabbir ta' l-ekonomija u tal-progress soċjali għall-perijodu li jispiċċa fil-31 ta' Marzu, 1980.

SKEDA

(Artikolu 2)

PJAN TA' ŻVILUPP GĦAL MALTA 1973-80

SUPPLIMENT

DAĦLA

L-ippjanar hu proċess kontinwu l-iżjed fi gżira żgħira bħal Malta li għadha tiżviluppa l-ekonomija tagħha u li tintlaqat mill-qrib b'kulma jiġri fil-qasam ekonomiku internazzjonali.

Ġa sar ħafna progress fl-implimentazzjoni ta' diversi proġetti u programmi skond l-istrateġija mfassla fil-Pjan ta' Żvilupp 1973-80. Madankollu f'dal-aħħar snin l-iżvilupp ekonomiku infirex f'oqsma oħra li qed insibu waqt li l-pajjiż qed jiżviluppa b'pass mgħaġġel biex isir ċentru ewlieni fil-Mediterran. Diversi Ministeri u

organizzazzjonijiet oħra li għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' l-iżvilupp ġa qiesu dal-opportunitajiet ġodda għax għarfu sew il-kontribuzzjoni siewja li dawn jistgħu jagħtu biex jintlaħqu l-għanijiet ġenerali nazzjonali.

F'dan l-istadju, il-pubblikazzjoni ta' dan is-Suppliment tal-Pjan għandu jservi bħala bażi siewja ta' diskussjoni għal dawk is-sezzjonijiet tal-kommunità Maltija li jinteressaw ruħhom mill-qrib fl-iżvilupp ekonomiku tal-pajjiż. Fid-dawl ta' kif il-pubbliku jilqa' dan id-dokument, dan is-Suppliment jitressaq għad-diskussjoni fil-Parlament qabel ma jiġi approvat; b'hekk in-nazzjon jagħraf aktar mill-qrib it-toroq ġodda li għandna quddiemna u li flimkien ma' l-oqsma tradizzjonali għandhom jagħtu spinta qawwija lill-iżvilupp ekonomiku tal-pajjiż.

I — INTRODUZZJONI

Malta issa waslet bejn wieħed u ieħor fin-nofs tal-Pjan ta' Żvilupp 1973-80. Dan huwa forsi l-aħjar żmien biex wieħed jagħti ħarsa lura u jqis il-progress li sar s'issa fl-isfond ta' żviluppi domestiċi u ta' ambjent internazzjonali li qiegħed dejjem jinbidel. Dan l-istudju għandu jagħti wkoll l-opportunita' li ndaħħlu fl-istrateġija ġenerali nazzjonali dawk l-esperjenzi u idejat ġodda li l-pajjiż kiseb mindu l-Pjan ġie mniedi fl-1973; dawn ma jistgħux jagħmlu ħaġ'oħra ħlief li jsaħħu l-iżvilupp ta' Malta.

Dan is-Suppliment tal-Pjan għalhekk jinqasam b'mod ġenerali fi tliet taqsimiet prinċipali. L-ewwel taqsima tagħti ħarsa lejn l-iżvilupp li sar s'issa — ħarsa ġenerali lejn kif imxew il-Gżejjer Maltin mill-1971 sal-lum mil-lat politiku, ekonomiku u soċjali. It-tieni taqsima tagħti indikazzjoni ġenerali tad-daqs u l-kobor tax-xogħol li jrid isir u l-għanijiet li rridu nilħqu. L-aħħar taqsima tħares lejn l-opportunitajiet ġodda għall-iżvilupp li jekk naħtfuhom sewwa, jistgħu jkunu mezzi oħra li bihom insaħħu l-istrateġija tal-iżvilupp kif hemm imfisser fil-Pjan.

L-għan ewlieni tal-Pjan ta' Żvilupp 1973-1980, u ta' dan is-Suppliment, huwa li jwassal lill-Gżejjer Maltin għal vijabilità ekonomika sħiħa li permezz tagħha n-nefqa tal-forzi Militari Brittaniċi stazzjonati fil-gżira — li fuqhom tradizzjonalment kienet tiddependi l-ekonomija ta' Malta — tonqos bil-mod il-mod sakemm tispiċċa għal kollox sa l-aħħar ta' Marzu 1979 meta tagħlaq il-bażi militari Ingliża fil-gżira.

Il-ħsieb wara dan is-Suppliment jibqa' l-istess tal-Pjan oriġinali. Minkejja it-taqlib qawwi ekonomiku fid-dinja fl-1974 u fl-1975 li minnu Malta ma setgħatx ma tintlaqatx bħalma fil-fatt ġara, l-impenn politiku tal-gżira jibqa' sħiħ u qawwi. Sad-data stabbilita — il-31 ta' Marzu, 1979 — Malta twarrab għal kollox l-użu tradizzjonali tagħha ta' fortizza u tfassal ħajja ġdida li m'għandha x'taqsam xejn ma' gwerra, u li permezz tagħha il-poplu Malti jaqla' l-għixien tiegħu b'ħidma onesta fl-oqsma tal-manifattura, tiswija ta' vapuri, bini ta' vapuri, agrikoltura, turiżmu, kummerċ u servizzi oħra.

Dan il-għan ġdid ser nilħquh l-ewwel nett billi ngħinu lilna nfusna, għaliex dan huwa l-qofol tat-twemmin tal-Gvern Laburista Malti. Il-poplu Malti ivvota għal dan it-twemmin f'Ġunju ta' l-1971 u ġedded il-mandat tiegħu f'Settembru ta' l-1976.

Il-poplu Malti qed jilqa' dan l-inpenn storiku ġdid bi qlubija u determinazzjoni. Il-pajjiż jinsab miexi b'entużjażmu matul it-triq li għażel b'rieda soda u li ġiet mfissra b'mod l-aktar ċar fil-Pjan ta' Żvilupp, lejn ħajja ta' kollaborazzjoni u ħbiberija mal-pajjiżi l-oħra kollha, speċjalment ma' dawk qrib tagħna, ħajja ta' xogħol iebes, ta' qawmien morali, ta' ħelsien veru. Fit-triq li qabad ta' soċjaliżmu demokratiku u ħanin, il-poplu Malti jimxi 'l quddiem fis-sliem u fil-prosperità.

II — IL-PROGRESS TAL-PJAN

FRUNTIERI POLITIĊI

Matul dawn l-aħħar sitt snin, Malta stinkat mingħajr serħan biex jitwaqqaf ordni ġdid fil-Mediterran mibni fuq l-għarfien ta' interdipendenza bażika bejn l-Ewropa tal-Punent u l-Istati Għarab. Malta temmen bis-sħiħ ukoll li hija tista' biss tkompli miexja f'din it-triq ġdida ta' newtralita' u li ma tkun marbuta ma' ħadd fl-interess tal-paċi, kemm-il darba ssib l-għajnuna fl-isforzi tagħha sew mill-pajjiżi Għarab kif ukoll mill-pajjiżi Ewropej.

Għaldaqstant il-politika ta' Malta kellha bħala għan ewlieni li tnaqqas sakemm tneħħi għal kollox id-dipendenza tradizzjonali tal-pajjiż fuq l-isfruttar tal-posizzjoni strateġika tagħha għal skopijiet militari; minflok dan, attivitajiet u programmi ekonomiċi ispirati mill-paċi se jagħtu sehemhom għall-prosperità u l-progress soċjali tal-kommunità Maltija fl-isfond ta' paċi u stabbilità reġjonali.

Mill-1971 'l hawn il-politika barranija ta' Malta tbiddlet b'mod mill-iżjed qawwi. Din issa saret politika ta' newtralità stretta miż-żewġ super potenzi, bażata fuq it-twemmin illi l-preżenza militari tagħhom b'mod permanenti fil-Baħar Mediterran m'hiex fl-interessi veri ta' paċi f'dawn l-inħawi. Għalhekk, fl-1971 Malta għalqet l-Uffiċċju ewlieni tan-NATO biex teħles lilha nnifisha mir-rabtiet politiċi tal-imgħoddi u biex tnaqqas l-influwenzi politiċi barranin fil-Mediterran ċentrali.

F'Marzu ta' l-1972 Malta laħqet ftehim mal-Ingilterra li permezz tiegħu il-bażi militari Ngliża fil-pajjiż se tispiċċa. Dal-ftehim, mhux biss ma jħallix lil Malta tintuża għal skopijiet aggressivi kontra kwalunkwe stat iżda fih ukoll l-kondizzjoni ċara illi, ikunu x'ikunu ċirkostanzi, Malta qatt ma tintuża, l-anqas għal skopijiet ta' difiża, kontra xi wieħed mill-istati Għarab. Fl-1976 Malta ingħaqdet mal-Grupp tas-77 bħala xhieda oħra tar-rieda soda ta' Malta li tingħaqad mal-moviment ta' dawk tal-pajjiżi mhux allinejati, li huma ħielsa minn kull għaqda jew irbit politiku.

Fl-istess ħin, Malta ħadmet bla heda biex ittejjeb ir-relazzjonijiet tagħha u twaqqaf kuntatti aktar mill-qrib ma' bosta pajjiżi Ewropej u Għarab. Bħala riżultat ta' l-inizjattivi politiċi u ekonomiċi li ħadet Malta fil-qasam internazzjonali, issa teżisti koperazzjoni mill-qrib bejn Malta u nazzjonijiet oħra li ġenwinament għandhom l-istess xewqat u twemmin ta' Malta. Is-suċċess ta' negozjati ġodda għall-reviżjoni tal-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni mal-Komunità Ekonomika Ewropea u l-ftehim bilaterali dwar koperazzjoni ekonomika u teknika ma' għadd kbir ta' pajjiżi fosthom il-Jamaharija Għarbija Libjana, l-Italja, iċ-Ċina, il-Kuwajt, is-Sawdi Arabja, Franza u l-Ġermanja tal-Punent, huma kollha xhieda tas-suċċess li kisbet din politika ġdida.

Ix-xewqa ta' paċi u prosperità fil-Mediterran tista' tintlaħaq permezz ta' għaqda qawwija bejn l-istati kollha tal-Mediterran, biex jinħoloq reġjun tabilħaqq awtonomu. Kien għalhekk li l-Gvern ta' Malta żamm sod kemm felaħ fil-Konferenza dwar is-Sigurtà u l-Koperazzjoni fl-Ewropa li saret f'Helsinki fl-1975. Permezz tal-inizjattiva ta' Malta fl-aħħar kien hemm qbil bejn l-istati kollha li ħadu sehem li ma jistax ikun hemm sigurtà fl-Ewropa mingħajr sigurtà fil-Mediterran. Permezz ta' dawn l-isforzi f'Helsinki u sforzi oħra aktar tard f'Belgrade, hemm it-tama li jum wieħed l-istati kollha tal-Mediterran ikunu jistgħu jitkellmu b'leħen wieħed fuq affarijiet li jolqtu is-sigurtà u d-destin politiku tagħhom.

Ħafna huma dawk li issa għarfu is-sehem ta' Malta bħala pont ta' paċi li jgħaqqad il-kontinenti ta' l-Ewropa u ta' l-Afrika u bosta pajjiżi ġa taw ukoll l-appoġġ politiku tagħhom. Barra minn dan it-twemmin idejoloġiku, żdiedu wkoll rabtiet ekonomiċi qawwija bejn Malta u pajjiżi oħra ġirien fil-Mediterran u pajjiżi oħra ħbieb li għandhom l-istess xewqat.

Barra li wriet ħerqa li tistabbilixxi orizzont politiku ġdid għall-Mediterran mibni fuq armonija u koperazzjoni reġjonali, Malta wettqet sforz ieħor daqstant determinat biex tagħti xeħta moderna u biex tagħti ħajja ġdida lill-istruttura interna tal-pajjiż. F'Diċembru ta' l-1974 il-Parlament Malti approva Kostituzzjoni ġdida li għamlet lil Malta repubblika demokratika fi ħdan il-Commonwealth mibnija fuq ix-xogħol u fuq ir-rispett lejn id-drittijiet ewlenin u l-libertà tal-bniedem. B'hekk Malta saret responsabbli għal kollox fit-tmexxija ta' ħwejjiġha u tat libertà sħiħa ta' kuxjenza u ta' twemmin reliġjuż.

Dawn il-prinċipji, flimkien ma' oħrajn li daħlu fil-Kostituzzjoni ġdida ta' Malta, għandhom igħinu l-proċess ta' riforma tas-soċjetà Maltija u fl-aħħar iwasslu biex jissaħħu l-għaqda u s-solidarjetà nazzjonali — spirtu bħal dan hu tabilħaqq meħtieġ f'dan l-istadju kruċjali ta' l-iżvilupp tal-pajjiż.

IL-PROGRESS TAL-EKONOMIJA

Malta ma tistax tilħaq l-għanijiet politiċi, ekonomiċi u soċjali tagħha mingħajr ma tibdel l-istruttura ta' l-ekonomija b'mod li tkun aktar tiddependi minnha nnifisha u ma tibqax tiddependi aktar fuq qliegħ mill-bażi militari. Sabiex jintlaħqu dawn l-għanijiet hemm enfasi qawwi fuq żvilupp industrjali għalkemm l-iżvilupp ta' servizzi li jinbiegħu bħal ngħidu aħna, it-turiżmu, *shipping* u l-kummerċ qed jingħata sehem importanti ukoll.

Sa l-aħħar ta' l-1976, kien sar progress f'bosta oqsma tal-ekonomija u wħud minnhom, mhux biss imxew skond il-Pjan ta' Żvilupp, iżda qabżu wkoll l-miri li kienu tfasslu fil-Pjan. L-importanza relattiva tal-bażi militari barranija kompliet tonqos. Ir-rata ta' żieda rejali fil-*gross domestic product* kienet ogħla sew mill-medja proġettata għal matul il-Pjan. Is-setturi li fihom l-aktar li kellu jsir żvilupp jiġifieri l-intrapriżi ndustrjali u t-turiżmu, għamlu progress kbir. Ir-rata taż-żieda reali fil-produzzjoni ndustrjali kienet ogħla mir-rata li kienet proġettata minħabba ż-żieda fl-għadd ta' nies li jaħdmu bi qliegħ u l-aktar minħabba żieda mgħaġġla firrata ta' produzzjoni minn kull ħaddiem. Il-produttività kienet akbar minn kif oriġinarjament tbassret fil-Pjan minħabba effiċjenza akbar fil-postijiet tax-xogħol u minħabba użu aħjar ta' makkinarju produttiv li ġa kien qiegħed hemm.

Il-Pjan ta' Żvilupp huwa mibni l-iżjed fuq struttura ekonomika bażata l-aktar fuq settur industrjali sod, għalkemm il-Gvern qed jippjana li fis-snin li ġejjin jiżviluppa bis-sħiħ is-settur ta' servizzi li jagħmlu l-akbar użu mill-qagħda ġeografika unika ta' Malta u vantaġġi oħra li din iġġib magħha. Il-fatt illi s-settur direttament produttiv żied il-kontribut ekonomiku minn madwar 42 fil-mija fl-1973 għal madwar 48 fil-mija fil-1976 huwa fih innifsu sinjal inkoraġġanti ħafna. Minn naħa l-oħra, il-qliegħ minn servizzi mhux ta' bejgħ li jinkludu servizzi militari, niżel minn 22 fil-mija fl-1973 għal 18 fil-mija fl-1976.

Mindu beda l-Pjan, is-settur tal-manifattura mexa 'l quddiem sew bħalma kien mistenni minkejja kriżijiet internazzjonali fosthom ir-reċessjoni u nflazzjoni. F'dal-aħħar erba' snin, s-settur tal-esportazzjoni li mexa 'l quddiem sew u kiber b'rata qawwija ħafna, kien fattur ewlieni fil-progress kbir li għamlet l-ekonomja. Il-produzzjoni fis-settur tal-manifattura, wara li rnexxielha żżomm sod u tegħleb in-nuqqas ta' domanda għal prodotti fis-swieq ewlenin barra minn Malta fl-aħħar parti tal-1974, kompliet tissaħħaħ u l-valur tal-produzzjoni, minn £M65 miljun fl-1973 tela' għal £M131.8 miljun fl–1976. Il-fatt li l-valur tal-produzzjoni irdoppja fi żmien daqshekk qasir juri li sar użu aħjar mill-makkinarju li ġa hemm fil-fabbriki kif ukoll suċċess fl-isforzi biex inħajjru u nwaqqfu ntrapriżi ġodda minn meta beda l-Pjan.

Mill-1973 'l hawn, bdew jaħdmu 116-il proġett ġdid fis-settur tal-manifattura. Il-Pjan kien immira għal żieda ta' 7,600 impieg f'intrapriżi tal-manifattura għal matul

is-snin 1973 sa 1976; fil-fatt li sa l-aħħar ta' l-1976 kienu nħolqu madwar 8,700 impieg ġdid. Din iż-żieda fl-għadd ta' impiegi flimkien maż-żieda fil-produzzjoni tal-manifattura huma xhieda mill-aktar ċara tas-suċċess li nkiseb wara sforzi bla heda, biex jinstabu swieq ġodda għall-esportazzjoni ta' prodotti Maltin u biex il-prodotti Maltin jibqgħu kompetittivi fi swieq barranin permezz ta' kontroll għaqli fuq prezzijiet domestiċi u fuq spejjeż tal-produzzjoni. L-esportazzjoni domestika żdiedet minn £M31.8 miljuni fil-1973 għal £M80.1 miljuni fl-1976; dan jirrappreżenta żieda fil-volum ta' madwar 67 fil-mija li hija wkoll akbar minn dik maħsuba fil-Pjan.

Fl-industrija tat-turiżmu sar ukoll progress kbir minkejja l-kondizzjonijiet ekonomiċi ħżiena fil-pajjiżi li minnhom jiġu l-biċċa l-kbira tat-turisti li jżuru Malta. In-numru ta' turisti li waslu Malta fl-1976 kien ta' 339,537 waqt li dak maħsub fil-Pjan kien ta' 289,200. Dan il-progress qawwi jidher ukoll fil-qliegħ ta' flus barranin li qala' l-pajjiż permezz ta' dan is-settur li ħalla żieda akbar fil-profitti u użu aħjar ta' lukandi u akkomodazzjoni oħra għat-turisti li qabel ma kienux użati biżżejjed.

Fl-1976 il-*gross national product* ras għal ras laħaq il-medja ta' £M730 waqt li fl-1973 kien £M413. Meta wieħed iqis iż-żidiet fil-prezzijiet, dan ifisser rata medja ta' żieda rejali ta' madwar 15 fil-mija fis-sena, li hija akbar mir-rata li kienet mistennija. Il-benefiċċji miż-żieda fid-dħul nazzjonali tqassmu b'mod xieraq bejn id-diversi gruppi soċjali permezz ta' politika li tħaddmet apposta biex ittejjeb id-dħul relattiv ta' dawk li huma l-aktar fil-bżonn.

In-nefqa fuq oġġetti ta' konsum bħala proporzjon tad-dħul matul is-snin 1973-76 imxiet kif kien maħsub u waqt li żdiedet in-nefqa fuq oġġetti ta' konsum, kien hemm ukoll proporzjon akbar ta' tfaddil. Il-konsum f'termini reali żdied b'mad-

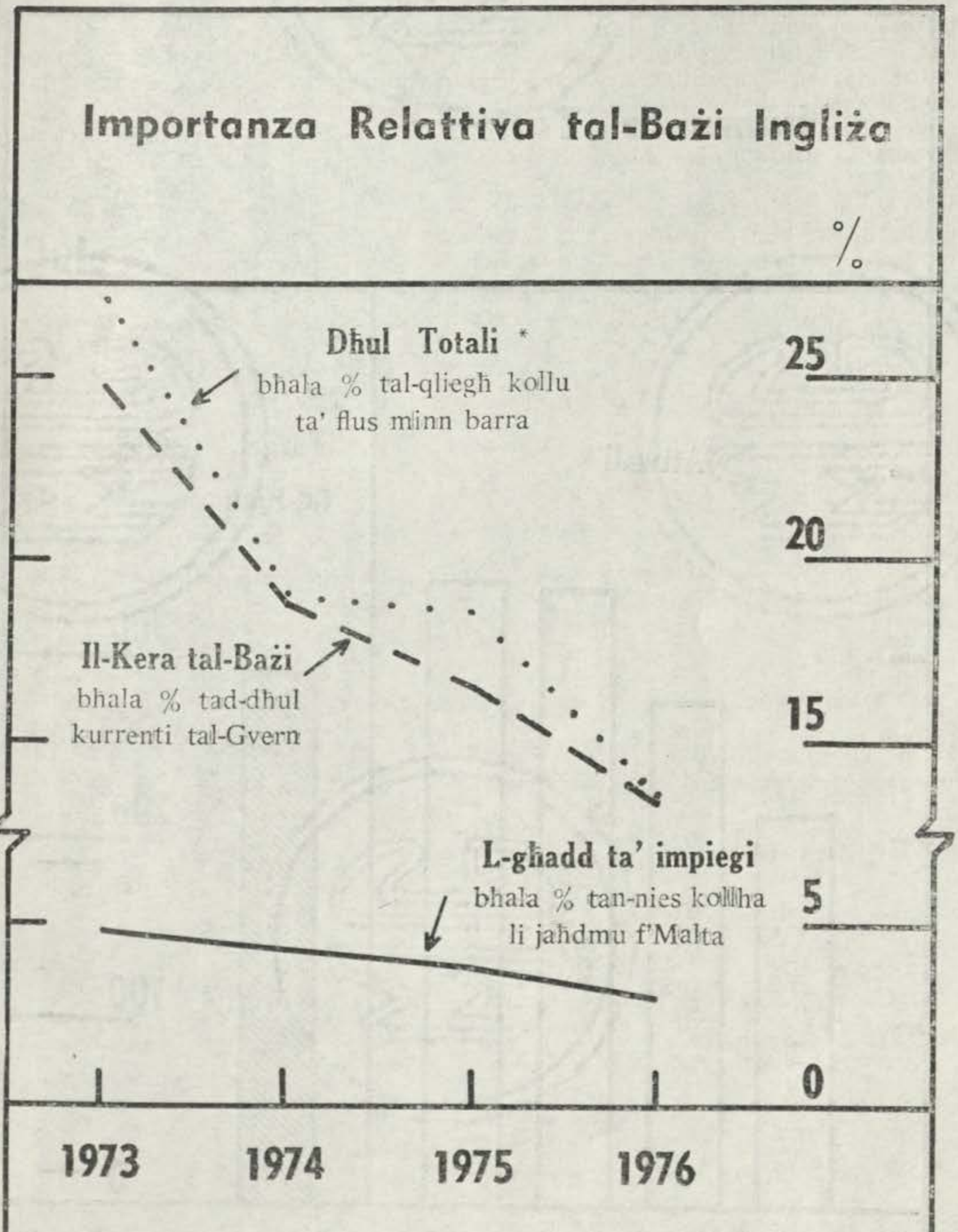
IMPORTANZA RELATTIVA TAL-BAŻI MILITARI BARRANIJA

Tabella II.1

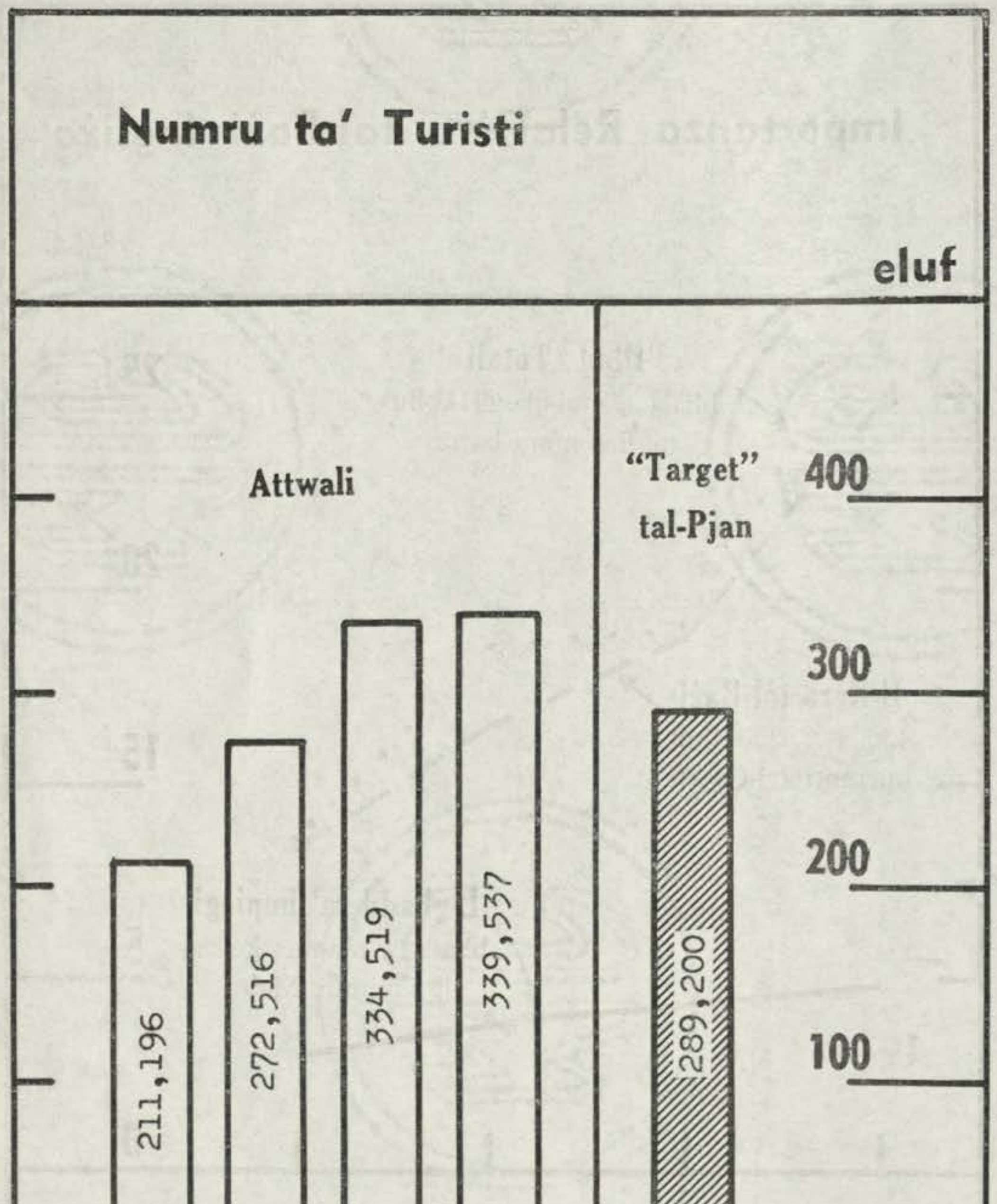
			1973	1974	1975	1976
A.	(a)	Kera għall-Bażi Ingliża (£M miljuni)	13.5	13.6	13.5	13.0
	(b)	Dħul Kurrenti tal-Gvern (£M miljuni)	54.6	71.6	81.6	97.6
		(a) bħala perċentaġġ ta' (b)	24.7%	19.0%	16.5%	13.3%
B.	(a)	Dħul minn Servizzi Militari fil-Bażi Ingliża (£M miljuni) ...	28.7	27.3	31.1	27.7
	(b)	Qliegħ totali ta' flus minn barra (£M miljuni)	105.9	142.7	168.2	206.0
		(a) bħala perċentaġġ ta' (b)	27.1%	19.1%	18.5%	13.4%
Ċ.	(a)	Impiegi mal-Bażi Militari ...	4,892	4,423	4,166	3,329
	(b)	Impiegi Totali	102,981	102,310	107,814	110,518
		(a) bħala perċentaġġ ta' (b)	4.8%	4.3%	3.9%	3.0%

Noti: A (a) u (b): L-ammonti jirreferu għas-snin finanzjarji li jibdew f'April u jispiċċaw f'Marzu tas-sena ta' wara.

B (a): Magħmul minn bejgħ lill-membri tas-Servizzi Ngliżi u d-dipendenti tagħhom, materjal u kuntratti, pagamenti għal servizzi pubbliċi, pagi lill-impjegati Maltin u Kera tal-Bażi.



* Dan jinkludi bejgħ lin-nies tas-Servizzi Ngliżi u l-familji tagħhom, materjali u kuntratti, ħlas għal servizzi pubbliċi, pagi ta' ħaddiema Maltin u kera tal-Bażi.


Numru ta' Turisti
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0
211,196
272,516
334,519
339,537
289,200
1973 1974 1975 1976
1976

Żieda Rejali fil-"Gross National Product" ras imb' ras

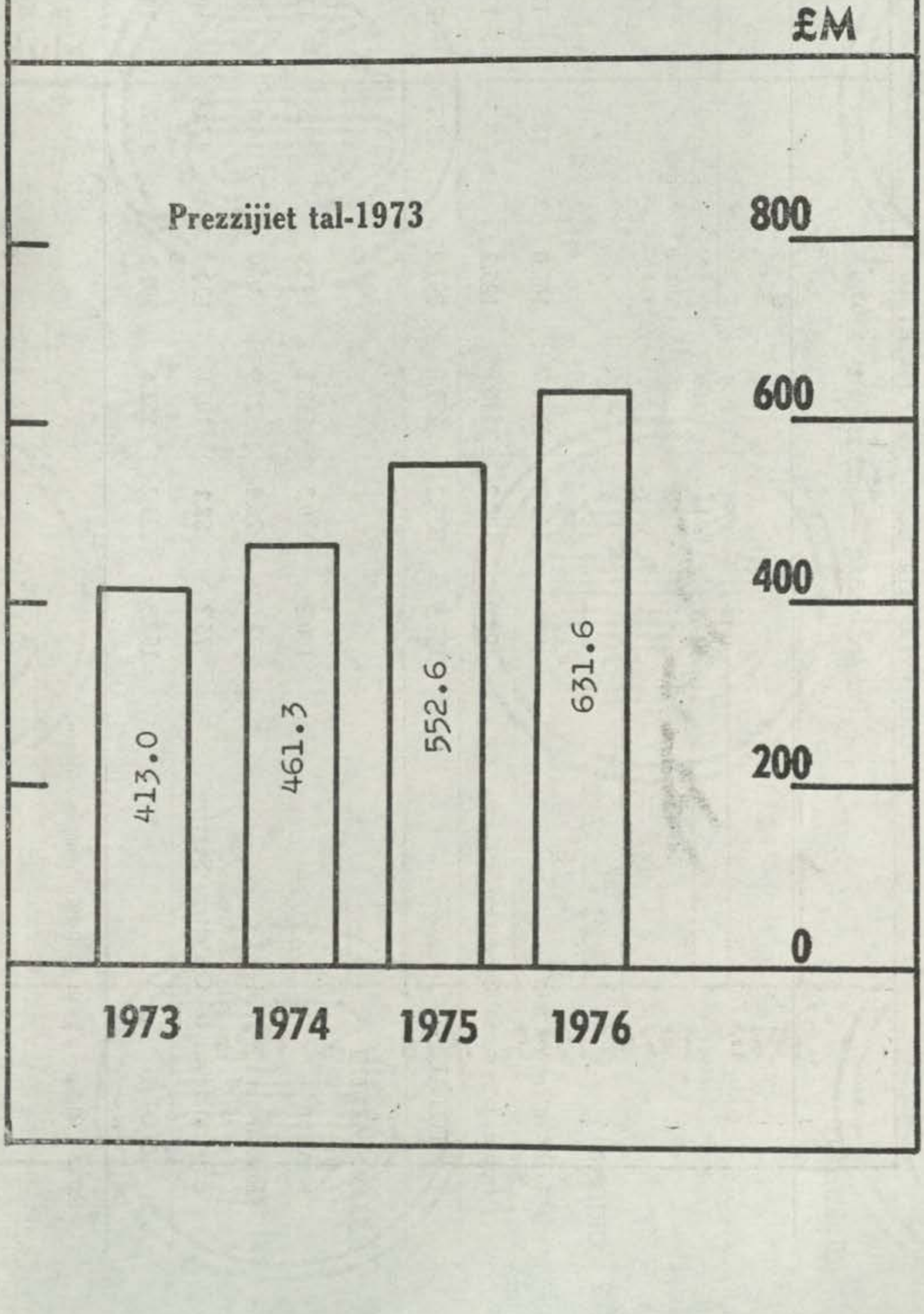


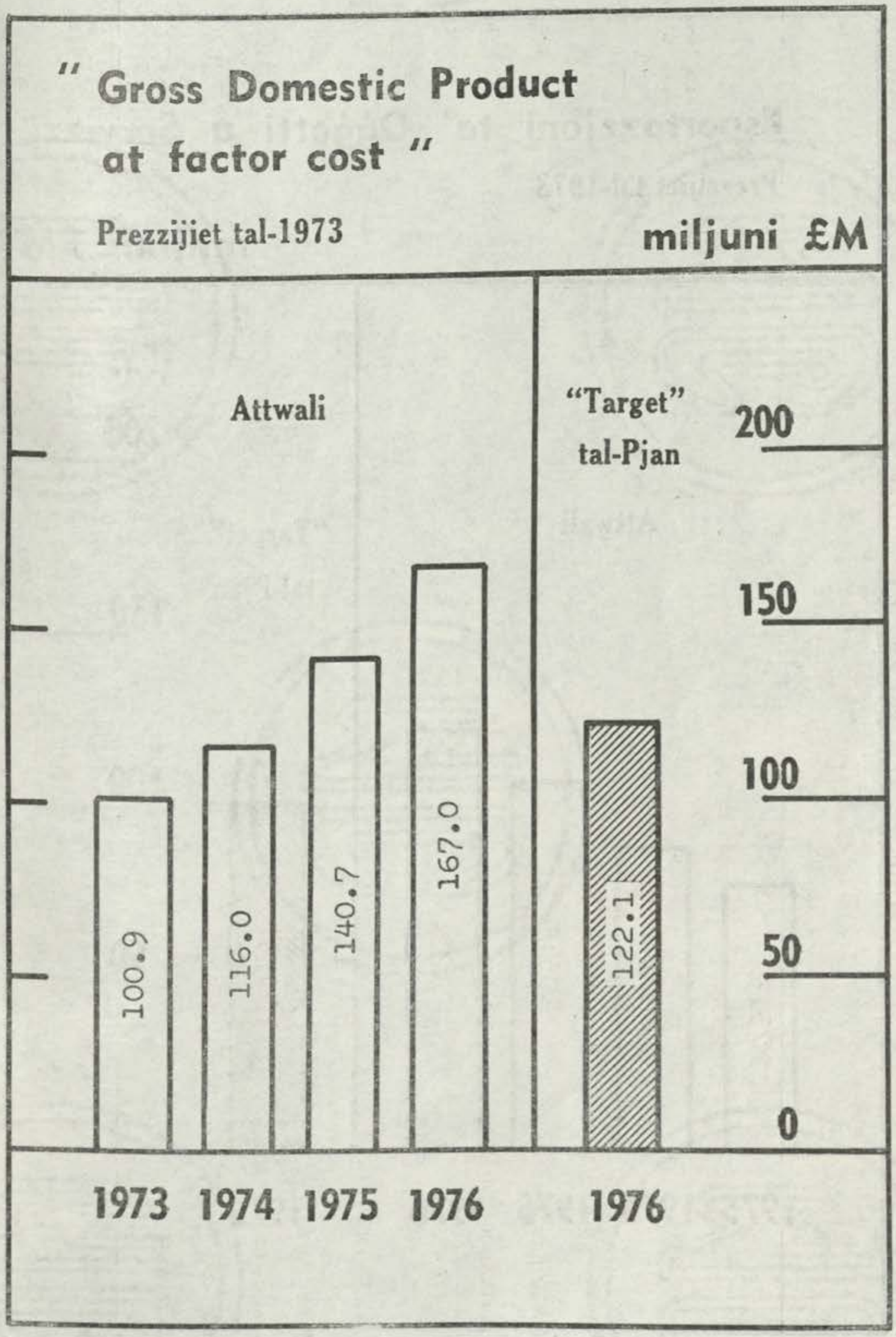
Tabella II.2

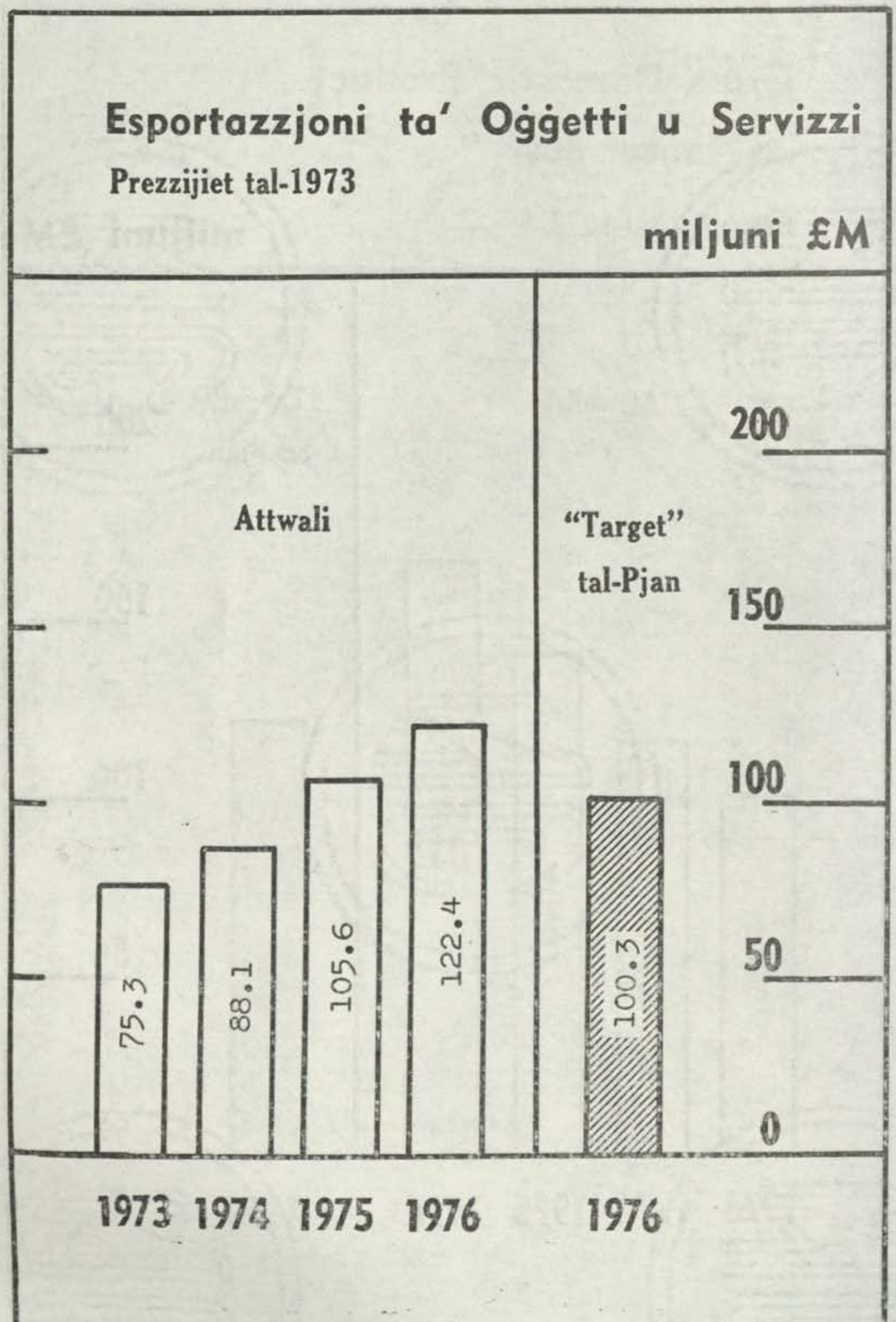
ORIĠINI U ALLOKAZZJONI TA' RIŻORSI

(*'at factor cost'* — prezzijiet ta' l-1973)

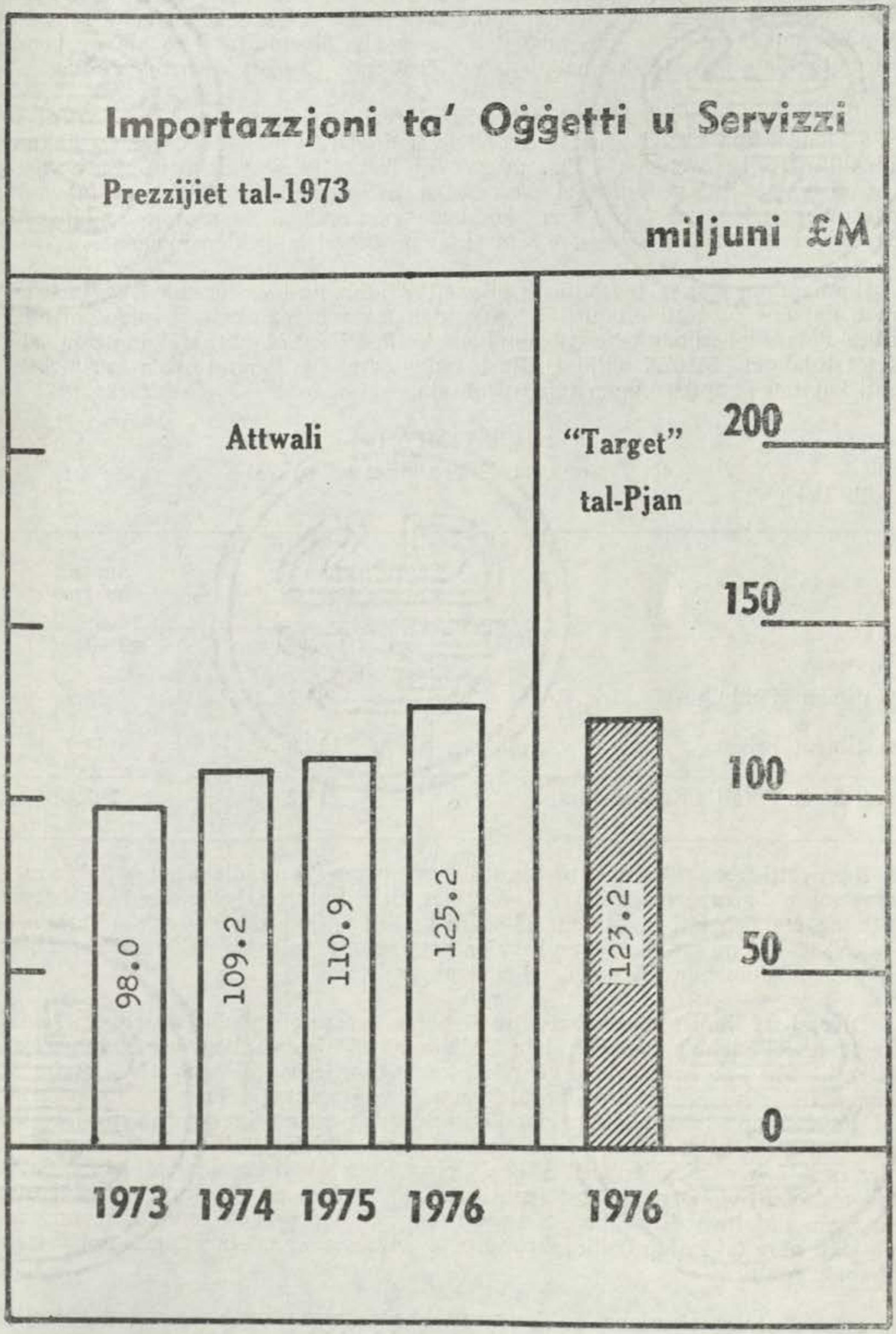
	1973 £Mm	1974 £Mm	1975 £Mm	1976			
				Attwali £Mm	Rata Medja Annwali ta' Bdil %	Pjan £Mm	Rata Medja Annwali ta' Bdil %
ORIĠINI							
'GDP at factor cost'	100.9	116.0	140.7	167.0	18.3	122.1	6.6
Importazzjoni ta' Oġġetti u Servizzi ...	98.0	109.2	110.9	125.2	8.5	123.2	7.9
TOTAL	198.9	225.2	251.6	292.2	13.7	245.3	7.2
ALLOKAZZJONI							
Konsum	100.2	110.3	118.1	132.9	9.8	112.8	4.0
Investiment Totali	23.4	26.8	27.9	36.9	16.4	32.2	11.2
Esportazzjoni ta' Oġġetti u Servizzi ...	75.3	88.1	105.6	122.4	17.6	100.3	10.0
TOTAL	198.9	225.2	251.6	292.2	13.7	245.3	7.2

NOTA: Il-figuri attwali għall-1976 huma provviżorji.


" Gross Domestic Product
at factor cost "
Prezzijiet tal-1973
miljuni £M
Attwali
"Target"
tal-Pjan
200
150
100
50
0
100.9
116.0
140.7
167.0
122.1
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976



Esportazzjoni ta' Oġġetti u Servizzi
Prezzijiet tal-1973
miljuni £M
Attwali
"Target"
tal-Pjan
200
150
100
50
0
75.3
88.1
105.6
122.4
100.3
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Importazzjoni ta' Oġġetti u Servizzi
Prezzijiet tal-1973
miljuni £M
Attwali
"Target" tal-Pjan
200
150
100
50
0
98.0
109.2
110.9
125.2
123.2
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976

war 9.8 fil-mija; dan huwa ogħla sew mir-rata ta' 4 fil-mija li kienet maħsuba fil-Pjan. Iż-żieda fid-dħul kienet, madankollu, ħafna aktar ogħla minn dak mistenni. In-nefqa fuq il-konsum f'termini ta' flus telgħet b'rata medja fis-sena ta' 14.6 fil-mija matul l-aħħar tliet snin meta tqisha ma' żieda ta' 22 fil-mija fil-*gross national product*.

Il-*gross fixed capital formation* f'termini reali u n-nefqa fuq l-investiment sa l-1976 kienu wkoll b'mod ġenerali skond l-għanijiet tal-Pjan. Meta wieħed jikkunsidra illi matul l-ewwel snin fi Pjan ta' Żvilupp ir-rata ta' l-investiment hija normalment mistennija li tkun fuq skala aktar baxxa, u mbagħad tiżdied fis-snin ta' wara, l-investiment mis-settur privat kien skond ma kien maħsub waqt li fil-fatt l-investiment mis-settur pubbliku żdied b'pass aktar mgħaġġel milli kien ippjanat.

Il-programm vast ta' investiment mis-settur pubbliku biex tissaħħaħ l-infrastruttura u jinbdew proġetti produttivi ġodda kien mexa ħafna aktar 'il quddiem mill-miri tal-Pjan. Fil-perijodu ta' erba' snin bejn April, 1973 u Marzu, 1977 in-nefqa kapitali totali laħqet £M102.4 miljuni. Din in-nefqa saret fuq kapital fiss u fuq investimenti kapitali f'impriżi kummerċjali u oħrajn.

INVESTIMENT

(*at factor cost* — prezzijiet ta' l-1973)

Tabella II.3

	Pjan 1973/79	Attwali 1973/76
	£M miljun	£M miljun
Investiment Pubbliku	94.2	46.9
Investiment Privat	119.0	54.9
Investiment Totali f'Kapital Fiss	213.2	101.8

Il-proġetti kbar ta' l-infrastruttura li diġa' imxew 'il quddiem ħafna jinkludu l-estensjoni ta' l-ajruport, l-iżvilupp tal-portijiet, titjib fit-toroq, l-estensjoni tas-sistema tad-drenaġġ, u proġetti għat-tħaffir u l-ħażna ta' l-ilma. Qed issir espansjoni kbira ħafna wkoll fis-sistemi tat-telekomunikazzjonijiet kemm f'Malta kif ukoll ma' barra biex ilaħħqu mad-domanda tal-lum u tal-ġejjieni.

Diversi faċilitajiet u servizzi oħra li huma essenzjali għall-iżvilupp ġew ukoll imtejba jew imdaħħla fil-pajjiż. Issa f'Malta hawn sistema bankarja kummerċjali effiċjenti li fiha l-poplu ta' Malta għandu nteress dirett, waqt li twaqqaf l-*Investment Finance Bank* kif hemm provdut fil-Pjan sabiex jipprovdi l-flus għall-investiment għal proġetti industrjali b'kondizzjonijiet li normalment ma jipprovduhomx il-banek kummerċjali. Għaldaqstant, l-*Investment Finance Bank* jista' jipprovdi l-flus għal żmien qasir jew għal żmien twil u jista' jipparteċipa wkoll permezz ta' ishma f'attivitajiet produttivi. Dan il-Bank jista' wkoll jixtri l-istocks li jkun hemm fis-suq finanzjarju f'Malta u jista' jinvesti t-tifdil domestiku fi proġetti ndustrjali, turistiċi u proġetti oħra ta' żvilupp billi joħroġ *stocks* jew *bonds* għall-iżvilupp biex jinxtraw mill-poplu Malti.

Twaqqfu l-linji nazzjonali ta' l-ajru u tal-baħar biex ikun hawn mezzi aħjar ta' komunikazzjoni ħalli jinqdew aħjar l-industrji Maltin tal-manifattura u s-settur tat-turiżmu li dejjem qegħdin jiżviluppaw. Servizzi essenzjali oħra, bħalma huma l-importazzjoni u l-ħażna taż-żejt, u t-telekomunikazzjonijiet inkluż ix-xandir saru propjetà tal-Maltin u issa huma kkontrollati mill-Maltin.

Saret ukoll nefqa kapitali mill-Gvern fuq impriżi direttament produttivi bħalma huma l-proġett ta' "Iżra u Rabbi" għall-iżvilupp tal-biedja u l-proġett tat-*trawlers* tas-sajd. Fil-qasam industrjali l-Gvern għandu l-inizjattivi privati ta' investiment billi waqqaf waħdu għadd ta' intrapriżi b'għajnuna teknika barranija jew inkella waqqafhom permezz ta' *joint ventures* ma' investituri privati barranin u aġenziji pubbliċi.

Saret riorganizzazzjoni fit-Tarzna li issa nbidlet f'intrapriża vijabbli. Fl-istess ħin inbeda wkoll programm vast li issa mexa 'l quddiem sewwa kemm għal żieda fil-faċilitajiet ta' tiswija tal-vapuri kif ukoll biex it-Tarzna ddaħħal faċilitajiet ġodda għal bini tal-vapuri fuq skala kbira. Dan il-programm jinkludi l-bini ta' baċir ta' 300,000 tunnellata b'għajnuna teknika u finanzjarja Ċiniża u l-bini tat-tarzna għal bini tal-vapuri fil-Marsa li fiha il-Jamaharija Libjana Għarbija ġa kisbet sehem. Dawn iż-żewġ proġetti għandhom jgħinu biex Malta ssir ċentru ewlieni fil-Mediterran għat-tiswija u għall-bini tal-vapuri.

NEFQA KAPITALI MIS-SETTUR PUBBLIKU

£M miljun

Tabella II.4

	1973/74*	1974/75*	1975/76*	1976/77*	Total
INVESTIMENT					
Tiswija u bini tal-vapuri ...	1.1	1.1	3.7	4.3	10.2
Żvilupp tal-Industrji ...	6.1	2.0	12.7	8.9	29.7
Turiżmu	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	1.5
Telekomunikazzjonijiet ...	0.2	0.6	3.9	2.5	7.2
Biedja u Sajd	0.5	1.3	0.7	0.9	3.4
	8.3	5.4	21.3	17.0	52.0
INFRASTRUTTURA					
Żvilupp tal-Ajruport ...	0.5	1.5	2.4	3.2	7.6
Żvilupp tal-Portijiet ...	0.4	0.8	1.8	1.7	4.7
Elettriku**	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.9	3.9
Ilma	0.3	0.5	1.1	0.9	2.8
Toroq	1.1	1.8	2.0	1.4	6.3
Dranaġġi	0.3	0.4	1.8	1.4	3.9
	3.6	6.1	10.0	9.5	29.2
SOĊJALI					
Saħħa	0.2	0.5	1.1	1.2	3.0
Edukazzjoni	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.9
Djar	1.8	2.6	4.1	4.6	13.1
Propjetà Pubblika, eċċ ...	3.0	0.3	0.5	0.4	4.2
	5.3	3.7	5.9	6.3	21.2
TOTAL	17.2	15.2	37.2	32.8	102.4

* Snin finanzjarji li jibdew f'April u li jispiċċaw f'Marzu.

** Magħduda l-ispiża tal-Bord ta' l-Elettriku ta' Malta.

Ix-xejra ġenerali fil-volum ta' l-importazzjoni mxiet skond ma kien mistenni fil Pjan waqt li l-esportazzjoni kienet aktar milli kien mistenni. L-iżbilanċ fil-kummerċ li kien akbar sew matul l-1974 minħabba żieda qawwija fil-valur ta' l-importazzjoni minħabba ż-żieda fil-prezzijiet taż-żejt u inflazzjoni f'pajjiżi barra minn Malta, naqas fis-snin ta' wara. Tjieb ukoll il-proporzjon bejn l-esportazzjoni u l-importazzjoni u minn 41 fil-mija fl-1975 dan sar 54 fil-mija fl-1976.

Minkejja l-effetti ħżiena ta' żidiet fil-prezzijiet minn barra u kondizzjonijiet ħżiena ta' bejgħ fil-pajjiżi li Malta l-aktar li tikkummerċja magħhom, il-bilanċ tal-pagamenti kien aktar b'saħħtu milli stennejna. Iż-żieda fl-esportazzjoni, iż-żieda fid-dħul mit-turiżmu u d-dħul sostanzjalment ogħla mill-investimenti Maltin barra l-pajjiż iġġeneraw bejniethom żidiet kbar fil-kont kurrenti, u r-riżervi barranin totali telgħu minn £M160.2 miljun fl-1973 għal £M286.6 miljun fl-1976.

Matul is-snin 1973-76 l-għadd ta' nies li jistgħu jaħdmu żdied b'aktar ħeffa milli kien maħsub fil-Pjan. Dan ġara l-iżjed minħabba r-ripatrijazzjoni netta ta' 2,698 ċittadin Malti fl-1975 u 1976 minflok emigrazzjoni netta ta' 6,000 persuna kif kien maħsub. Fatturi oħra li taw sehemhom għaż-żieda fin-numru ta' nies li jfittxu x-xogħol kienu jinkludu t-tnaqqis fl-għadd ta' ħaddiema minn ditti stabbiliti li ntlaqtu ħażin mir-riċessjoni fid-dinja li kellha wkoll effett ħażin fuq ir-rata ta' ħolqien ta' mpiegi f'ditti oħra li kienu jifilħu jħaddmu aktar nies; u l-fatt li tnaqqsu l-ħaddiema minn attivitajiet ekonomiċi bi produttività baxxa. Dawn ma setgħux jifilħu għal kollox għaż-żidiet fil-pagi li seħħew wara l-introduzzjoni ta' paga minima nazzjonali f'Novembru ta' l-1974 u għal titjib sinifikanti ieħor fil-kondizzjonijiet tax-xogħol li tqis li kien hemm bżonnu għall-ġid tal-ħaddiema in ġenerali.

BILANĊ TA' PAGAMENTI KONT KURRENTI

(Prezzijiet Kurrenti)

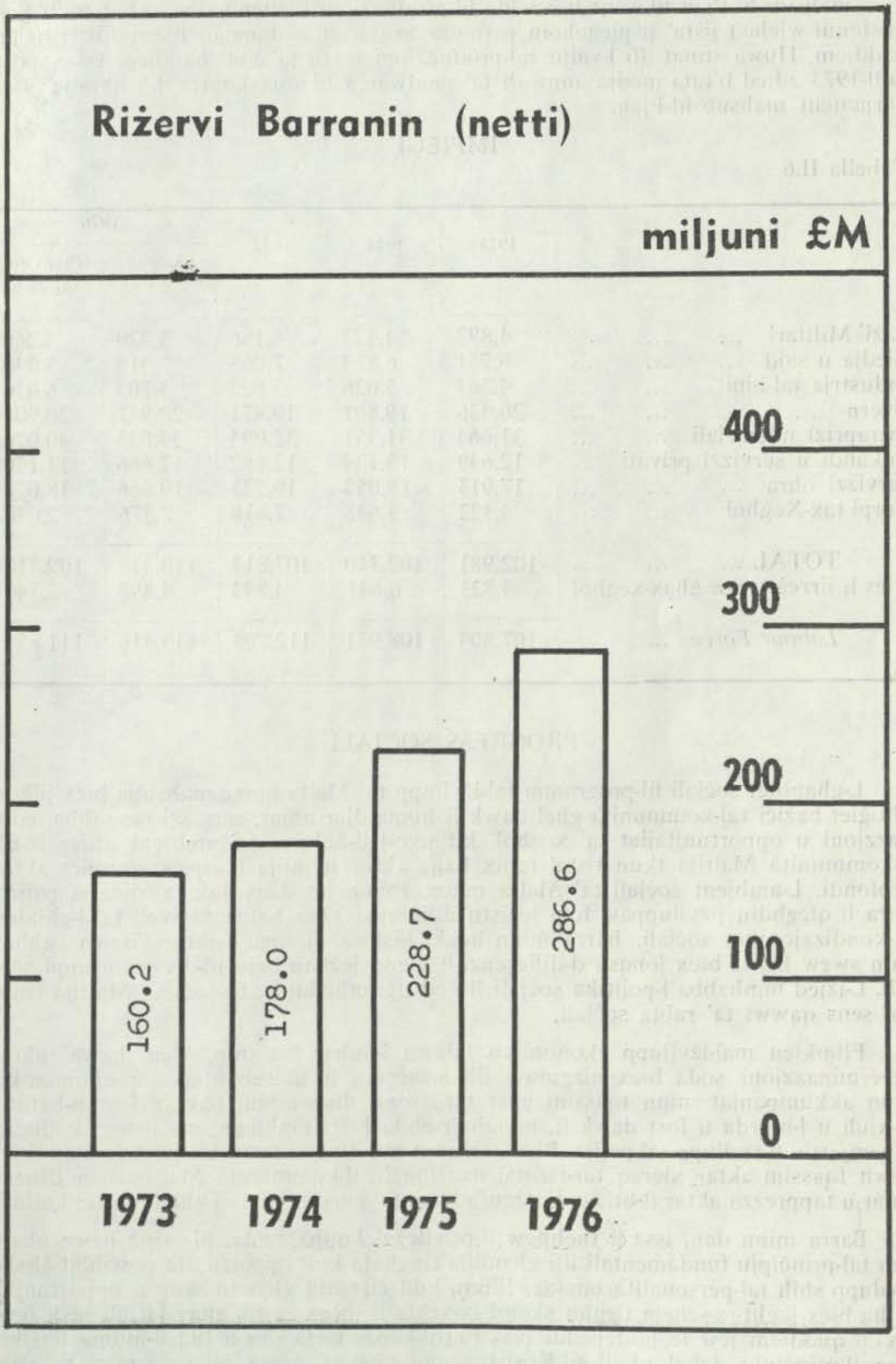
Tabella II.5

£M miljun

	1973	1974	1975	1976 (Prov.)
Esportazzjoni ta' oġġetti u servizzi ...	75.3	110.4	137.3	171.7
Importazzjoni ta' oġġetti u servizzi ...	−98.0	−148.4	−159.7	−195.8
Qliegħ nett minn investimenti barranin	7.5	12.5	18.3	19.2
Trasferimenti netti	28.5	30.6	29.2	31.9
Bilanċ tal-Kont Kurrenti ...	+13.3	+ 5.1	+ 25.1	+ 27.0

L-impiegi f'bosta setturi ekonomiċi kienu bejn wieħed u ieħor skond il-miri tal-Pjan. L-agrikoltura; it-trasport u l-kommunikazzjonijiet impjegaw numru akbar ta' ħaddiema milli kien mistenni, waqt li kien hemm anqas ħaddiema fl-industrja privata tal-bini billi parti kbira sew tal-programm tax-xogħlijiet pubbliċi li qabel kienet tkun f'idejn kuntratturi privati, bdiet issir direttament minn ħaddiema tal-korpi tax-xogħol.

Ir-rata li biha qed jinħolqu mpiegi ġodda fis-settur tal-manifattura żammet pass mgħaġġel, għalkemm dawn l-isforzi ntlaqtu sew mill-kondizzjonijiet kuntrarji fis-swieq barranin u mill-fatt li xi ndustrjalisti prospettivi ma kenux lesti li jieħdu deċiżjonijiet dwar investimenti matul perijodu hekk ikrah fil-qasam internazzjonali.



Riżervi Barranin (netti)
miljuni £M
400
300
200
100
0
160.2
178.0
228.7
286.6
1973
1974
1975
1976

Il-fatt illi ż-żieda netta fl-impiegi fis-settur tal-manifattura kienet aktar baxxa milli kien maħsub fil-Pjan fil-waqt li ż-żieda fil-produzzjoni kienet ħafna akbar milli kien mistenni wieħed jista' jispjegahom permezz taż-żieda sostanzjali fil-produttività tal-ħaddiem. Huwa stmat illi l-valur tal-produzzjoni rejali ta' kull ħaddiem f'das-settur mill-1973 żdied b'rata medja annwali ta' madwar 8 fil-mija kontra 4.5 fil-mija oriġinarjament maħsub fil-Pjan.

Tabella II.6

IMPIEGI

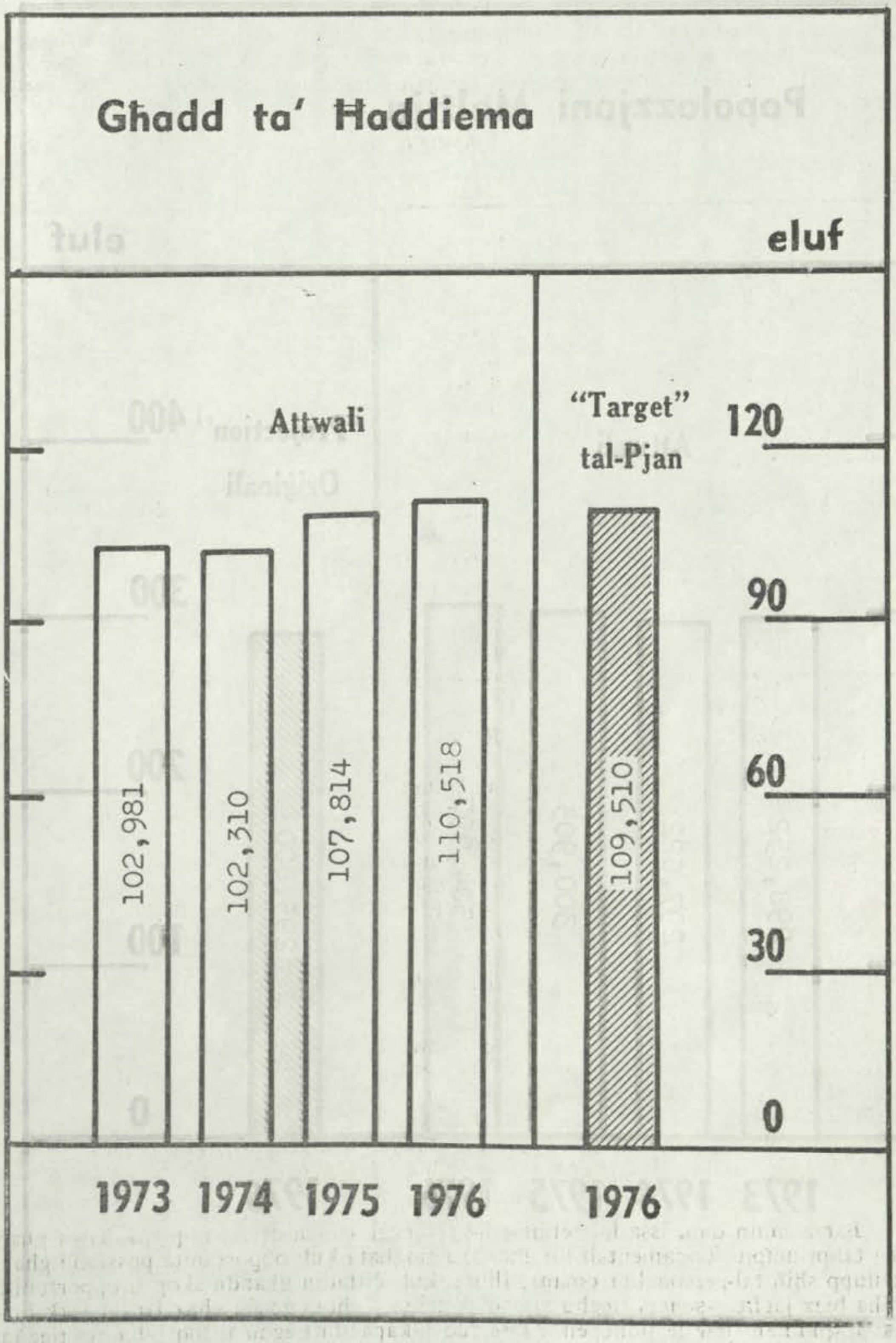
	1973	1974	1975	1976	
				Attwali	*Projection* tal-Pjan
Bażi Militari	4,892	4,423	4,166	3,329	3,260
Biedja u sajd	6,751	6,874	7,066	7,314	5,940
Industrja tal-bini	4,364	5,026	5,022	4,705	6,030
Gvern	20,436	19,801	19,471	20,937	20,900
Intrapriżi ndustrjali	31,664	31,351	32,094	34,025	40,070
Lukandi u servizzi privati ...	12,639	13,134	12,662	12,666	13,150
Servizzi oħra	17,913	18,053	19,523	19,666	18,070
Korpi tax-Xogħol	4,322	3,648	7,810	7,876	2,090
TOTAL	102,981	102,310	107,814	110,518	109,510
Nies li jirreġistraw għax-xogħol	4,823	6,641	4,894	4,898	2,340
Labour Force	107,804	108,951	112,708	115,416	111,850

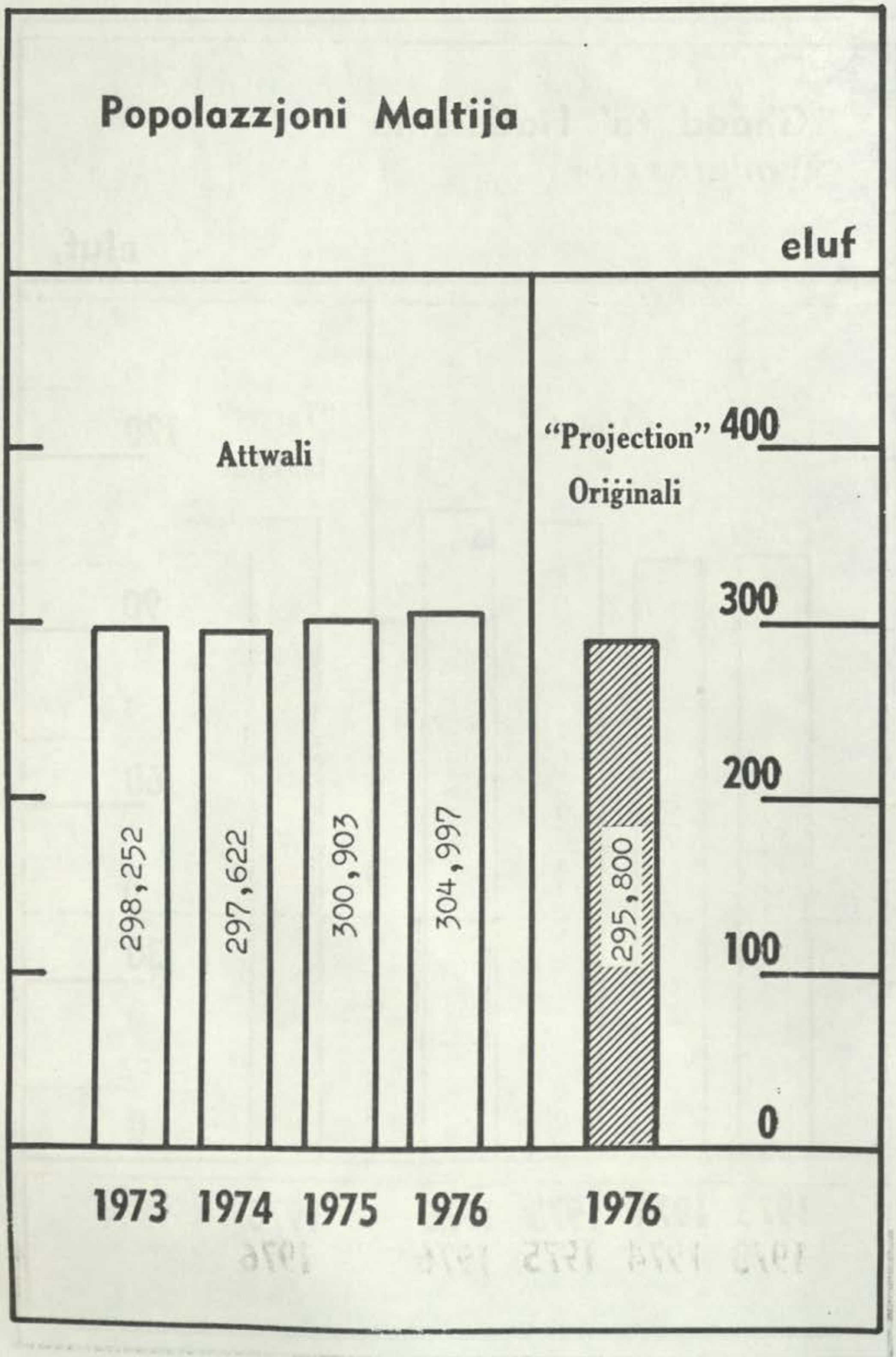
PROGRESS SOĊJALI

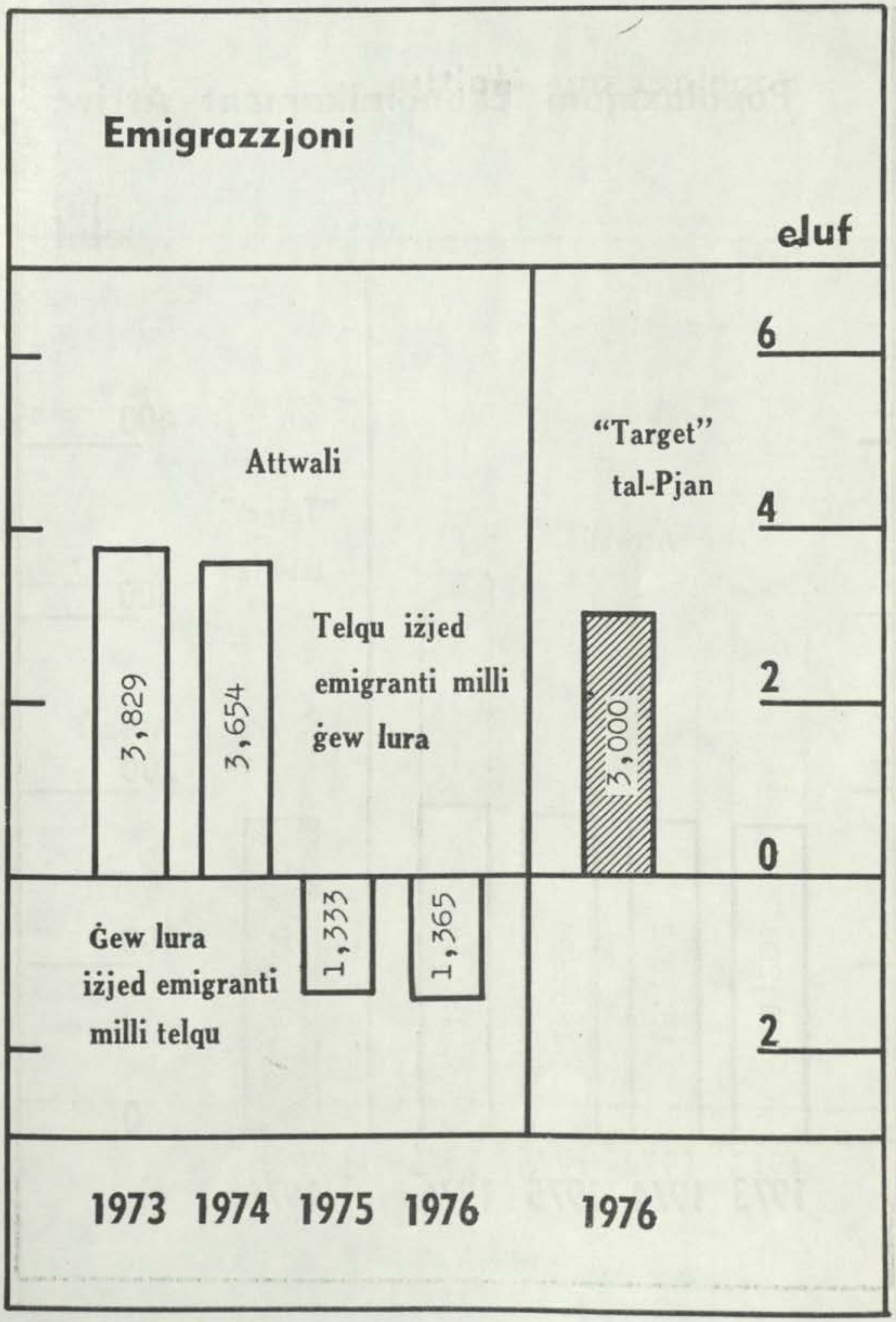
L-għanijiet soċjali fil-programm tal-iżvilupp ta' Malta huma maħsuba biex jilħqu l-ħtiġiet bażiċi tal-kommunità għal dawk li huma djar aħjar, servizzi tas-saħħa, edukazzjoni u opportunitajiet ta' xogħol, kif ukoll il-ħolqien ta' ambjent aħjar li fih il-kommunità Maltija tkun tista' tgħix ħajja aktar mimlija b'aspirazzjonijiet aktar profondi. L-ambjent soċjali ta' Malta mhux żbilanċjat daqs dak ta' diversi pajjiżi oħra li qiegħdin jiżviluppaw fejn jeżistu differenzi kbar ħafna fil-livell ta' l-għixien u kondizzjonijiet soċjali. Barra minn hekk, l-isforzi li saru l-aktar f'dawn l-aħħar snin swew ħafna biex jonqsu d-differenzi li kienu jeżistu bejn id-diversi gruppi soċjali. L-iżjed minħabba l-politika soċjali li qed tiġi mħaddma, fis-soċjetà Maltija trabba' sens qawwi ta' rabta soċjali.

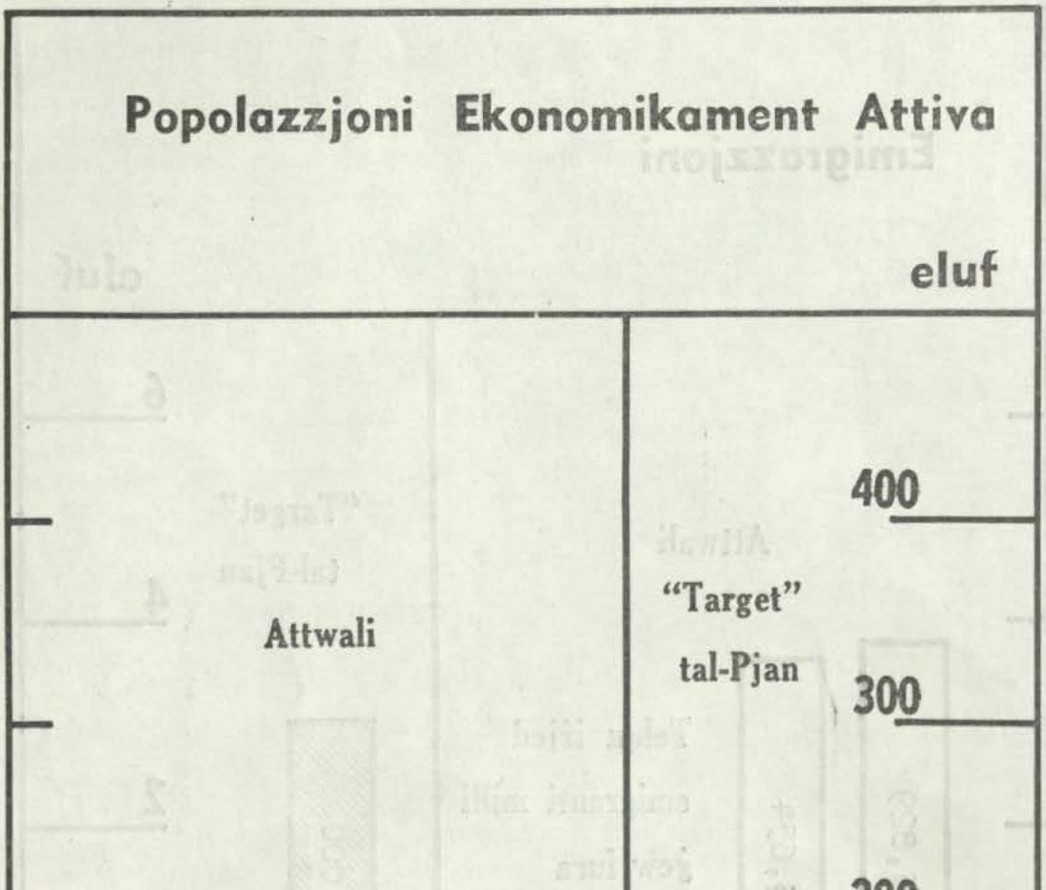
Flimkien mal-iżvilupp ekonomiku f'dawn l-aħħar ftit snin, kien hawn ukoll determinazzjoni soda biex niżguraw illi s-suċċess li nkiseb fil-qasam ekonomiku jkun akkumpanjat minn tqassim ġust tar-riżorsi disponibbli l-aktar fost il-batuti, ix-xjuħ u l-morda u fost dawk li, mingħajr ebda ħtija tagħhom, ma jistax ikollhom sehem attiv fl-iżvilupp tal-pajjiż. Bħala riżultat tad-diversi miżuri li ttieħdu biex ikun hawn tqassim aktar xieraq tar-riżorsi nazzjonali, il-kommunità Maltija issa tifhem aħjar u tapprezza aktar il-ħtieġa li tiżgura livell ta' għixien xieraq għall-Maltin kollha.

Barra minn dan, issa li tneħħew il-privileġġi kollha żejda, fil-pajjiż hawn għarfien tal-prinċipju fundamentali illi għandha tingħata kull opportunità possibbli għall-iżvilupp sħiħ tal-personalità umana. Illum, kull ċittadin għandu skop u opportunità sħiħa biex jagħti s-sehem tiegħu skond ix-xeħta li jħoss ġo fih għax jaf illi jekk jimxix 'il quddiem jew le jiddependi biss fuq il-kapaċità tiegħu u fuq il-ħidma tiegħu. Dan il-prinċipju daħal ukoll fil-Kostituzzjoni għaliex huwa biss permezz ta' dan l-ispirtu ta' għaqda soċjali li n-nazzjon jista' jqis ruħu f'pożizzjoni li jikseb l-appoġġ sħiħ u jassigura s-sehem taċ-ċittadini kollha fis-snin li ġejjin.


Għadd ta' Ħaddiema
eluf
Attwali
"Target" tal-Pjan
120
90
60
30
0
102,981
102,310
107,814
110,518
109,510
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Popolazzjoni Maltija
eluf
Attwali
"Projection"
Originali
400
300
200
100
0
298,252
297,622
300,903
304,997
295,800
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Emigrazzjoni
eluf
6
4
2
0
2
Attwali
"Target"
tal-Pjan
Telqu iżjed
emigranti milli
ġew lura
Ġew lura
iżjed emigranti
milli telqu
3,829
3,654
1,333
1,365
3,000
1973 1974 1975 1976 1976



Popolazzjoni Ekonomikament Attiva
eluf
Attwali
"Target"
tal-Pjan
400
300
200
100
0
181,200
181,842
185,693
190,543
184,900
1973 1974 1975 1976 1976

Il-Gvern ma naqasx li jwettaq tabilħaqq dawn l-ideat ta' armonija soċjali u li jimxi fuq it-twemmin tiegħu permezz ta' għadd ta' miżuri illi issa kisbu l-appoġġ sħiħ tad-diversi sezzjonijiet tal-kommunità. B'hekk, diġà sar progress li jqawwi l-qalb fit-twettiq ta' l-għanijiet bażiċi soċjali li fuqhom nbena l-Pjan ta' Żvilupp. Dawn huma maħsuba biex f'pajjiżna noħolqu *Welfare State* mibni fuq titjib kontinwu fil-livell ta' l-għixien u fil-ġid tal-poplu b'attenzjoni xierqa għal dawk is-sezzjonijiet tal-kommunità li jekk ma jkunx hemm min jaħseb fihom ma jieħdux is-sehem li ħaqqhom mill-frott tal-progress ekonomiku.

Biex jilħaq dawn l-għanijiet, il-Gvern ħaddem politika dwar pagi u dħul li permezz tagħha jkun hawn tqassim ġust ta' dħul ta' flus. L-impjegati kollha ġew mogħtija l-istess żidiet fil-pagi skond l-għoli tal-ħajja u ż-żieda fil-produttività nazzjonali. Bl-introduzzjoni tal-paga minima nazzjonali f'Novembru ta' l-1974; bil-ħlas obbligatorju ta' bonus annwali lill-ħaddiema kollha mill-1975; bil-pagi tan-nisa fissetturi kollha li minn April ta' l-1976 saru daqs dawk tal-irġiel; u bl-għoti obbligatorju ta' żidiet ta' l-għoli tal-ħajja lill-ħaddiema fis-settur privat daqs dawk mogħtija lil impjegati fis-settur pubbliku; u bil-ħlas ta' pagi ta' kbar, minn April ta' l-1977, lill-ħaddiema li jilħqu l-età ta' 18-il sena — dawn kienu kollha miżuri li jġibu tqassim aħjar ta' dħul u ta' ġustizzja soċjali.

Il-politika dwar il-prezzijiet u l-pagi li miexi biha l-Gvern hija maħsuba wkoll biex tgħin fil-proċess fejn minn jiflaħ, igħin lill-batut u lil min jinsab fil-bżonn. Iż-żidiet regolari li jingħataw bl-għajnuniet differenti tal-istat bħal, ngħidu aħna, il-pensjonijiet tax-xjuħ, benefiċċji tas-sigurtà nazzjonali u ħlasijiet ta' l-għajnuna soċjali — jieħdu wkoll in konsiderazzjoni l-ħtieġa li niżguraw illi dawk li jieħdu dil-għajnuna jipparteċipaw u jgawdu s-sehem tagħhom mill-progress tan-nazzjon.

It-tħaddim ta' struttura progressiva ta' taxxa hija maħsuba wkoll biex tqassam ir-riżorsi b'mod aktar ġust u tnaqqas id-differenzi kbar fid-dħul ta' flus. L-introduzzjoni ta' *children's allowances* f'Novembru ta' l-1974, swiet ukoll biex familji Maltin ikunu f'pożizzjoni aħjar biex jieħdu ħsieb it-trobbija ta' wliedhom waqt li l-ħlas tas-sussidji taffa l-effett taż-żidiet fil-prezzijiet ta' oġġetti domestiċi.

Flimkien ma' dal-miżuri kien hemm ukoll skemi u programmi biex isaħħu l-infrastruttura soċjali tal-pajjiż. Saret nefqa kbira fl-investiment għal titjib fil-kondizzjonijiet ta' l-għixien skond il-progress ekonomiku waqt li għaddej il-Pjan.

Settur fejn sar investiment pubbliku fuq skala li qatt qabel ma kien hawn bħalha huwa l-programm soċjali tal-Gvern għall-bini tad-djar. Il-Gvern, li jagħraf bis-sħiħ l-effetti koroh soċjali ta' nuqqas ta' djar, ħa ħsieb ta' dan il-problema mill-bidu nett meta fassal il-pjani tiegħu għall-iżvilupp soċjali. Bħala riżultat tal-programm intensiv ta' bini ta' djar li wettaq direttament il-Gvern minn fondi pubbliċi, għadd kbir ta' djar f'diversi nħawi f'Malta u Għawdex diġà tlestew jew ma jdumux ma jitlestew. Il-Gvern ta prijorità wkoll lil proġetti għal tneħħija ta' *slums* biex b'hekk jinqerdu s-*slums* fejn issib nies jgħixu f'ambjent li xejn ma jagħmel tajjeb lil min ikun joqgħod fih.

Bħala parti mill-kampanja kontinwa biex jgħolli l-livelli tas-saħħa u minħabba t-talba li dejjem qed tikber għal servizzi fl-isptarijiet, il-Gvern beda programm vast ta' titjib fl-isptarijiet biex jilħaq l-għanijiet tal-Pjan. Dawn il-proġetti jinkludu, fost oħrajn, l-immodernizzar tas-swali ta' l-operazzjonijiet u tad-dipartiment tal-maternità fl-Isptar San Luqa li huwa l-akbar sptar ġenerali f'Malta; u l-modernizzazzjoni ta' diversi swali u servizzi fl-isptarijiet l-oħra tal-Gvern skond *standards* moderni għall-kura tal-morda. Hemm ukoll servizzi ġodda tas-saħħa li qed nipprovduhom bħalma kien tħabbar fil-Pjan. Dawn il-proġetti jinkludu l-*Intensive Therapy Unit* li ġiet inawgurata fis-Sajf ta' l-1976 u s-sezzjoni tat-tfal u s-sezzjoni tax-xjuħ li t-tnejn għadhom qed jinbnew.

Is-sistema edukattiva wkoll issaħħet sew skond l-għanijiet industrjali u soċjali tal-Pjan ta' Żvilupp. Biex il-futur ekonomiku ta' Malta jinbena fuq bażi ndustrjali b'saħħitha, infetħu għadd ta' skejjel tas-snajja' biex iħarrġu n-nies fis-snajja' li jkunu meħtieġa mis-settur ndustrjali ta' Malta li qiegħed jikber. L-espansjoni mgħaġġla tas-sistema edukattiva ta' Malta l-aktar fil-qasam tekniku tassigura li jkun hawn ħaddiema aktar produttivi li huma kapaċi jagħtu s-sehem importanti tagħhom fis-soċjetà ndustrjali ta' Malta.

Dal-aħħar kien hemm attenzjoni kbira fuq il-ħtieġa li jkun hemm kordinazzjoni aktar mill-qrib bejn iż-żewġ istituzzjonijiet ta' edukazzjoni ogħla f'Malta — il-Polytechnic u l-Università. Dawn iż-żewġ istituzzjonijiet għandhom sehem tassew importanti fl-iżvilupp ekonomiku ta' Malta billi jipprovdu n-nies tekniċi u professjonali li jkunu meħtieġa. Għalhekk, l-attivitajiet ta' daż-żewġ istituzzjonijiet jiġu eżaminati ta' sikwit sabiex in-nies li joħorġu minnhom ikunu skond il-ħtiġiet tal-Gżira. Għal din ir-raġuni ċerti korsijiet ta' studju qed jieħdu struttura differenti u jxaqilbu aktar fuq bażi prattika biex hekk dawn iż-żewġ istituzzjonijiet, waqt li jaħdmu flimkien mill-qrib, jippruvaw ukoll jistabbilixxu rabtiet akbar mill-qrib l-aktar mal-industrja u jagħtu s-sehem tagħhom posittiv lejn il-proċess tal-bidla ekonomika.

Diġà sar ħafna progress biex jintlaħqu l-għanijiet soċjali bażiċi li huma l-qofol tal-Pjan ta' Żvilupp. F'Malta ħloqna kommunità ħanina mogħnija b'sens ta' ġustizzja soċjali u n-nazzjon kollu issa jifhem sewwa r-rabta soda li jġibu magħhom l-armonija soċjali u l-istabbilità. Barra minn hekk, il-fatt illi l-Gvern qiegħed jaġixxi b'mod posittiv u bil-ħeffa għall-ħtiġiet soċjali tal-kommunità permezz tal-bini ta' djar, u permezz ta' programmi li għandhom x'jaqsmu mas-saħħa u mal-edukazzjoni, juri biċ-ċar l-impenn sod biex f'Malta ssir *welfare state* ċkejken iżda modern, li jagħraf sewwa r-responsabbilitajiet li għandu quddiemu biex jissodisfa l-valuri u l-ħtiġiet bażiċi ta' kull individwu.

III. GĦANIJIET EKONOMIĊI ĠENERALI

L-għan ewlieni ta' l-iżvilupp jibqa' l-kisba ta' indipendenza ekonomika sħiħa sa l-1979 l-aktar permezz ta' espansjoni fl-esportazzjoni. Biex niksbu qagħda ekonomika vijabbli u nżommu progress kontinwu li jibqa' jsostni l-pajjiż neħtieġu rata ta' żieda fil-produzzjoni u fil-qliegħ ta' flus li:

(a) tagħmel tajjeb għall-qliegħ u għall-impiegi li jiġu mis-servizzi militari li jagħti l-pajjiż;

(b) tagħmel l-aqwa użu minn riżorsi umani li hawn fil-pajjiż;

(ċ) tippermetti tqassim ġust tad-dħul u titjib kontinwu fil-livell tal-għixien tal-komunità Maltija kollha;

(d) tiġġenera qliegħ biżżejjed ta' flus minn barra biex jagħmel tajjeb għall-ħtiġiet ta' mportazzjoni bla ma jbati l-bilanċ tal-pagamenti;

(e) tagħmel possibbli livell suffiċjenti ta' tfaddil biex ilaħħaq mal-ħtiġiet ta' investiment sabiex tiġi żgurata espansjoni ekonomika b'saħħitha u bilanċjata; u

(f) tipprovdi dħul biżżejjed ta' flus mill-Gvern biex jiffinanzja n-nefqa mis-settur pubbliku.

POPOLAZZJONI U NIES LI JAĦDMU

Qabel l-1975 l-emigrazzjoni kienet fattur ewlieni f'dak li hu t-tibdil fil-popolazzjoni Maltija. Fl-1975, għall-ewwel darba fl-istorja, l-għadd ta' ċittadini Maltin li ġew lura minn barra kien akbar mill-għadd ta' nies li emigraw bir-riżultat li kien hemm żieda netta fil-popolazzjoni. Fit-tbassir ġdid li qed isir dwar il-popolazzjoni, wieħed qed jaħseb illi fis-snin li ġejjin l-emigrazzjoni netta tkun spiċċat għal kollox. Il-popolazzjoni Maltija għalhekk proġettata fuq din il-bażi hija stmata li ser tiżdied b'madwar 3,700 ruħ fis-sena matul il-perijodu bejn l-1976 u l-1981.

PROJECTIONS TAL-POPOLAZZJONI MALTIJA *

Tabella III.1

	1976	1979	Tibdil 1976/79	1981	Tibdil 1979/81
Irġiel	147,000	153,000	+ 6,000	156,800	+3,800
Nisa	158,000	163,200	+ 5,200	166,600	+3,400
TOTAL	305,000	316,200	+11,200	323,400	+7,200

* Ir-rata ta' mwiet u r-rata ta' twelid huma bażati fuq il-medji tas-snin bejn l-1974 u l-1976.

Ħaddiema Disponibbli

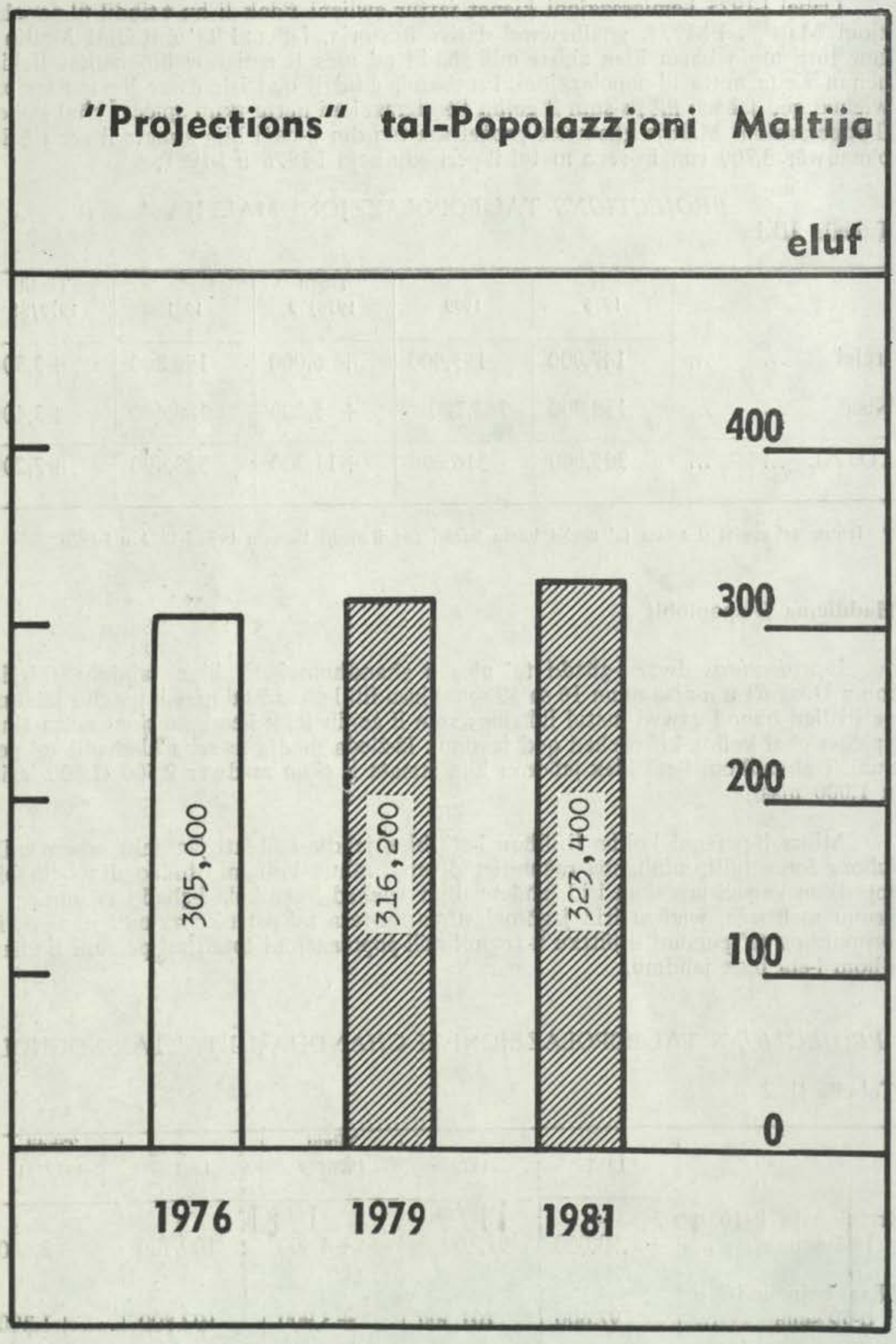
Il-*projections* dwar l-għadd ta' nies li għandhom l-età biex jaħdmu (l-irġiel minn 16 sa 64 u n-nisa minn 16 sa 59 sena) juru illi l-għadd ta' nies li jistgħu jaħdmu se jiżdied b'mod qawwi matul il-ħames snin li ġejjin jekk l-emigrazzjoni netta tkun spiċċat għal kollox kif wieħed qed jassumi. Iż-żieda medja fis-sena fil-għadd ta' persuni li għandhom l-età biex jaħdmu hija stmata li tkun madwar 2,500 (1,500 irġiel u 1,000 nisa).

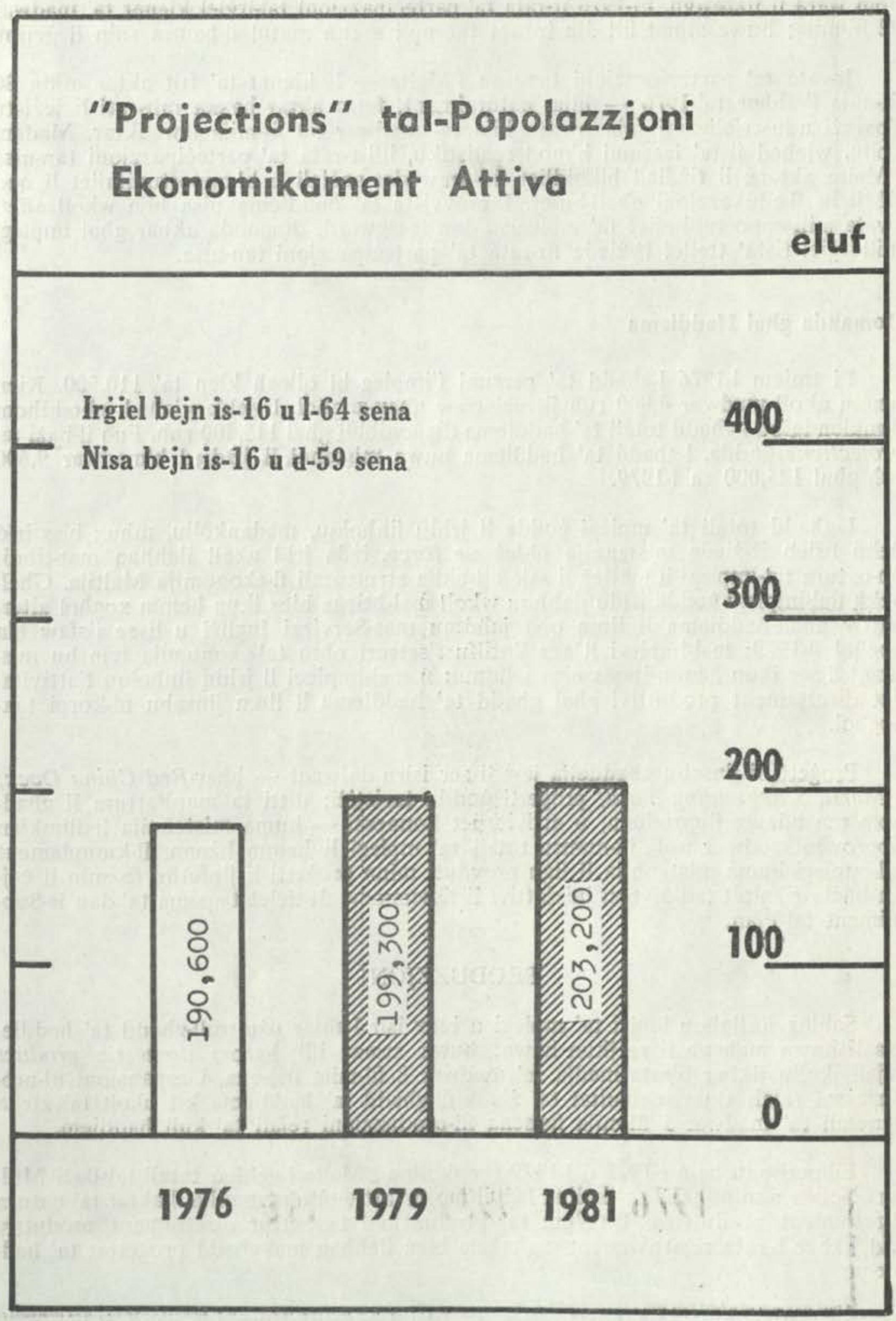
Mhux il-persuni kollha li jilħqu l-età biex jaħdmu fil-fatt jagħmlu sehem mill-*labour force* billi, minħabba raġunijiet diversi, mhux kull min jilħaq din l-età bil-fors ikun kapaċi jew ikun irid jaħdem. Biex wieħed jikkalkola l-għadd ta' mpiegi li jkunu meħtieġa, wieħed irid jagħmel stima tar-rata ta' parteċipazzjoni, jiġifieri, il-proporzjon ta' persuni li jfittxu x-xogħol mill-popolazzjoni totali ta' persuni li għandhom l-età biex jaħdmu.

PROJECTIONS TAL-POPOLAZZJONI LI GHANDHA L-ETA' TAX-XOGHOL

Tabella III.2

	1976	1979	Tibdil 1976/79	1981	Tibdil 1979/81
Irġiel bejn is-16 u l-64 sena ...	93,000	97,800	+4,800	100,400	+2,600
Nisa bejn is-16 u d-59 sena ...	97,600	101,500	+3,900	102,800	+1,300
TOTAL	190,600	199,300	+8,700	203,200	+3,900


"Projections" tal-Popolazzjoni Maltija
eluf
400
300
200
100
0
305,000
316,200
323,400
1976
1979
1981


"Projections" tal-Popolazzjoni
Ekonomikament Attiva
eluf
Irgiel bejn is-16 u l-64 sena
Nisa bejn is-16 u d-59 sena
400
300
200
100
0
190,600
199,300
203,200
1976
1979
1981

Jeżistu rati differenti ta' parteċipazzjoni kemm għall-irġiel kif ukoll għan-nisa; waħda mir-raġunijiet prinċipali hija illi l-biċċa l-kbira tan-nisa jħallu l-impieg tagħhom wara li jiżżewġu. Fl-1976 ir-rata ta' parteċipazzjoni tal-irġiel kienet ta' madwar 92 fil-mija; huwa stmat illi din ir-rata tkompli sseħħ matul il-ħames snin li ġejjin.

Ir-rata ta' parteċipazzjoni tan-nisa f'Malta — li kienet ta' ftit aktar minn 30 fil-mija fl-aħħar tal-1976 — hija, naturalment, ferm aktar baxxa mir-rati li jeżistu f'pajjiżi ndustrjalizzati fejn ir-rata hija ta' madwar 50 fil-mija jew aktar. Madankollu, wieħed jista' jassumi b'mod realistiku, illi r-rata ta' parteċipazzjoni tan-nisa f'Malta aktarx li tiżdied bil-bidliet fid-drawwiet soċjali u bl-opportunitajiet li qed jiżdiedu fl-edukazzjoni għall-bniet. Il-provvista ta' ħaddiema nisa hija wkoll affettwata mill-opportunitajiet ta' mpiegi; f'dan ir-rigward, domanda akbar għal impiegi mill-irġiel tista' ttellef iż-żieda fir-rata ta' parteċipazzjoni tan-nisa.

Domanda għal Ħaddiema

Fi tmiem l-1976 l-għadd ta' persuni f'impieg bi qliegħ kien ta' 110,500. Kien hemm ukoll madwar 4,900 ruħ jirreġistraw għax-xogħol, li jekk wieħed jgħoddhom flimkien iġibu l-għadd totali ta' ħaddiema disponibbli għal 115,400 ruħ. Fuq il-bażi ta' *projections* ġodda, l-għadd ta' ħaddiema huwa mistenni li jiżdied b'madwar 9,600 ruħ għal 125,000 sa l-1979.

L-għadd totali ta' mpiegi ġodda li jridu jinħolqu, madankollu, mhux biss irid jieħu ħsieb iż-żieda mistennija fil-*labour force*, iżda jrid ukoll ilaħħaq mat-tibdil fin-natura tal-impiegi li jeħtieġ li ssir bil-bidla strutturali fl-ekonomija Maltija. Għal-hekk dal-impiegi ġodda jridu jlaħħqu wkoll mal-ħtieġa biex ikun hemm xogħol alternattiv għall-ħaddiema li llum qed jaħdmu mas-Servizzi Ingliżi u li se jisfaw bla xogħol fl-1979; mal-impiegi li ser jintilfu f'setturi oħra tal-ekonomija fejn hu mistenni li ser ikun hemm inqas nies jaħdmu; u mal-impiegi li jridu jinħolqu f'attivitajiet direttament produttivi għal għadd ta' ħaddiema li llum jinsabu fil-korpi tax-xogħol.

Proġetti li jinsabu għaddejja jew li ser isiru dalwaqt — bħar-*Red China Dock;* il-*Marsa Shipbuilding Yard;* proġetti ġodda turistiċi; ditti tal-manifattura li għadhom ma bdewx jipproduċu; u attivitajiet konnessi — huma mistennija li flimkien jipprovdu madwar nofs in-numru totali ta' mpiegi li hemm bżonn. Il-kumplament tal-impiegi huma mistennija li jiġu provduti minn proġetti li jinfetħu fis-snin li ġejjin bħala riżultat tad-diversi inizjattivi li jissemmew fit-tielet taqsima ta' dan is-Suppliment tal-Pjan.

PRODUZZJONI

Sabiex jintlaħqu l-miri ta' mpiegi u biex isir l-aħjar użu mill-għadd ta' ħaddiema li huwa maħsub li se jkun hawn, huwa stmat illi l-*gross domestic product* rejali jkollu jikber b'rata medja ta' madwar 8 fil-mija fis-sena. L-espansjoni fil-produzzjoni rejali tkun ir-riżultat ta' żieda fil-għadd ta' ħaddiema kif ukoll ta' żieda ġenerali ta' madwar 5 fil-mija fis-sena fil-produzzjoni rejali ta' kull ħaddiem.

Fil-perijodu bejn l-1977 u l-1979 ser ikollna f'Malta l-egħluq totali tal-Bażi Militari Ngliża u minflokha se jkollna l-iżvilupp ta' attività ekonomika, l-aktar ta' natura direttament produttiva. Il-volum ta' produzzjoni tas-settur direttament produttiv irid jikber b'rata relattivament mgħaġġla biex ilaħħaq mal-għadd proġettat ta' ħaddiema.

Fis-settur direttament produttiv, id-ditti tal-manifattura kif ukoll it-tiswija u l-bini tal-vapuri, ikollhom iżidu b'mod sostanzjali l-kontribut tagħhom għall-*gross domestic output* u jżidu l-proporzjon ta' produzzjoni għall-esportazzjoni. Servizzi

ta' bejgħ li jinkludu t-turiżmu, servizzi personali, xogħol bankarju u s-settur distributtiv, huma mistennija wkoll li jżidu l-kontribut tagħhom fil-*gross domestic product* biex ilaħħqu maż-żieda fl-attivitajiet direttament produttivi, anke jekk forsi b'rata inqas mgħaġġla.

Hawnhekk it-turiżmu jibqa' bħala wieħed mis-setturi ewlenin tal-iżvilupp fis-snin li ġejjin u jibqa' jkollu sehem importanti ħafna sew għal dak li hu qliegħ ta' flus minn barra l-pajjiż kif ukoll għal dak li għandu x'jaqsam mal-impjiegi. Dak li għaddiet minnu l-industrja tat-turiżmu fil-gżejjer Maltin f'dal-aħħar snin juri li rnexxielna nibnu fama bħala post tajjeb għall-vaganzi fost oqsma internazzjonali li għandhom x'jaqsmu mal-ivvjaġġar.

Madankollu, għalkemm li nħajjru aktar turisti jiġu Malta jibqa' dejjem wieħed mill-għanijiet ewlenin tal-politika tal-iżvilupp tal-industrja tat-turiżmu, dejjem fil-limiti mposti miċ-ċokon ta' Malta u minn diffikultajiet oħra soċjali, jenħtieġ li tingħata attenzjoni akbar għal livelli ogħla u għal servizz aktar effiċjenti fl-industrja tat-turiżmu. Fost l-għanijiet prinċipali l-oħra hemm ukoll tqassim aħjar fil-wasla ta' turisti li jiġu Malta matul is-sena u t-tfittix ta' turisti minn postijiet ġodda permezz ta' reklamar effettiv u komunikazzjonijiet aħjar bejn Malta u pajjiżi oħra.

Huwa wkoll ta' mportanza kbira l-fatt li l-Gżejjer Maltin jibqgħu jżommu l-pożizzjoni kompetittiva li għandhom meta tqabilhom ma' ċentri oħra ta' turiżmu fil-Mediterran: waqt li l-għadd ta' faċilitajiet għall-akkomodazzjoni tat-turisti jenħtieġ li nżommuh dejjem quddiem għajnejna. Hawnhekk, attenzjoni xierqa qiegħda tingħata għall-konverżjoni ta' proprjetà mħollija mis-Servizzi Ngliżi li tista' tiġi wżata għal dan l-iskop.

INVESTIMENT

Sabiex tintlaħaq l-espansjoni proġettata fil-produzzjoni domestika, tinħtieġ nefqa relattivament kbira f'investiment. B'investiment hawnhekk wieħed jifhem kemm ix-xiri ta' tagħmir kapitali għal produzzjoni diretta kif ukoll in-nefqa sabiex jitwettqu proġetti ta' infrastruttura. Rigward il-programm ta' infrastruttura li jidher fil-Pjan ta' Seba' Snin, għadd ta' proġetti fis-settur pubbliku jew diġà tlestew għal kollox u saret ġa n-nefqa meħtieġa jew inkella waslu biex jitlestew. Il-proġetti li mistennija jitlestew qabel l-1979 jinkludu l-iżvilupp ta' l-ajruport u tal-Port il-Kbir, telekomunikazzjonijiet interni u ma' barra, l-espansjoni tas-sistema li tiġġenera l-elettriku, l-estensjoni tas-sistema tad-drenaġġ, l-immodernizzar ta' l-isptarijiet u l-bini ta' djar.

Proġetti direttament produttivi li jinsabu għaddejjin jinkludu l-iżvilupp tat-Tarzna, il-*Marsa Shipbuilding Yard,* il-programm tal-bini ta' fabbriki, il-proġetti tal-biedja u tas-sajd u l-immodernizzar ta' l-impjant għall-pasturizzazzjoni tal-ħalib. Proġetti oħra maħsuba biex jitwettqu matul is-snin li ġejjin jinkludu l-iżvilupp ta' Marsaxlokk biex ikun jista' jipprovdi faċilitajiet moderni speċjalment għat-trasbord; u r-*recycling* ta' skart solidu u likwidu biex ikollna metodu mingħajr periklu ta' kif wieħed jiddisponi minnu waqt li fl-istess ħin ikollna kompost biex insaħħu l-ħamrija u nirreklamaw l-art u jkollna ilma tat-tisqija għall-agrikoltura. L-istadju li jkun imiss f'dan il-proġett li bħalissa qiegħed jiġi studjat, ikun kif wieħed għandu jnaddaf dan l-ilma biex jagħmlu tajjeb ħalli jerġa' jinxteħet fl-*aquifer*. Dan kollu jsir flimkien mal-proġetti l-oħra li diġà qegħdin jitħaddmu biex jiżdiedu r-riżorsi ta' l-ilma permezz ta' l-iskemi ta' *boreholes* u lqugħ biex jinġabar l-ilma tax-xita.

Minbarra l-ispiża kapitali mill-Gvern fuq dawn il-proġetti kbar mis-settur pubbliku u oħrajn ta' mportanza relattivament anqas, ikun jinħtieġ ukoll aktar kapital għal investiment f'attivitajiet direttament produttivi bħall-manifattura u intrapriżi oħra li l-Gvern se jidħol għalihom jew waħdu jew fuq bażi ta' sħubija ma' intra-

prendituri lokali u barranin: b'hekk jiżdiedu l-isforzi ta' dawn l-aħħar ftit snin biex f'Malta jkun hawn ekonomija mista.

Biex jiffinanzja din l-ispiża kapitali relattivament kbira, il-Gvern se jkompli jiddependi fuq il-vitalità tal-ekonomija lokali biex tiġġenera qliegħ biżżejjed ta' flus minn sorsi nterni u fuq il-qliegħ minn investimenti barra l-pajjiż. Ma' dal-flus il-Gvern għandu wkoll għad-disposizzjoni tiegħu faċilitajiet mill-aktar favorevoli għal self ta' flus sew mill-Komunità Ekonomika Ewropea, kif ukoll miċ-Ċina, il-Ġermanja tal-Punent, l-Arabja Sawdija u pajjiżi oħra ħbieb.

Tabilħaqq, l-isforzi kbar tal-Gvern biex jakkwista riżorsi oħra finanzjarji għal skopijiet ta' investiment dal-aħħar kellhom riżultati mill-aktar sodisfaċenti. Huwa l-ħsieb tal-Gvern li jkompli jipprova jġib aktar flus bħal dawn fis-snin li ġejjin peress li self ta' flus b'rati favorevoli minn Gvernijiet jew organizzazzjonijiet barranin, meta jiġi wżat biex jiffinanzja proġetti mportanti ta' żvilupp, huwa ta' benefiċċju kbir għall-ekonomija ta' Malta.

Is-*Saudi Fund Development*, per eżempju, diġà qabel li jagħti self ta' ħmistax-il miljun dollaru b'imgħax baxx għall-iżvilupp ta' Marsaxlokk. L-Arabja Sawdija se tħajjar pajjiżi oħra Għarab biex jipprovdu aktar flus għal dal-proġett.

Il-*Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development* qabel ukoll li jikkonsidra li jagħti lil Malta self b'rati favorevoli għall-proġett li permezz tiegħu l-iskart solidu u likwidu jerġa' jiġi wżat. It-tħejjija dettaljata tal-proġett dalwaqt tingħata lil waħda fost grupp ta' ditti ta' konsulenti. L-aktar li se jibbenefika se jkun il-proġett koperativ ta' 'Iżra' u Rabbi' li ġie mwiegħed ukoll aktar għajnuna teknika minn barra l-pajjiż.

Il-*Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development* qabel ukoll li jgħin fl-iffinanzjar tal-proġett għas-sajd fuq il-bażi tar-rapporti dwar il-*feasibility* u l-preparazzjoni ta' dan il-proġett li tħejjew mill-FAO. Il-ħsieb ewlieni huwa li titwaqqaf flotta moderna tas-sajd komposta minn għadd ta' *trawlers* ta' qawwa medja li jistgħu jistadu fuq bażi kummerċjali f'irqajja' tas-sajd li għadhom mhux jinħadmu u li huma ftit jew wisq produttivi: dawn il-postijiet tajbin għas-sajd sabhom il-vapur ta' riċerka "Jurong" li matul l-1976/77 kien ingħata lil Malta mill-FAO/UNDP. Hemm il-ħsieb li għadd ta' *trawlers* minn din il-flotta tas-sajd jinbnew fit-Tarzna ta' Malta għalkemm sabiex il-proġett ikun jista' jibda fl-ewwel nofs tas-sena 1978 huwa maħsub li jridu jsiru arranġamenti oħra fosthom il-kiri ta' xi vapuri.

KUMMERĊ BARRANI U PAGAMENTI

Matul dan il-perijodu ta' espansjoni ekonomika mgħaġġla se jkun hemm ħtieġa akbar għall-importazzjoni ta' kull xorta ta' prodotti u l-aktar ta' tagħmir kapitali u ta' materja prima meħtieġa jekk irridu nilħqu l-volum ta' produzzjoni ndustrjali li hemm maħsub.

Għaldaqstant wieħed irid joqgħod attent għad-domanda għal oġġetti ta' konsum u se jsir kull sforz matul dan iż-żmien biex kemm jista' intaffu ż-żieda fl-importazzjoni ta' oġġetti għall-konsum u l-iżjed ta' oġġetti li wieħed xorta jgħaddi mingħajrhom.

Biex nevitaw id-diffikultajiet fil-bilanċ tal-pagamenti jenħtieġ li nrażżnu ż-żieda fl-importazzjoni ta' oġġetti u servizzi għal rata relattivament aktar baxxa miż-żieda li nixtiequ li jkun hemm fil-qliegħ mill-esportazzjoni ta' oġġetti u servizzi. Dan hu neċessarju biex inżommu baxx kemm jista' jkun l-isbilanċ tradizzjonali minn transazzjonijiet ta' oġġetti u servizzi biex hekk inkunu nistgħu nagħmlu tajjeb għalih permezz ta' trasferimenti ta' flus fuq kont kurrenti u kapitali mingħajr ma jkollna għalfejn induru fuq ir-riżervi. Il-bilanċ tal-pagamenti, naturalment, ikun jiddependi ħafna miż-żieda fil-prezzijiet barra minn Malta u minn tibdil fit-termini tal-kummerċ.

IV — OPPORTUNITAJIET ĠODDA GĦALL-IŻVILUPP

Il-Gvern Laburista ħadem bla serħan minn kemm ilu fil-Gvern mill-1971 biex jagħti dimensjoni ġdida lill-ħajja Maltija. Bħala riżultat tal-ħidma tiegħu, issa kisbet saħħa sewwa u rabbiet għeruq ħoxnin fost il-Maltin x-xewqa li nagħmlu Malta bħala ċ-ċentru fil-Mediterran, ħielsa minn kull irbit mis-super-potenzi iżda marbuta bis-sħiħ mal-kawża ta' xogħol iebes u paċi.

Flimkien mal-isforzi ta' Malta biex tgħix ħajja ġdida kien hemm ukoll sforzi kbar biex inwettqu b'mod prattiku dawn il-proposti ħalli jagħtu kontribut siewi lill-ekonomija ta' Malta u ħalli jkun hawn ftehim reġjonali akbar. Fi żmien meta n-nazzjon għandu quddiemu l-aktar biċċa xogħol iebsa fi żmien il-paċi, il-Gvern Laburista dejjem ħeġġeġ lill-pajjiż biex jgħin lilu nnifsu u biex jikkonsidra bħala prinċipju ewlieni li x-xogħol għandu jkun il-pedament li fuqu għandna nibnu l-isforzi tagħna fis-snin li ġejjin. Dawn il-prinċipji se jidhru dejjem aktar fis-snin li ġejjin hekk kif in-nazzjon jintefa' b'ħerqa biex iwettaq l-għanijiet li huma magħrufa sew u li jridu jsiru bi tħejjija għal bidu tal-ħajja ġdida ta' Malta f'April 1979, u fis-snin li jiġu wara.

Minn mindu l-elettorat Malti ġedded il-mandat tiegħu f'Settembru ta' l-1976, il-Gvern Laburista saħħaħ kemm felaħ it-tħejjija tal-pjani tiegħu biex ikun jista' jwettaq ix-xogħlijiet kbar li għandu quddiemu. Ix-xogħol fuq proġetti kbar ta' żvilupp qabad rittmu aktar mgħaġġel. L-isforzi biex inġibu lejn il-pajjiż investimenti barranin qed isiru b'ħerqa akbar, u dalwaqt jibda x-xogħol fuq żewġ oqsma ndustrjali ġodda fir-Rikażli u Ħal-Far biex ikollna fabbriki biżżejjed.

Fl-istess ħin, il-Gvern qed jaħdem bis-sħiħ fuq proġetti u skemi oħra li jistgħu jagħtu kontribut siewi għall-iżvilupp ta' Malta. Dawn l-inizjattivi kollha qegħdin isiru flimkien ma' miżuri oħra biex inkabbru l-produttività nazzjonali u biex inneħħu d-drawwiet ta' ħela li writna mill-imgħoddi u li ma għandhomx aktar post f'kommunità moderna, li hi lesta taħdem bis-sħiħ biex tilħaq l-għanijiet li għandha quddiemha.

MANIFATTURA

Il-Gvern baqa' jżomm sod ma' dak li kien intqal fil-Pjan ta' Żvilupp dwar is-sehem importanti tal-industrja tal-manifattura u xorta għadu jqis il-produzzjoni ndustrjali bħala settur l-iżjed importanti fl-iżvilupp ta' Malta. Il-Gvern għalhekk ġa żied sew l-isforzi tiegħu biex iħajjar kemm jiflaħ u jgħin it-twaqqif ta' ditti tal-manifattura f'Malta.

Għalhekk qed isiru sforzi kbar biex inħajjru l-investiment minn bosta pajjiżi fl-Ewropa, il-kontinent Amerikan u l-Asja. Il-Gvern għandu fehma soda li dawn l-isforzi jirnexxu u qiegħed ifittex għajnuna minn barra biex inwaqqfu fuq linji professjonali moderni grupp effiċjenti ta' nies Maltin mħarrġin fit-tħajjir tal-investimenti u f'affarijiet oħra li għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' dax-xogħol. Ix-xogħol ewlieni ta' dan il-grupp ikun li jagħmel minn kollox biex ifittex, iwaqqaf u jżomm kuntatt ma' investituri statali u privati barranin li jistgħu jinvestu f'pajjiżna u li jirreklama lil Malta bħala post li joffri potenzjal kbir għall-iżvilupp industrjali u li għandu tamiet kbar għall-ġejjieni. Huwa maħsub illi jekk noħolqu din id-dehra ġdida, il-proċess biex nagħmlu Malta post industrjali jkollu warajh dik ix-xorta ta' investiment illi fuqu jiddependi bis-sħiħ il-ġejjieni ekonomiku tagħna.

Għaldaqstant issa qed inħossu illi f'dan il-waqt il-banek kummerċjali lokali u l-*Investment Finance Bank* għandhom jieħdu sehem akbar fl-isforzi biex inħajjru investimenti barranin f'Malta. Dawn l-istituzzjonijiet, bil-kuntatti li għandhom barra minn Malta, bir-riżorsi u l-esperjenza tagħhom, għandhom issa jipparteċipaw aktar direttament billi jsibu lil min jista' jissieħeb ma' Malta fl-iżvilupp ekonomiku tagħna, u flimkien mal-*Malta Development Corporation* iħajjru il-parteċipazzjoni ta' kapital statali u privat minn barra biex inżommu ir-ritmu ta' espansjoni ndustrjali.

Ir-riżultati inkoraġġanti li ksibna dan l-aħħar fl-isforzi tagħna biex inħajjru kumpaniji sodi Ingliżi jinvestu f'Malta wrewna illi wkoll fi żmien meta *entrepreneurs* f'pajjiżi ndustrjalizzati jaħsbuha darbtejn biex jieħdu deċiżjonijiet dwar l-investimenti, Malta għadha xorta waħda tista' toffri vantaġġi kbar bħala post industrjali lil kull min jitħajjar jinvesti — vantaġġi li jegħilbu kull konsiderazzjoni oħra. Għalhekk Malta tista' toffri ħaddiema dixxiplinati ħafna u kapaċi, spejjeż ta' produzzjoni relattivament baxxi, stabilità politika u ndustrjali u aċċess għal swieq Ewropej u Għarab. Barra minn dan kollu, Malta tista' ukoll toffri lil ditti li mhumiex fil-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja il-possibilità li jdaħħlu l-prodotti tagħhom mingħajr dazju f'pajjiżi tas-Suq Komuni.

Dawn il-vantaġġi jkomplu jiżdiedu bil-fatt illi bis-sistema ta' sħubija li l-Gvern Malti dejjem iħajjar, teknoloġija ndustrjali avvanzata, ġejja l-aktar minn pajjiżi żviluppati tal-Punent, tista' faċilment tingħaqad f'Malta mar-riżorsi finanzjarji minn pajjiżi Għarab u b'hekk din is-sħubija tiżgura ruħha mill-aċċess għas-swieq Għarab li għadhom relattivament mhux miftiefsa. Jekk jirnexxielna nġibu dawn iż-żewġ partijiet flimkien biex iwaqqfu proċessi ndustrjali f'Malta, dawn l-inizjattivi bi sħab mhux biss joħolqu opportunitajiet ta' mpieg produttiv għall-ħaddiema Maltin iżda jgħinu ukoll biex inqiegħdu s-settur industrjali ta' Malta fuq bażi soda li jagħti kontribuzzjoni siewi lill-iżvilupp ekonomiku ta' Malta.

Flimkien ma' dan, wieħed irid iżomm ukoll quddiem għajnejh is-sehem li missennija jagħtu l-intrapriżi li bħalissa qegħdin taħt idejn il-poplu permezz tal-Gvern. L-enfasi l-iżjed qawwi se jkun fuq il-ħtieġa li dawn itejjbu l-attivitajiet tagħhom waqt li jsaħħu l-organizzazzjoni tagħhom biex hekk ikunu jistgħu jagħtu sehem aktar siewi fl-iżvilupp industrjali tal-pajjiż. Fis-snin li ġejjin ser nibqgħu nħabbtu wiċċna ma' problemi ta' organizzazzjoni teknika u ta' idejat soċjali ġodda. Għaldaqstant, waħda mill-ewwel affarijiet li jenħtieġ issir hi l-iżvilupp ta' esperjenza lokali fil-qasam tal-"Management", b'mod li wieħed ikun jista' jieħu passi liberi ħalli jintlaħqu l-għanijiet ta' produzzjoni u ta' bejgħ.

Fl-istess ħin, minħabba parteċipazzjoni li qiegħda dejjem tikber mill-ħaddiema waqt li jittieħdu d-deċiżjonijiet fuq il-post tax-xogħol, se jkun hemm il-ħtieġa ta' metodi ġodda u fl-istess ħin flessibbli għal dik li hija tmexxija ta' dal-postijiet. M'għandniex xi ngħidu, il-pajjiż ikun irid ipatti ta' dan kollu għax sakemm wieħed jitgħallem, jenħtieġ li l-pajjiż iħallas. Dan il-ħlas però huwa fih innifsu parti mill-proċess ta' tagħlim u ta' esperjenzi ġodda li minnu tinsab għaddejja f'das-snin l-ekonomija lokali. L-għan ta' dawn l-intrapriżi ndustrjali fl-aħħar mill-aħħar hu t-tmexxija mill-ħaddiema nnifishom li jsiru s-sidien ta' dal-postijiet. Iżda jkun żball jekk wieħed jistenna li l-ħaddiema weħedhom ser jerfgħu fuq spallejhom il-piż kollu tat-tmexxija ta' dawn l-industrji qabel ma dawn ikunu qamu fuq saqajhom sew.

Intrapriżi bi sħab

Il-fatti illi Malta qed tiġbed lejn ix-xtut tagħha l-investimenti ta' flus Għarab f'intrapriżi produttivi fuq bażi ta' sħubija bejn kapital lokali u nvestiment barrani huwa sinjal ċar tal-fiduċja qawwija li hawn fl-iżvilupp ekonomiku li jista' jkun hawn f'pajjiżna. Fis-snin li ġejjin se jsiru aktar sforzi biex inħajjru u nkabbru l-investiment ta' kapital Għarbi fl-ekonomija Maltija u biex inżidu u nifirxu aktar is-sehem Għarbi fis-settur tal-manifattura lokali.

Kien b'dan l-għan illi f'Ottubru tal-1975 il-Gvern Malti u l-Gvern Libjan laħqu ftehim dwar it-twaqqif tal-*Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited* biex tiżviluppa u twaqqaf proġetti ndustrjali, kummerċjali, finanzjarji u tas-sajd u attivitajiet oħra li għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' dawn u permezz ta' hekk jimxi aktar 'il quddiem il-proċess ta' industrjalizzazzjoni fiż-żewġ pajjiżi b'mod kumplimentari. Il-kapital oriġinali tal-*Holding Company* li kien ta' £M2 miljuni aktar tard żdied b'£M6.4 miljuni f'Lulju tal-1976.

L-attivitajiet tal-*Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited* kienu sa issa nkoraġġanti ferm u mir-riżultati li diġà nkisbu jidher li hemm il-possibilità li jiżdiedu l-kuntatti ndustrjali u proġetti ta' investiment bi sħab bejn iż-żewġ pajjiżi. F'Awissu tal-1976 il-*Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited* għamlet l-ewwel deċiżjoni mportanti meta ħadet ħamsin fil-mija mill-ishma tal-*Malta Shipbuilding Company Ltd* li qed tieħu ħsieb il-bini u t-tmexxija tat-tarzna l-ġdida għall-bini tal-vapuri fil-Marsa.

Il-*Holding Company* ħadet it-tieni pass kbir tagħha f'Marzu tal-1977 meta flimkien mal-kumpannija ġganteska Brażiljana, *Madebras*, twaqqfet il-*Marlibras International Trading Company Limited* b'kapital awtorizzat ta' żewġ miljun lira Maltin. Skond il-ftehim milħuq ma' Madebras, Malta ser tintuża bħala ċentru biex timporta, taħżen, tnixxef u tqassam injam Brażiljan lejn swieq fl-Ewropa, fil-Lvant Nofsani u fl-Afrika (għalissa minbarra l-Alġerija, Spanja u l-Iraq). *Marlibras International Trading Company Limited*, madankollu, mhux ser tieħu ħsieb biss li timporta, tipproċessa u terġa' tesporta l-injam. Skond il-ftehim ser jitwaqqfu wkoll diversi kumpanniji sussidjarji biex jimmanifatturaw prodotti ta' l-injam, inklużi panewijiet, forom, bibien u twieqi, mankijiet għall-għodod ta' l-idejn, u għamara domestika u ndustrjali.

Dan hu t-tip ta' proġett bi sħab li s-settur ndustrjali ta' Malta jeħtieġ — ftehim ma' interessi qawwija barranin li permezz tiegħu esperjenza teknika minn barra tingħaqad ma' prospetti tajba ta' bejgħ fi swieq barra fuq il-bażi ta' sħubija bejn kapital lokali u barrani. F'perijodu relattivament qasir minn mindu twaqqet, il-*Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited* diġà stabbiliet ruħha bħala organizzazzjoni dinamika u l-ħin kollu qed tfittex diversi oqsma ġodda ta' żvilupp bejn iż-żewġ naħat. Il-*Holding Company* qegħda wkoll tistudja bir-reqqa, fost proġetti oħra, it-twaqqif ta' raffinerija taz-zokkor f'Malta li tkun tista' tlaħħaq mal-ħtiġiet ta' Malta u tal-Libja u tkun tista' wkoll tesporta lejn pajjiżi oħra.

Il-ftehim bilaterali ta' koperazzjoni ekonomika u teknika li saru ma' bosta pajjiżi fosthom il-Jugoslavja, il-Pakistan, Spanja, u pajjiżi ħbieb oħra, għandhom igħinu biex inwaqqfu rabtiet ekonomiċi aħjar ma' dawn il-pajjiżi u fost oħrajn il-possibilità li nwaqqfu proġetti bi sħab permezz ta' investimenti ma' organizzazzjonijiet privati u/jew pubbliċi. Dawn ir-relazzjonijiet ġodda jistgħu jagħtu sehem siewi fl-iżvilupp ndustrjali ta' Malta billi b'hekk nistgħu nwaqqfu kuntatti u nagħrfu aħjar il-kwalità ta' prodotti li jistgħu jkunu ta' nteress għaż-żewġ naħat kemm f'dik li hi produzzjoni kif ukoll għall-bejgħ.

Żvilupp ta' Ndustrji tal-Metall

Fost il-varjeta' ta' proċessi ndustrjali li jidhru li joffru potenzjal kbir ħafna għall-investiment f'Malta, l-industrji tal-metall u s-settur ta' l-inġinerija ndustrjali b'mod partikolari, joffru vantaġġi konsiderevoli. Malta minn żmien twil kellha ħaddiema bi snajja' ta' l-inġinerija minħabba li għal ħafna snin kellna x'naqsmu ħafna mattiswija tal-vapuri u għaldaqstant għandna ħafna ħaddiema tas-sengħa li dan is-settur ta' l-industrja jkun jeħtieġ. Minbarra dan, snajja' aktar avvanzati u aktar sofistikati jistgħu jiżdiedu u jiġu żviluppati fi żmien qasir.

Il-prodotti tal-inġinerija jħaddmu għadd relattivament kbir ta' nies u għandhom kontenut qawwi ta' żieda lokali fil-valur. Għalhekk l-iżvilupp ta' l-industrji tal-metall għandu prijorità billi dan ukoll fl-aħħar mill-aħħar igħin biex is-settur tal-manifattura f'Malta niddiversifikawh u ma jibqax marbut iż-żejjed fuq it-tessuti u l-manifattura ta' ħwejjeġ li kif jaf kulħadd ibatu ħafna minn kondizzjonijiet ta' bejgħ fi swieq internazzjonali li xejn ma huma sodi u li jbatu sew minn ċaqliq ta' sikwit. Ta' min jgħid hawnhekk li fl-1976 dal-prodotti bejniethom kienu jlaħħqu għal madwar 38 fil-mija tal-produzzjoni totali ta' l-industrja tal-manifattura f'Malta.

Għaldaqstant ma għandna nitilfu l-ebda opportunità biex inwaqqfu f'Malta dawn l-attivitajiet ndustrjali u ndustrjalisti li jitħajjru jwaqqfu dawn l-industrji f'Malta — minbarra li hemm ġa diversi attrazzjonijiet x'iħajjruhom — għandhom ukoll jitħajjru bid-deċiżjoni tal-Gvern biex inwaqqfu fonderija ċentrali biex taqdi l-ħtiġiet lokali. B'kollaborazzjoni sħiħa mal-UNIDO il-Gvern qed jikkunsidra li jwaqqaf ukoll il-*Metal Industries Development Centre*. Malli jitwaqqaf dan iċ-ċentru u jibda jaħdem fuq bażi regolari, Malta għandha ssir post li jkollu iżjed x'joffri biex iħajjar li jitwaqqfu ndustrji ġodda ta' l-inġinerija tal-metall iżjed u iżjed minħabba l-għadd ta' ħaddiema mħarrġa apposta għal dan ix-xogħol. Industrji tal-metall li ġa għandna f'Malta jistgħu jgawdu wkoll mill-ħidma tal-*Metal Industries Development Centre* li se jgħin biex ikollna teknika aqwa ta' produzzjoni u faċilitajiet aħjar għall-bejgħ ta' dal-prodotti.

Il-*Metal Industries Development Centre* ser jgħin b'mod pożittiv ukoll fl-espansjoni u x'aktarx li jgħin ukoll fid-diversifikazzjoni ta' ndustrji li ġa għandna. Ħidma oħra importanti taċ-ċentru se tkun li tagħżel il-proċessi ġodda ta' xogħol tal-metall u t-tipi ġodda ta' attivitajiet fis-settur tal-inġinerija li jistgħu jsiru f'Malta skond il-prospetti ta' bejgħ li jkollhom fis-swieq barranin.

Barra minn hekk, dan iċ-ċentru — li mistenni li jitmexxa fil-bidu minn *project manager* barrani — hemm il-ħsieb ukoll li jipprovdi l-appoġġ tekniku u l-esperjenza li huma meħtieġa fil-manifattura ta' prodotti diversi ta' inġinerija f'industrji ġodda jew li diġà jeżistu; daċ-ċentru se jara wkoll kif jiżviluppa u jgħolli l-livell tas-snajja' lokali f'dak li huwa disinn, ippjanar u produzzjoni, u wkoll taħriġ fuq ix-xogħol f'teknika moderna tal-manifattura. Iċ-ċentru jista' jkollu sehem qawwi wkoll fit-twaqqif ta' ndustrji ġodda fil-qasam ta' *precision engineering*.

Relazzjonijiet bejn Malta u l-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja

Dawn l-inizjattivi prattiċi biex inżidu l-produzzjoni ndustrjali ta' Malta fihom innifishom ma humiex biżżejjed. Jeħtieġ ukoll li magħhom isiru sforzi oħra biex niksbu u nżommu swieq akbar barra minn Malta fejn inkunu nistgħu nbiegħu għadd akbar ta' prodotti Maltin; jeħtieġu wkoll miżuri biex niżguraw li fis-snin li ġejjin l-industrji Maltin jkunu jistgħu jżommu fuq saqajhom u jkunu kapaċi wkoll li jikkompetu fi swieq barranin.

Is-sehem tal-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja fil-proċess ta' żvilupp ta' Malta huwa għalhekk importanti ħafna għall-Gvern u għalkemm ir-relazzjonijiet mal-Kommunità ssaħħu, Malta għadha qed tipprova tikseb sħubija aktar siewja mal-Kommunità b'mod li tkun ta' għajnuna pożittiva biex Malta tkun tista' tibni s-saħħa ekonomika tagħha.

Id-difetti prinċipali fil-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni mal-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja li ġie ffirmat fl-1970 kienu ċari ħafna. It-tneħħija ftit ftit tat-tariffi, għalkemm tat l-opportunità lill-industrji Maltin li jidħlu u jippruvaw ibiegħu l-prodotti tagħhom fi swieq Ewropej biex ipattu għaċ-ċokon fid-daqs tas-suq lokali li kulħadd jaf bih, kienet tfisser ukoll, iżda, li l-industrja Maltija sabet ruħha qed tħabbatha f'kompetizzjoni diretta ma' industrji oħra Ewropej ferm aktar b'saħħithom meta kien jidher ċar li l-industrja Maltija ma kenitx kapaċi tagħmel dan. Is-settur industrjali Malti għadu ċkejken wisq u għadu relattivament bla esperjenza u miftuħ wisq: u barra minn hekk jonqsu sewwa kemm l-esperjenza fit-tmexxija kif ukoll fit-teknoloġija; is-settur industrjali jiddependi ħafna wkoll fuq materja prima importata. Minħabba dan kollu, il-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni oriġinali ma kienx ħa ħsieb biżżejjed tal-industrja Maltija li kienet għadha qiegħda tikber u ma ħarisħiex biżżejjed mill-kompetizzjoni ta' industrji aktar qawwija fil-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja. Il-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni naqas ukoll li jaħseb għal sehem aktar dirett mill-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja fit-tħajjir bejn Malta ta' kumpanniji ndustrjali kbar Ewropej biex jagħtu s-sehem dirett tagħhom huma wkoll fl-iżvilupp tas-settur industrjali f'Malta.

L-isforzi tal-Gvern biex jirrevedi l-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni mal-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja fl-aħħar kisbu suċċess f'Marzu tal-1976. Il-ftehim rivedut mhux biss jinkludi miżuri biex jissaħħu u jikbru r-relazzjonijiet ekonomiċi li jeżistu taħt il-ftehim oriġinali iżda jorbot ukoll lill-Kommunità u lil Malta li jwaqqfu diversi xorta ta' koperazzjoni bil-għan li dawn jagħtu s-sehem tagħhom fl-iżvilupp ta' Malta, u jsaħħu r-rabtiet eżistenti ekonomiċi. Din il-koperazzjoni bejn il-Kommunità u Malta għandha tiżviluppa, b'mod partikolari, is-sehem tal-Kommunità fl-iżvilupp tal-attività produttiva u tal-infrastruttura ekonomika ta' Malta sabiex nid-diversifikaw l-istruttura ekonomika tal-gżira; fil-bejgħ ta' oġġetti esportati minn Malta; fit-twettiq tal-programm ta' żvilupp industrjali ta' Malta li jinkludi t-twaqqif ta' rabtiet u kuntatti bejn min ifassal il-politika ndustrjali tal-Kommunità, investituri, u kumpanniji ndustrjali u ditti Maltin.

Il-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni rivedut fih ukoll Protokoll Finanzjarju li permezz tiegħu l-Kommunità wegħdet total ta' 26 miljun *unit of account* biex bihom tieħu sehem fl-iffinanzjar ta' proġetti maħsuba biex jikkontribwixxu għall-iżvilupp ekonomiku u soċjali ta' Malta. Din is-somma tinqasam f'16-il miljun *unit of account* f'forma ta' self mill-*European Investment Bank* b'kondizzjonijiet normali; 5 miljun *unit of account* f'forma ta' self b'rati speċjali; u għotja ta' 5 miljun *unit of account*. Dawn il-fondi se jintużaw biex bihom niffinanzjaw proġetti sħaħ jew parti minn proġetti bħal ngħidu aħna proġetti kapitali fl-oqsma ta' produzzjoni u ta' infrastruttura ekonomika u soċjali u programmi ta' koperazzjoni teknika.

Il-Protokoll Finanzjarju tal-Ftehim Rivedut kien jeħtieġ li jiġi ratifikat mill-Istati Membri; iżda l-Kommunità dal-aħħar qablet li l-koperazzjoni ma' Malta skond il-Ftehim Rivedut tista' tibda sseħħ ukoll jekk dak il-Protokoll għadu ma ġiex ratifikat. Dan ifisser li Malta issa tista' tibda tagħmel użu mill-għajnuna teknika u finanzjarja tal-Kommunità; u għalhekk sar ftehim li għandu jitwaqqaf grupp ta' esperti Ewropej biex jaraw x'inhuma sewwa sew il-ħtiġiet industrjali ta' Malta u jaraw ukoll min jistgħu jkunu s-sħab Ewropej tagħna għal proġetti bi sħab mal-Maltin.

Malta kisbet ukoll, permezz tal-Ftehim Rivedut, aċċess għal teknoloġija Ewropeja li hi l-aktar adattata għall-ħtiġiet partikolari tagħha. Hija x-xewqa soda tal-Gvern li jużа kemm jiflaħ din l-opportunità fis-snin li ġejjin biex istituzzjonijiet Maltin ikunu jistgħu jimxu mal-progress teknoloġiku barra minn Malta li jista' jkun ta' benefiċċju prattiku u ta' nteress dirett għalina f'Malta. Dan l-aċċess għal tagħrif ta' riċerka fl-Ewropa huwa tassew ta' siwi kbir għalina għax minħabba ċ-ċokon tagħna, Malta ma tista' qatt ikollha t-teknoloġija tagħha stess u jkollha bil-fors taqa' fuq kuntatti simili ma' istituzzjonijiet Ewropej ta' żvilupp u riċerka.

Il-kuntatti tal-bidu li twaqqfu bejn id-*Directorate General for Research, Science and Education* u mal-*Joint Research Centre* tal-Kummissjoni tal-Kommunitajiet Ewropej huma ta' kuraġġ kbir. Bħala riżultat, issa qed nistennew li koperazzjoni f'dan il-qasam bejn Malta u l-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja tinkludi d-dokumentazzjoni teknika li għandha x'taqsam mal-ħtiġiet ta' Malta; żjajjar minn xjenzati Maltin fl-istabbilimenti tal-*Joint Research Centre* u attendenza għal korsijiet li jsiru f'dawn l-istabbilimenti; pariri minn esperti fuq diffikultajiet tekniċi partikolari li jkunu jinkludu żjajjar f'Malta minn uffiċjal tal-Kummissjoni u d-dħul ta' studenti Malti fl-istabbilimenti tal-*Joint Research Centre* skond ir-regoli li jeżistu fil-Kommunità. Diġà ntgħażlu setturi speċifiċi għall-koperazzjoni xjentifika u teknoloġika u fost dawn insibu l-applikazzjoni tal-enerġija tax-xemx biex tiġġenera sħana, kesħa, refriġerazzjoni, desalinazzjoni u l-produzzjoni ta' l-elettriku; il-ħarsien ta' l-ambjent b'enfasi speċjali fuq problemi ta' tniġġiż tal-arja u tal-ilma u ta' kimika velenuża; u l-istandardizzazzjoni ta' affarijiet li għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' attivitajiet industrjali.

M'hemmx għalfejn li wieħed jisħaq fuq il-vantaġġi ċari li jkollna jekk prodotti Maltin jidħlu aktar liberament fi swieq Ewropej. Iż-żieda fl-esportazzjoni ta'

prodotti tal-manifattura li neħtieġu biex nilħqu l-miri ekonomiċi ta' Malta tiddependi ħafna fuq is-suċċess fil-bejgħ ta' prodotti Maltin: iżda għalkemm il-mertu ta' prodott huwa mportanti ħafna jekk irid jinbiegħ, li jkun hawn swieq lesti biex jixtru prodotti lokali huwa daqstant ieħor importanti. Għalhekk jekk ikollna diversi ftehim ekonomiċi ma' pajjiżi barranin u arranġamenti favorevoli biex niffaċilitaw d-dħul ta' prodotti Maltin, dan ikun ta' vantaġġ kbir għall-industrja lokali. Ta' min iżid hawnhekk li billi l-volum ta' produzzjoni lokali huwa parti ferm żgħira mill-ħtiġiet ta' pajjiżi Ewropej, dawn l-arranġamenti ma għandhomx joħolqu problemi kbar għal ditti Ewropej.

Taħt l-ewwel fażi tal-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni tal-1970, il-prodotti ndustrjali Maltin esportati lejn il-Kommunità, barra minn ċerti eċċezzjonijiet fosthom prodotti tat-tessuti, tnaqqsitilhom 70% tat-tariffa tal-Kommunità dejjem jekk ikunu jaqgħu taħt ċerti regoli dwar l-oriġini tagħhom. Fl-1974, il-Gvern Laburista rnexxilu jneħħi t-tariffa ta' 30% li kien baqa' permezz ta' Ftehim unilaterali annwali li bih il-Kommunità tat lil Malta trattament ekwivalenti għal G.S.P. Barra minn dan, f'Ġunju tal-1976, il-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja tat lil Malta tnaqqis fit-tariffi li jvarja minn 40 sa 60% fuq il-prodotti agrikoli prinċipali.

Wara li saru aktar negozjati bejn Malta u l-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja, bil-ħsieb li jtaffu l-effett fuq Malta ta' meta l-Ingilterra saret membru sħiħ tal-Kommunità mill-1 ta' Lulju, 1977, u biex ukoll niksbu titjib għal Malta fl-arranġamenti li kien hemm, intlaħaq ftehim bejn iż-żewġ naħat fid-29 ta' Ġunju 1977. Bħala riżultat, l-ewwel stadju tal-ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni, li kien fil-fatt ġa skada, ittawwal sal-31 ta' Diċembru, 1980. Intlaħaq ukoll ftehim illi l-kontenut tat-tieni stadju jsir magħruf matul negozjati li għandhom isiru matul l-1980. Minbarra dan, il-provvedimenti li hemm fl-ewwel stadju tal-ftehim żdiedu permezz ta' provvedimenti oħra, li żguraw dħul konċessjonarju għal prodotti Maltin, partikolarment tessuti u prodotti agrikoli f'pajjiżi li huma membri tal-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja. Meta qed niżguraw li prodotti Maltin jintlaqgħu aħjar fi swieq tal-Kommunità Ekonomika, qegħdin b'xi mod intaffu l-isfida iebsa li jsibu quddiemhom prodotti esportati minn Malta f'ambjent kompetittiv għall-aħħar.

Taħriġ fit-Tmexxija Ndustrjali

F'dal-aħħar snin l-aktar biċċa xogħol iebsa ta' Malta kienet li twaqqaf intrapriżi ndustrjali biex joħolqu l-impiegi għall-ħaddiema Maltin u biex iżidu l-produzzjoni ndustrjali l-aktar biex dal-prodotti jinbiegħu barra minn Malta. Għalkemm l-esportazzjoni ta' oġġetti manifatturati żdiedet sew, minn issa 'l quddiem jeħtieġ noqogħdu aktar attenti milli konna s'issa għad-diffikultajiet li jsibu prodotti esportati minn Malta fi swieq internazzjonali li qed isiru dejjem aktar kompetittivi.

L-iżvilupp ndustrjali ta' Malta f'dawn is-snin jeħtieġ li jagħti attenzjoni xierqa lill-iżvilupp tas-snajja' tekniċi u tal-esperjenza ta' tmexxija fil-qasam industrjali li neħtieġu jekk irridu li tirnexxi l-istrateġija ndustrjali li fuqha huma mibnija l-għanijiet ekonomiċi tal-pajjiż. Huwa biss b'dan il-mod li l-prodotti lokali jistgħu jkunu ta' livelli tajbin biżżejjed biex weħedhom jifilħu għall-kompetizzjoni qawwija fis-swieq ta' barra li fis-snin li ġejjin se tkun ferm aktar qawwija.

Bħalissa l-iżvilupp ta' politika komprensiva ta' tagħlim fit-tmexxija ndustrjali f'Malta hija ħaġa mill-aktar importanti jekk irridu tassew li prodotti Maltin jikkompetu ma' prodotti oħra fuq l-istess livell fi swieq barranin għal dak li huwa servizz, disinn, kwalità u prezz. Għaldaqstant, sabiex innaqqsu kemm nistgħu d-difetti tradizzjonali tas-settur ndustrjali Malti f'dawn l-oqsma, nistgħu norganizzaw f'Malta korsijiet ta' "Management" speċjalizzati li jkunu jxaqilbu fuq it-tagħlim prattiku: nistgħu wkoll inħejju programmi li permezz tagħhom studenti Maltin jistgħu jieħdu sehem f'korsijiet barra fuq *business management* li għandhom x'jaqsmu direttament mas-sitwazzjoni li għandna f'Malta.

MALTA BĦALA ĊENTRU EWLIENI TA' *SERVICING* FIL-MEDITERRAN

Waħda mill-aktar attitudini mportanti li l-Gvern dejjem saħaq fuqha u ħeġġeġ lin-nazzjon biex jadottaha bħala parti mill-istrateġija tal-Pjan, hija li l-pajjiż għandu jkun dejjem lest li jwarrab it-toroq il-qodma meta dawn ma jibqgħux aktar tajbin biżżejjed biex permezz tagħhom wieħed jikseb ir-riżultati li jixtieq; il-Gvern saħaq ukoll li għandna naħtfu kull opportunita' ġdida li tifaċċa quddiemna. Biex insibu soluzzjoni għall-problemi ta' l-iżvilupp tal-pajjiż irid ikollna attitudni flessibbli li, waqt li tieħu vantaġġ sħiħ miċ-ċirkostanzi lokali, fl-istess ħin tgħin lin-nazzjon biex jagħmel l-aħjar użu minn riżorsi u esperjenzi ġodda sabiex inkomplu nżidu mal-inizjattivi l-oħra. Għalhekk il-Pjan ta' Żvilupp kien qal biċ-ċar: "L-ippjanar f'Malta irid ikun flessibbli ħafna. Il-flessibiltà tfisser il-ħolqien u l-inkoraġġiment ta' xejriet ta' ħsieb u għamliet ta' ħajja li għandhom il-ħila japprofittaw ruħhom malajr u fil-waqt minn dak li jiġri fl-ekonomija tad-dinja li jkun jaqbel l-iżjed għal Malta u jaġġornaw ruħhom bla dewmien meta ma jaqblux. Biex jasal għal din il-flessibiltà, il-Pjan irid jimmira għal ekonomija diversifikata u għal riservi differenti li jintużaw f'kull żmien għal ħtiġiet li jiġu fuqna f'daqqa. Flessibiltà tfisser ukoll li jkollok għal lest tattika għal għanijiet li fassalna aħna u li nimxu pass pass ma' l-iżvilupp f'artna u barra minnha".

U mill-ġdid fl-aħħar paġna tal-Pjan: "Fih (fil-Pjan) hemm il-flessibilità sabiex ikunu jistgħu jinstabu toroq ġodda, waqt li Malta tibqa' miexja lejn il-progress. Il-flessibilità tinsab hemm biex jekk l-affarijiet jiżvolġu b'mod differenti ħafna minn kif kien maħsub, it-tweġiba tan-nazzjon tinbidel skond il-ħtieġa. L-iżvilupp jikkonsisti filli jitwarrbu sistemi iebsa ż-żejjed għalkemm il-biża' li l-Pjan isir ħaġa oħra riġida fis-sistema għandha titwarrab akkost ta' kollox. Iżda l-flessibilità, li huwa ħsieb li nsibuh ta' sikwit fil-Pjan, m'għandhiex tkun skuża għal nuqqas ta' ppjanar. Anzi, dan huwa l-uniku mod kif ippjanar effettiv jista' jkun jiġi mwettaq f'soċjetà żgħira u miftuħa bħal Malta".

Bħalma kien qal, il-Gvern f'dawn l-aħħar xhur qies bl-akbar reqqa u bil-ħeġġa kollha l-possibilitajiet ġodda li tfaċċaw fis-snin minn mindu beda l-Pjan. Dan għamlu għax ħassu konvint illi dawn l-opportunitajiet ġodda jistgħu jagħtu sehem kbir sabiex isaħħu aktar il-proċess ta' żvilupp tal-pajjiż.

L-istrateġija ta' l-iżvilupp tal-Pjan tisħaq l-aktar fuq it-tkabbir ta' l-attivitajiet produttivi sabiex b'hekk ikollna opportunitajiet ġodda ta' xogħol u sabiex nilħqu l-mira tal-produzzjoni ta' oġġetti manifatturati li fuqhom jiddependi ħafna jekk Malta tilħaqx l-oġġettivi ekonomiċi tagħha. Il-Pjan kellu l-iskop li jħaffef l-iżvilupp ndustrjali ta' Malta fl-oqsma kollha permezz tal-espansjoni, it-titjib u tisħiħ tas-settur ndustrjali li hu tant importanti għall-pajjiż. Din il-ħidma sabiex tinbena soċjetà ndustrjali ġdida f'Malta diġa' kellha suċċess, iżda, bħalma turi ċar ż-żieda fil-produzzjoni li hi meħtieġa biex nilħqu l-għanijiet ekonomiċi li għandna quddiema, is-sehem tas-settur direttament produttiv fl-iżvilupp tal-ekonomija lokali fis-snin li ġejjin huwa tabilħaqq importanti.

Madankollu, fil-ħidma tiegħu biex ikabbar bis-sħiħ l-attività ekonomika f'Malta, il-Gvern ma llimitax ruħu għas-setturi tradizzjonali tal-iżvilupp iżda esplora wkoll idejat u possibilitajiet ġodda. Dejjem b'seba' għajnejn biex ifittex idejat ġodda u jiftaħ toroq ġodda, il-Gvern qed jaħdem b'ħeġġa u entużjażmu fuq proġetti oħra illi, jekk jirnexxu, għandhom jgħinu biex nilħqu l-miri ekonomiċi li għandna quddiemna u biex naslu għall-għanijiet tal-iżvilupp.

Dawn l-idejat ġodda huma mibnija l-aktar fuq il-benefiċċji u vantaġġi li jistgħu jinkisbu jekk nisfruttaw bis-sħiħ il-pożizzjoni ġeo-strateġika ta' Malta fiċ-ċentru tal-Mediterran. Huwa minnu li Malta tradizzjonalment qdiet din il-parti, iżda waqt li matul is-snin pajjiżna uża il-pożizzjoni strateġika tiegħu għal skopijiet militari, id-dehra ġdida ta' Malta hija dik ta' gżira li tgħix għal kollox fuq attivitajiet ta'

paċi li jsostnu struttura ekonomika ġdida b'kollaborazzjoni mal-akbar għadd ta' msieħbin.

Għalhekk l-istrateġija ġdida ta' Malta ssaħħaħ l-attivitajiet tradizzjonali ekonomiċi billi tipprova tagħmel minn Malta ċentru ewlieni fejn il-materja prima jew oġġetti mhux maħdumin għal kollox minn pajjiżi 'il bogħod fl-Amerika t'Isfel u l-Asja jistgħu jiġu proċessati u mqassmin lejn pajjiżi oħra fl-Ewropa u l-Afrika ta' fuq. F'din is-sħubija ġdida ma' pajjiżi oħra li qegħdin jiżviluppaw minn kontinenti oħra, Malta ser tipprovdi s-servizzi u l-faċilitajiet infrastrutturali li jkunu meħtieġa u sservi bħala ċentru għat-tqassim ta' prodotti u/jew materja prima minn pajjiżi mbegħdin fuq bażi aktar kompetittiva milli kieku dan kellu jsir band'oħra.

Hemm opportunitajiet oħra jekk Malta tinbidel f'bażi minn fejn inkunu nistgħu nagħtu servizz lil ċerti xorta ta' ndustrji fil-Mediterran u fil-Lvant Nofsani. Minbarra dan, jidher ukoll li hemm possibilitajiet kbar jekk Malta tiġi żviluppata f'ċentru fil-Mediterran fejn diversi pajjiżi jistgħu jieħdu sehem f'bosta oqsma prattiċi ta' koperazzjoni bħal ngħidu aħna fil-kultura, il-kummerċ, l-ekonomija, il-mezzi ta' komunikazzjoni, il-pubblikazzjoni ta' kotba, it-tħaris tal-ambjent u n-newtralità politika. Dawn l-inizjattivi ġodda niddiskutuhom aktar fil-fond aktar 'il quddiem f'dan is-Suppliment.

ATTIVITAJIET TA' TRASBORD/PROĊESSAR

L-ideja li Malta tinbidel f'ċentru għall-iproċessar u t-tqassim ta' materja prima u oġġetti mhux maħduma għal kollox hi konsegwenza diretta tas-suċċess li għamlet il-kumpannija nazzjonali tal-vapuri *Sea Malta* fl-attivitajiet tagħha ta' trasbord. Meta s-*Sea Malta* twaqqfet f'Novembru tal-1973, il-ħsieb ewlieni kien li taqdi lissettur industrjali Malti fil-qasam tal-esportazzjoni billi twaqqaf jew ittejjeb il-kuntatti diretti ma' pajjiżi li jimportaw oġġetti maħduma f'Malta. Kien hemm il-ħtieġa illi l-isforz li Malta kienet qed tagħmel biex tesporta prodotti Maltin ma kellux ikun imfixkel billi nkunu niddependu ż-żejjed fuq is-servizz li jagħtu linji tal-baħar barranin: kien jinħass ukoll illi servizz hekk vitali fl-iżvilupp tal-ekonomija nazzjonali kellu jitħaddem taħt kontroll Malti.

Is-*Sea Malta* żviluppat malajr bħala fattur ewlieni fl-infrastruttura tal-gżira billi tat servizz effiċjenti bejn Malta u diversi postijiet u bil-mod il-mod l-attivitajiet tal-kumpannija kibru biex bdew jaqdu l-ħtiġiet ta' settur li hu aktar rilevanti direttament għall-iżvilupp. Il-kumpannija rnexxielha tilħaq ftehim maċ-*China National Chartering Corporation* li permezz tiegħu merkanzija Ċiniża tinħatt Malta u titqassam lejn postijiet oħra fil-Mediterran permezz tal-vapuri tas-*Sea Malta*.

Dan il-ftehim malajr wera l-benefiċċji li minnhom tkun tista' tgawdi ekonomija lokali jekk Malta jirnexxilha tinbidel f'ċentru ewlieni ta' trasbord. Barra minn hekk, bħala riżultat ta' din l-esperjenza li ksibna minn dax-xogħol ġdid, beda jidher biċ-ċar li Malta setgħet tippjana li tkabbar dawn l-attivitajiet u tidħol għal xogħol aktar ambizzjuż li jisfrutta bis-sħiħ il-pożizzjoni ġeografika u strateġika ta' Malta u l-fatt li qiegħda qrib is-swieq Ewropej u s-swieq fl-Afrika ta' Fuq u fil-Lvant Nofsani li qegħdin jikbru b'rata mgħaġġla.

Deher ukoll illi kien hemm tliet tipi ta' attività f'dan il-qasam li setgħu jibdew isiru f'Malta, jiġifieri: xogħol ta' trasbord; ħażna u tqassim u l-ipproċessar ta' materja prima. Il-Gvern fi ħsiebu jkompli jiżviluppa lil Malta bħala ċentru ta' tqassim tal-merkanzija minn fejn wara li din tinħatt, titqassam f'portijiet oħra permezz tal-vapuri tas-*Sea Malta*. Qed isiru sforzi wkoll biex inħajjru jiġu Malta produtturi u esportaturi ta' materja prima u/jew materjal mhux maħdum għal kollox, l-aktar minn pajjiżi 'l bogħod. Dan il-materjal imbagħad ikun jista' jiġi proċessat f'Malta biex wara jinbiegħ fi swieq oħra. Dan huwa x-xorta ta' xogħol illi se jibda jsir f'Malta

bħala riżultat tal-proġetti bi sħab mad-ditta Brażiljana *Madebras*. Barra minn hekk, hemm ukoll il-possibilità illi x-xogħol ta' proċessar jikber billi nipproduċu oġġetti lesti għall-esportazzjoni f'Malta: u dan ukoll qed jiġi studjat bil-ħerqa.

Ġa saru kuntatti ma' għadd ta' pajjiżi li wrew interess f'dawn l-attivitajiet u delegazzjonijiet uffiċjali ġa żaru l-Brażil, Costa Rica, il-Messiku, il-Filippini, l-Arġentina, il-Perù, l-Ekwador u l-Venezwela. Dawn il-proposti Maltin qanqlu nteress qawwi fost organizzazzjonijiet pubbliċi u nvestituri privati f'dawn il-pajjiżi: dan kien sinjal li jimlina b'kuraġġ u wieħed jittama li jiġu negozjati b'suċċess ftehim oħra li jkunu jixbhu lil dak li sar mal-*Madebras*.

Dawn l-inizjattivi għandhom vantaġġi kbar għan-naħat kollha li jieħdu sehem fihom. F'din is-sħubija ġdida ma' pajjiżi oħra li qed jiżviluppaw Malta tkun qed toffri faċilitajiet infrastrutturali li jinsabu f'Malta b'rati aktar baxxi minn dawk li hemm f'pajjiżi oħra. Dawn il-forom ġodda ta' koperazzjoni fl-istess ħin jiżguraw għal Malta aċċess għal tagħrif tekniku li s'issa għad m'għandnix fil-gżira barra milli jkabbru l-possibilità li Malta tkompli tiddiversifika l-prodotti li tesporta. Dawn il-proġetti bi sħab bla dubju, igawdu minn fatturi mportanti bħalma huma l-ftehim ta' Malta mal-Kommunità Ekonomika Ewropeja li permezz tiegħu dawn il-prodotti proċessati f'Malta jkunu jistgħu jidħlu fi swieq Ewropej b'rati ta' tariffi konċessjonali; dal-proġetti jgawdu wkoll mir-rabtiet politiċi u ekonomiċi li dejjem qed jikbru bejn Malta u l-Istati Għarbin.

Fattur ieħor importanti li għamel il-proposti ta' Malta aktar interessanti huwa l-fatt li fil-Port il-Kbir vapur jista' jidħol iħott u joħroġ bil-ħeffa: dan hu l-oppost ta' dak li jiġri f'diversi portijiet fil-Mediterran u f'portijiet oħra minn fejn is-sħab ġodda fil-kummerċ is-soltu mdorrija jmexxu n-negozju tagħhom f'dawn l-inħawi.

Il-Proġett tal-Port ta' Marsaxlokk

Minħabba li l-proposti ta' Malta ntlaqgħu tajjeb u minħabba l-possibilità li pajjiżi oħra jitħajru jieħdu sehem, huwa ta' mportanza ferm kbira li niżguraw illi l-faċilitajiet infrastrutturali prinċipali ta' Malta jkunu jistgħu jlaħħqu mal-volum ta' xogħol li dawn il-proġetti ġodda ta' trasbord / ipproċessar mistennija joħolqu meta jibdew jaħdmu sew. Dawn il-proġetti jibdew jutilizzaw bis-sħiħ dal-faċilitajiet u huwa fuqhom li fl-aħħar mill-aħħar jiddependi s-suċċess ta' dawn l-inizjattivi.

Għalkemm il-faċilitajiet li għandna fil-Port il-Kbir huma biżżejjed biex ilaħħqu mal-volum ta' merkanzija ġenerali li tasal f'Malta llum, iż-żieda ta' xogħol ta' trasbord li qed nippjanaw li jkollna ma nkunux nistgħu nlaħħqu magħha jekk kull ma nagħmlu li dal-faċilitajiet li għandna fil-Port il-Kbir insaħħuhom: għalhekk ikun jeħtieġ li niżviluppaw port ieħor f'Marsaxlokk. Li jkollna dat-tieni port hu meqjus essenzjali kemm minħabba ż-żieda li qed naħsbu li se jkollna fix-xogħol tat-tiswija u l-bini tal-vapuri ġol-Port il-Kbir kif ukoll minħabba n-nuqqas ta' spazju li hemm fil-mollijiet tal-Port il-Kbir għall-istallazzjoni ta' aktar tagħmir li neħtieġu fil-port.

Għaldaqstant il-Gvern qatagħha li jiżviluppa port ġdid f'Marsaxlokk. Dan il-post hu meqjus l-aħjar lokal għall-port il-ġdid u għall-iżvilupp marittimu għax jinsab imdawwar b'art biżżejjed fejn jistgħu jsiru oqsma ndustrjali.

Il-pjani għall-iżvilupp tal-port il-ġdid f'Marsaxlokk ġa tħejjew — u l-iskema qed tidher fis-Suppliment tal-Pjan. Il-faċilitajiet ta' port kummerċjali li hemm maħsuba jinkludu mollijiet fejn jinħattu l-*containers*, fejn tinħatt il-merkanzija ġenerali u fejn tinħatt il-merkanzija kbira, post fejn jinħażnu l-*containers*, tined għall-merkanzija, imħażen, uffiċini tal-port, *workshops*, u faċilitajiet oħra meħtieġa fosthom toroq tajba u s-servizzi tad-dawl, ilma u komunikazzjonijiet. Il-qasam industrjali ġdid, li hemm il-ħsieb li jinbena qrib il-port ta' Marsaxlokk, għandu jgħin sew biex iħajjar it-twaqqif ta' proġetti ndustrjali li hemm maħsuba għal dawn l-inħawi.

Prijorità kbira qed tingħata lill-proġett ta' Marsaxlokk, u s-*Saudi Fund for Economic Development* ġa qabel mas-self ta' ħmistax-il miljun dollaru b'imgħax baxx lill-Gvern biex jiffinanzja dan il-proġett importanti. Delegazzjoni mill-*Abu Dhabi Fund* ukoll żaret Malta u se tirrikkomanda lill-Bord tagħhom jagħti għajnuna finanzjarja b'rati ta' mgħax baxx għal dal-proġett.

Attivitajiet fil-qasam tal-ġarr tal-merkanzija

Minħabba l-potenzjal kbir li toffri dix-xorta ġdida ta' żvilupp, il-Gvern għandu l-ħsieb ukoll li jimmodernizza u jkabbar il-ħidma u n-natura tas-servizzi li tagħti l-linja nazzjonali tal-vapuri *Sea Malta*. Il-kumpannija se tiġi organizzata wkoll fuq linji aktar effiċjenti biex tkun tista' tlaħħaq maż-żieda fil-volum ta' xogħol li jġibu magħhom dawn l-attivitajiet ta' trasbord. Dan jinħtieġ li jsir jekk il-kumpannija Maltija tal-vapuri trid tieħu l-ikbar vantaġġ ekonomiku minn dax-xogħol u jkollha sehem kbir kemm jista' jkun f'dax-xogħol ġdid ta' ġarr ta' merkanzija.

Sea Malta ssaħħet ukoll bħala kumpannija billi daħlu fiha sħab barranin ġodda. Wara diskussjonijiet fl-Alġerija, CNAN, il-kumpannija nazzjonali tal-baħar Alġerina, dan l-aħħar qablet li tissieħeb mas-*Sea Malta*. Għalhekk, minbarra l-Korporazzjoni Maltija tal-Iżvilupp u sħab oħra Maltin fil-kumpannija, is-*Sea Malta* se jkollha ukoll parteċipazzjoni Alġerina minħabba sħubija Libjana permezz tal-*General National Maritime Transport Company*.

Il-koperazzjoni Alġerina mas-*Sea Malta* kompliet titjieb permezz ta' kiri lill-CNAN għal perijodi twal ta' vapuri tas-*Sea Malta* li fil-preżent il-kumpannija lokali ma teħtieġhomx. Iż-żewġ linji tal-vapuri ftehmu wkoll li jiżviluppaw flimkien rotot regolari tat-traffiku marittimu.

Is-suċċess ta' dil-ħidma, minbarra li juri biċ-ċar l-interess li hemm fil-potenzjal ta' kemm tista' tikber is-*Sea Malta*, huwa sinjal tajjeb ukoll tal-prospetti nteressanti li qed joffru dawn l-inizjattivi ġodda u li fihom se tibda tieħu sehem ukoll is-*Sea Malta*.

SERVIZZI TA' TISWIJA U TA' MANUTENZJONI

It-tieni attività ġdida li dan l-aħħar qed nintebħu li toffri prospetti sbieħ fis-snin li ġejjin għandha x'taqsam ma' servizzi li jistgħu jsiru mill-Maltin għall-kumpanniji barranin li jkunu qed jaħdmu fl-inħawi tal-Mediterran. Għal dax-xogħol Malta tista' tiġi żviluppata f'ċentru reġjonali nternazzjonali għat-tiswija, il-manutenzjoni, *servicing* u xogħol ieħor ta' din ix-xorta li jkunu jeħtieġu kumpanniji nternazzjonali li jkunu jaħdmu fil-Mediterran.

Ir-reġjun tal-Mediterran bħalissa jinsab għaddej minn żmien ta' bidla ekonomika kbira: r-riżorsi naturali mmensi tiegħu qed jiġu esplorati u żviluppati u bosta pajjiżi f'dawn l-inħawi qed iwettqu programmi kbar ta' ndustrijalizzazzjoni. Tabilħaqq, dan ir-reġjun qatt ma ra attività ekonomika daqshekk kbira. Fi żmien ta' żvilupp reġjonali hekk mgħaġġel, Malta jkun jaqblilha ferm jekk issir ċentru reġjonali mill-aqwa li tipprovdi s-servizzi lill-industrji li bħalissa qed jaħdmu fil-Mediterran, u l-aktar fl-Afrika ta' Fuq.

Malta għandha vantaġġi kbar jekk trid li tinbidel f'ċentru reġjonali ewlieni għal servizzi fil-Mediterran. Barra mill-pożizzjoni strateġika favorevoli tagħha u r-rabtiet sodi li għandha ma' pajjiżi ġirien u ma' pajjiżi oħra fil-Lvant Nofsani, Malta tista' toffri wkoll ħaddiema tajbin u ta' esperjenza kbira li jistgħu jagħtu dawk is-servizzi li aħna qed naraw nistgħux nagħtu aħna.

Jeħtieġ li Malta tagħmel minn kollox biex tkun imħejjija sew u f'qasir żmien għall-opportunitajiet ġodda li għandha quddiemha u biex tkun tista' taqdi sewwa l-ħtiġiet tar-reġjun għall-ħaddiema għall-manutenzjoni u għall-faċilitajiet ta' din ix-

xorta. Hemm tlett tipi ta' attività f'dan is-settur li jkunu jistgħu jsiru bi qliegħ għall-pajjiż minn ħaddiema Maltin li bl-esperjenza, bit-taħriġ u bis-snajja' li għandhom, jistgħu jagħmlu dan ix-xogħol ġdid li qed insemmu. Dawn huma s-settur tat-tfittix għaż-żejt; il-manutenzjoni ta' mpjant elettriku u mekkaniku; u t-tiswija u l-manutenzjoni ta' ajruplani ta' linji ta' l-ajru internazzjonali.

Bl-irtirar tal-forzi militari Ingliżi sa Marzu tal-1979 u bl-egħluq kif ippjanat tal-faċilititajiet militari wżati mis-Servizzi Ingliżi skond il-Ftehim tal-1972 mal-Ingilterra, se jkollna tnaqqis waqt li jgħaddi ż-żmien ta' numru ta' ħaddiema mpjegati mal-bażi militari Ingliża f'Malta. Għalkemm impjegati ċivili se jkollhom r-responsabilità diretta għal ċerti servizzi essenzjali — bħalma huma tifi tan-nar, salvataġġ fil-baħar, u servizzi tal-ajru — li bħalissa huma provduti minn impjegati tal-bażi Ngliża — madankollu l-irtirar tal-forzi Ngliżi se jfisser ukoll li se jkollna għadd ta' ħaddiema Maltin tas-sengħa li aktar 'il quddiem inkunu nistgħu nħaddmuhom band'oħra jekk l-esperjenza teknika tagħhom nistgħu nużawha.

Dawn il-ħaddiema, minħabba l-esperjenza tagħhom f'xogħol ta' *servicing* u ta' manutenzjoni ta' l-impjanti militari Ngliżi u faċilitajiet oħra f'Malta li jinkludu t-tiswija ta' tipi differenti ta' makkinarju u tagħmir, huma addattati sew biex iwettqu dan ix-xogħol ġdid li se jkollna jekk Malta taqdi din il-funzjoni ġdida ta' ċentru ta' manutenzjoni fil-Mediterran. L-organizzazzjoni ta' dawn il-ħaddiema f'korp ta' ħaddiema effiċjenti, imħejjija biex iwettqu dan it-tip ta' xogħol kemm f'Malta kif ukoll barra minn Malta, għandha tgħin biex niksbu suċċess fl-isforzi tagħna biex nifthu orizzonti ġodda u sabiex nidħlu wkoll għal dawn l-attivitajiet ġodda li f'dawn iż-żminijiet qed jinħass il-bżonn tagħhom fir-reġjun tal-Mediterran.

L-Industrja tat-Tħaffir għaż-Żejt

L-esperjenza li ksibna wara li fl-1974 twaqqfet f'Malta il-*Mediterranean Services Ltd — Medserv —* biex taqdi l-ħtiġiet tal-industrja tat-tfittix għaż-żejt kemm fuq l-art kif ukoll fil-baħar fil-Lvant Nofsani u fl-Afrika ta' Fuq, kienet ta' għajnuna kbira lin-nazzjon. Ir-riżultati tajba tal-kumpannija wrew biċ-ċar il-potenzjal kbir li għandu dan il-qasam kemm f'dawk li huma mpiegi kif ukoll fil-qliegħ ta' flus minn barra.

L-attivitajiet tal-*Medserv* s'issa l-aktar li kellhom x'jaqsmu mal-bejgħ u l-ħażna ta' provvisti u tagħmir għal kumpanniji taż-żejt u mal-ingaġġ ta' ħaddiema tas-sengħa għal xogħol fuq *oil rigs.* Issa jeħtieġ li dawn l-attivitajiet jikbru biex jipprovdu servizzi oħra li huma daqstant ieħor ta' ħtieġa għall-kumpanniji taż-żejt u li għax jinsabu 'l bogħod mill-bażi tagħhom ikun aktar ekonomiku għalihom jekk isibuhom f'post ċentrali li jkun milħuq aħjar u aktar qrib l-inħawi fejn ikunu qed jaħdmu.

Hekk, ngħidu aħna, bl-għajnuna sħiħa tal-kumpanniji taż-żejt ġa twaqqaf servizz ta' trasport bl-ajru għall-ħaddiema tal-kumpanniji taż-żejt. Hemm il-ħsieb li nistħarrġu wkoll possibilitajiet oħra li jidhru nteressanti. Fost dawn hemm l-użu tal-faċilitajiet ta' tiswija fit-Tarzna minn *rigs* li jħaffru għaż-żejt fil-baħar li b'hekk ikunu qed jipprovdu aktar xogħol għall-ħaddiema tat-Tarzna. Malta tista' tintuża wkoll bħala post fejn il-familji ta' ħaddiema mal-kumpanniji taż-żejt fil-Mediterran ikunu jistgħu jiġu joqogħdu għal żmien qasir u b'hekk l-irġiel ikunu jistgħu jiltaqgħu mal-familji tagħhom ta' sikwit.

Hemm ukoll l-opportunità li Malta tintuża bħala ċentru edukattiv għal ulied il-ħaddiema li jkunu jaħdmu fl-industrja taż-żejt. Il-ftehim li ntlaħaq ma' *Reading and Bates Drilling Company* għat-twaqqif ta' skola nternazzjonali f'Verdala li tkun timxi fuq is-sistema edukattiva Amerikana huwa eżempju ċar tal-mod kif il-faċilitajiet edukattivi li għandna f'Malta jistgħu jiġu utilizzati bl-aħjar mod fl-aħjar interess tal-pajjiż.

Se jiġi studjat ukoll l-aħjar użu li jista' jsir mill-faċilitajiet kbar għall-ħażna taż-żejt li bħalissa qegħdin f'idejn is-Servizzi Ngliżi u li dalwaqt se jingħataw lill-Gvern Malti. Malta ma jistax ikun li ma jkollhiex dawn il-faċilitajiet jekk trid li ssir ċentru ewlieni ta' servizzi fil-Mediterran. Il-faċilitajiet għall-ħażna taż-żejt li qabel kienu f'idejn in-Nato, minbarra li jistgħu jintużaw minn vapuri kummerċjali, jistgħu jibdew jaqdu wkoll il-bżonnijiet tal-industrja taż-żejt u b'hekk f'Malta jkun hawn aktar xogħol ta' *bunkering* u ta' attivitajiet oħra ta' din ix-xorta.

Tagħmir Elettriku u Mekkaniku

Is-snajja' u l-ħila tal-ħaddiema Maltin li bħalissa jaħdmu mal-Forzi Ngliżi jistgħu jintużaw ukoll għal ħtiġiet oħra ta' natura ta' manutenzjoni fir-reġjun billi jeżistu attivitajiet oħra, minbarra dawk li għandhom x'jaqsmu direttament ma l-industrja taż-żejt, li jistgħu jsiru mill-ħaddiema lokali li għandhom l-esperjenza teknika meħtieġa.

Qasam ġdid li nistgħu nidħlu għalih huwa dak tal-manutenzjoni u tat-tiswija ta' tagħmir kbir elettriku u tagħmir mekkaniku f'pajjiżi oħra li qed jiżviluppaw fil-Mediterran — u speċjalment fil-Libja — fejn għad m'hemmx nies tas-sengħa li jistgħu jagħmlu dan ix-xogħol.

Pjani biex jitwaqqaf korp ta' xogħol għall-ħaddiema tas-sengħa u li diġà għandhom l-esperjenza, imxew 'il quddiem sew. Din l-inizjattiva ġdida diġà qajjmet interess fost kumpanniji ta' fama internazzjonali li qegħdin jaraw x'sehem se jkollhom f'din il-kumpannija. Dan hu sinjal sabiħ li għandu jqawwilna qalbna.

Manutenzjoni ta' Ajruplani u Servizzi Oħra

Barra minn hekk, hemm aktar opportunitajiet f'dan is-settur ta' manutenzjoni li ħaddiema Maltin għandhom ikunu lesti biex jaħtfuhom għax dawn jutilizzaw is-sengħa u l-esperjenza li diġà għandna fil-pajjiż. Din l-attività ġdida tikkonsisti fil-manutenzjoni tal-ajruplani f'Malta, fejn minbarra servizz effiċjenti u ta' min jorbot fuqu li jkun ilaħħaq sew ma' livelli nternazzjonali, il-klijenti jgawdu wkoll mir-rati l-aktar kompetittivi li toffri Malta meta tqabbilhom mal-ħlas li jitolbu ċentri oħra ta' manutenzjoni.

Qegħdin isiru negozjati ma' linji ta' l-ajru ta' fama nternazzjonali sabiex jitwaqqfu f'Malta *workshops* għall-manutenzjoni u t-tiswija ta' l-ajruplani u sabiex tekniċi Maltin jiġu mħarrġa jew jingħataw l-aħħar tagħrif f'ċerti oqsma speċjalizzati ta' dan ix-xogħol. Għal dan l-għan se nużaw kemm jista' jkun il-faċilitajiet li se tħalli l-*Air Force* Ingliża meta jintemm il-Ftehim dwar il-Bażi.

Permezz ta' dan il-potenzjal ta' żvilupp li toffri Malta bħala ċentru reġjonali ta' servizzi u manutenzjoni fuq dawn il-linji li qed insemmu, minbarra li se nużaw is-snajja' tal-ħaddiema Maltin li bħalissa qed jagħmlu xogħol simili mal-Forzi Ngliżi, se nkunu nistgħu wkoll nipprovdu x-xogħol lill-istudenti li jkunu temmew il-korsijiet meħtieġa fl-iskejjel ta' snajja' u fit-*technical institutes.*

Barra minn dan, l-ingaġġ ta' ħaddiema li se jieħdu sehem f'dawn il-proġetti f'organizzazzjoni waħda se jkun ifisser li b'hekk dawn in-nies se jiżguraw rnħhom minn kondizzjonijiet ta' xogħol aħjar u minn pagi ogħla. Vantaġġi oħra jkunu jinkludu s-sehem dirett fit-tmexxija ta' dan il-grupp ta' ħaddiema.

Benefiċċju ieħor importanti li tikseb l-ekonomija Maltija permezz tad-diversi attivitajiet ta' *servicing* li nistgħu nipprovdu jista' jkun l-użu tas-servizzi finanzjarji tas-settur bankarju lokali.

KOPERAZZJONI REĠJONALI F'OQSMA POLITIĊI, KULTURALI U TEKNIĊI

It-tielet dimensjoni tas-sejħa ġdida ta' Malta tnebbħet l-iżjed mix-xewqa ġdida ta' Malta li tkun nazzjon li politikament m'hu marbut ma' l-ebda pajjiż iżda li hu marbut bis-sħiħ mal-kawża tal-paċi u koperazzjoni reġjonali.

It-tħabrik ta' Malta biex ikun hawn aktar ftehim reġjonali bejn l-istati kollha tal-Mediterran issa kiseb l-appoġġ tal-pajjiżi kollha f'dawn l-inħawi li jħobbu l-paċi. B'danakollu l-għaqda fil-Mediterran m'għandhiex tikkonsisti biss fi kliem, iżda għandha sseħħ u titwettaq permezz ta' ħidma pożittiva u permezz ta' inizjattivi prattiċi li jaqdu u jfissru l-aspirazzjonijiet reġjonali b'mod konkret. Malta b'hekk tista' tkun tassew ta' għajnuna lill-ġirien tagħha fil-Mediterran għax jekk wieħed iqis il-ġid kbir tal-ħajja u t-tradizzjonijiet tal-Mediterran, hu jsib li hemm tassew lok għal ħidma sħiħa biex Malta tilħaq l-għan tagħha u ssir ċentru ewlieni fejn jistgħu jsiru attivitajiet prattiċi ta' koperazzjoni fl-oqsma politiċi, kulturali, soċjali u ekonomiċi.

Sħab Malta fil-Mediterran issa fehmu sewwa xi jfissru l-proposti politiċi ta' Malta f'dawn l-aħħar ftit snin biex isaħħu l-istabbilità politika fir-reġjun. Il-messaġġ ta' Malta kien ċar u qawwi fil-Konferenza dwar is-Sigurtà u l-Koperazzjoni fl-Ewropa li saret f'Helsinki fl-1975 meta ntlaħaq ftehim li ma setax ikun hemm sigurtà vera fl-Ewropa mingħajr sigurtà fil-Mediterran. Bl-istess mod, ma tistax isseħħ koperazzjoni ekonomika u kulturali u lanqas ma jista' jkun ftehim soċjali jekk ma tkunx teżisti s-sigurtà.

Sabiex jirnexxu l-miżuri maħsuba biex isaħħu u jqawwu l-koperazzjoni bejn il-pajjiżi, jeħtieġ li qabel xejn ikun hemm tnaqqis fit-tensjonijiet politiċi. Tabilħaqq, l-esperjenza dejjem uriet li l-koperazzjoni tista' sseħħ biss meta bejn il-pajjiżi tkun teżisti atmosfera ta' fiduċja u ta' ftehim. Ir-relazzjonijiet bejn il-pajjiżi u l-koperazzjoni ekonomika u kulturali bejniethom jispiċċaw fix-xejn meta fuq ix-xefaq jitfaċċaw tensjonijiet politiċi.

Malta tħabtet bla heda biex iseħħ ordni politiku ġdid fil-Mediterran mibni fuq il-prinċipji ta' *detente* u newtralità. Il-preżenza militari kbira taż-żewġ superpotenzi fil-Mediterran x'aktarx li ma setgħetx tiġi evitata qabel Helsinki; iżda issa t-tluq bil-mod tal-flotot Amerikani u Sovjetiċi mill-Mediterran jagħti sehem siewi għas-sigurtà, il-paċi u l-ħelsien ta' dan ir-reġjun. Barra minn hekk, din ix-xewqa dwar il-ġejjieni tal-Mediterran hija mibnija wkoll fuq għarfien mill-istati kollha tal-ħtieġa li għandu jkun hemm għaqda soda bejniethom fuq suġġetti li jolqtu mill-qrib id-destin politiku u ekonomiku tagħhom. Dan is-sens ta' għaqda u koperazzjoni fil-Mediterran huwa ħolqa vitali fil-katina li qegħda tinbena għas-sigurtà u stabbilità fl-Ewropa.

L-isforzi bla heda ta' Malta fil-Konferenza ta' Helsinki dwar is-Sigurtà u l-Koperazzjoni fl-Ewropa fl-aħħar wasslu għad-dokument storiku dwar il-Mediterran li kien inkluż fl-Att Finali tal-Konferenza. Id-Dokument dwar il-Mediterran ma jsemmix biss kunċetti u twemmin politiku u jħeġġeġ l-istati tal-Mediterran kollha biex jagħtu sehemhom fi sforzi biex titjieb is-sigurtà billi jissaħħu r-rabtiet kulturali, ekonomiċi u xjentifiċi ma' l-istati Ewropej l-oħrajn.

Għalkemm dawn il-fehmiet kienu mniżżlin ċar fl-Att Finali tal-Konferenza ta' Helsinki, ftit jew xejn kienu l-miżuri prattiċi li saru. Tabilħaqq ftit huma l-inizjattivi prattiċi li ttieħdu biex jitwettqu l-obbligazzjonijiet imniżżlin fl-Att Finali.

Huwa sewwa sew f'dan il-kuntest li wieħed jifhem aħjar l-isforzi ta' Malta biex tistabbilixxi lilha nnifisha bħala ċentru ta' koperazzjoni politika, kulturali, soċjali u ekonomika fil-Mediterran. Għax għalkemm issa bdiet bis-serjetà l-mixja ħalli l-Mediterran jikseb l-identità tiegħu u ħalli f'dan ir-reġjun ikun hawn is-sigurtà, huwa

wkoll minnu illi d-djalogu fil-Mediterran dwar għadd ta' kwistjonijiet jeħtieġ lil min imexxih 'il quddiem sew biex isir tassew effettiv. L-istabbilità u l-armonija firreġjun tal-Mediterran fis-snin li ġejjin nistgħu niggarantuhom bħala l-ewwel pass effettiv lejn l-għaqda fl-Ewropa jekk ir-relazzjonijiet reġjonali nsaħħuhom u nqegħduhom fuq pedamenti aktar soda.

Huwa dan il-vojt li Malta fi ħsiebha timla fis-snin li ġejjin. Bl-inizjattivi ġodda ta' Malta se nwettqu l-inpenn li nibdew norganizzaw proposti pożittivi u konkreti biex tissaħħaħ il-koperazzjoni fil-Mediterran u biex maż-żmien niftħu toroq ġodda li jwasslu għat-twettiq tal-aspirazzjonijiet li għandu r-reġjun tal-Mediterran.

Inizjattivi Politiċi

Fil-qasam politiku, Malta ma naqsitx li tkompli tkun hi li turi t-triq meta minħabba sensiela ta' ġrajjiet storiċi kienet imġiegħla tieħu din l-inizjattiva fil-Konferenza ta' Helsinki f'isem sħabha tal-Mediterran. Minħabba f'hekk, issa diġà jeżisti għarfien akbar tal-vantaġġi li jistgħu jinkisbu minn relazzjonijiet speċjali mibnija fuq għaqda politika fost il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran. Inizjattiva ta' dan l-aħħar li tagħmel parti minn dawn l-isforzi biex jissaħħu r-rabtiet politiċi fil-Mediterran hija t-twaqqif f'Malta ta' segretarjat elett minn u biex jaqdi l-movimenti taż-żgħażagħ Soċjalisti kollha tal-Mediterran.

Inizjattiva oħra komuni bejn il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran li għandu jkollha effett politiku mportanti għar-reġjun kollu tal-Mediterran kienet il-konferenza li saret f'Malta b'suċċess f'Ġunju tal-1977 għall-partiti Soċjalisti u għall-organizzazzjonijiet politiċi progressivi oħrajn tal-Mediterran. Laqgħat politiċi ta' din ix-xorta se ninkuraġġuhom bis-sħiħ fis-snin li ġejjin għax permezz ta' hekk ikun hemm għarfien akbar tax-xewqat ta' Malta li tkun minn ta' quddiem politikament f'dan ir-reġjun. Barra minn hekk, il-kuntatti li nwaqqfu permezz ta' dawn l-attivitajiet, iġibu lillgżejjer Maltin f'kuntatt ma' idejat u esperjenzi ġodda li jkunu ta' siwi kbir għallprogress soċjali tal-pajjiż.

Bdil Kulturali

Wieħed mill-aspetti l-aktar importanti tal-Mediterran huwa r-rikkezza tal-istorja tiegħu u s-sehem kbir li kellu fiċ-ċiviltà ta' l-Ewropa tal-Punent. Tul iż-żminijiet, il-Mediterran kien il-post fejn iltaqgħu diversi kulturi, reliġjonijiet u tradizzjonijiet, u l-wirt vast tiegħu joffri possibiltajiet kbar għal bdil kulturali f'livell reġjonali bejn il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran.

Għalhekk hemm lok kbir biex Malta tieħu l-inizjattiva u ssir ċentru kulturali fil-Mediterran fejn jinxterdu l-aspetti diversi tal-ħajja tal-Mediterran u l-iżvilupp kulturali tal-pajjiżi f'dan ir-reġjun u minn fejn nistgħu nkabbru l-interess fil-wirt Mediterranju. Id-diversi attivitajiet ta' natura kulturali li Malta tista' torganizza flimkien ma' pajjiżi oħra fil-Mediterran jistgħu jqajjmu nteress akbar u jkabbru għarfien aħjar tal-wirt li għandhom il-pajjiżi kollha tal-Mediterran. Permezz ta' bdil kulturali ta' din ix-xorta, Malta tista' taqdi tajjeb is-sehem ġdid tagħha u tgħin biex niżviluppaw aktar relazzjonijiet tajba bejn il-pajjiżi kollha tal-Mediterran.

Malta tista' twettaq għadd kbir ta' inizjattivi biex tħeġġeġ u ssaħħaħ l-iżvilupp ta' bdil kulturali reġjonali fil-Mediterran. Jistgħu jsiru arranġamenti għall-bdil, ngħidu aħna, bejn gruppi Mediterraneji li jkun hemm fosthom:

— koperazzjoni bejn organizzazzjonijiet tal-mezzi tax-xandir li jinkludu aġenziji ta' l-istampa u għaqdiet ta' ġurnalisti biex jiġbru, jibdlu u jxerrdu l-informazzjoni l-aktar fuq suġġetti li għandhom x'jaqsmu l-iżjed mal-Mediterran u li huma direttament konnessi ma' l-aspirazzjonijiet tal-Mediterran;

— kuntatti u laqgħat bejn ġurnalisti, kumpanniji nazzjonali tar-radju u tat-televiżjoni għall-bdil ta' idejat u fehmiet;

— it-tqassim ta' programmi tar-radju u tat-televiżjoni li jkunu ta' nteress speċjali għal min joqgħod fil-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran;

— l-organizzazzjoni ta' wirjiet ta' kotba u t-titjib tal-faċilitajiet għal self u għall-bdil ta' films u dokumentarji;

— it-tixrid u l-iżvilupp tal-letteratura tal-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran biex din tkun tista' tilħaq aktar qarrejja;

— it-tixrid tal-wiri ta' films fuq bażi mhux kummerċjali fil-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran permezz ta' festivals ta' films eċċ., biex b'hekk ikun hawn kuxjenza akbar tad-destin komuni tal-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran;

— l-organizzazzjoni bejn il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran ta' avvenimenti reġjonali bħalma huma wirjiet ta' l-arti; wirjiet tejatrali; ballet u mużika; studji arkeoloġiċi; skejjel tas-sajf; attivitajiet sportivi; xogħlijiet operistiċi u drammatiċi; wirjiet minn gruppi artistiċi; avvenimenti kulturali taż-żgħażagħ eċċ.

Koperazzjoni Teknika u Xjentifika

Eżempju wieħed ta' koperazzjoni prattika bejn il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran fil-qasam xjentifiku huwa ċ-Ċentru Reġjonali kontra t-Tniġġis taż-Żejt li nfetaħ f'Malta f'Diċembru ta' l-1976 taħt l-awspiċji tal-UNEP u l-*Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (IMCO)*. Ix-xogħol taċ-ċentru jinkludi koperazzjoni fost il-pajjiżi tal-kosta tal-Mediterran biex iwaqqfu t-tixrid kbir taż-żejt fil-Mediterran speċjalment fl-emerġenzi u għajnuna lill-istati membri biex itejbu l-mezzi nazzjonali tagħhom kontra t-tniġġis miż-żejt. L-attivitajiet taċ-ċentru jinkludu wkoll il-ġbir u t-tqassim ta' informazzjoni lill-pajjiżi membri; it-tħejjija ta' pjani ta' emerġenza kontra t-tniġġis miż-żejt; l-iżvilupp ta' komunikazzjoni effettiva bejn iċ-ċentru u l-pajjiżi li jmissu mal-baħar Mediterran; u t-tixrid ta' programmi ta' koperazzjoni u ta' taħriġ teknoloġiku. B'dan il-mod Malta diġà qegħda tagħti s-sehem attiv tagħha biex issolvi wieħed mill-akbar problemi li bħalissa għandu l-Baħar Mediterran; u huwa ttamat li fis-snin li ġejjin jittieħdu inizjattivi oħra ta' din ix-xorta u ta' natura prattika bħala parti minn sforz kollettiv mill-pajjiżi kollha tal-Mediterran biex iħarsu l-ambjent tar-reġjun kollu u biex jitjiebu l-kondizzjonijiet ta' l-għixien tal-popli tagħhom.

F'dan ir-rigward u fl-isfond ta' inizjattivi u programmi bejn il-pajjiżi biex tikber aktar il-koperazzjoni teknika reġjonali, Malta diġà talbet l-għajnuna tal-Għus Magħquda u tal-aġenziji speċjalizzati tagħha fosthom l-UNEP, l-ECE u l-UNDP għat-twaqqif ta' ċentru reġjonali f'Malta għall-iżvilupp prattiku u l-applikazzjoni ta' l-enerġija tax-xemx u tar-riħ għall-benefiċċju tal-pajjiżi fir-reġjun. Dan il-proġett qed jiġi studjat bis-sħiħ u l-isforzi biex jinkiseb l-appoġġ ta' pajjiżi oħra għall-proposta Maltija diġà kisbu suċċess. Tabilħaqq, il-Libja, it-Turkija, il-Greċja, Ċipru, l-Italja u Spanja lkoll taw l-appoġġ tagħhom lill-proposta ta' Malta.

Bħalissa qed jiġi studjat ukoll proġett li għandu x'jaqsam mas-saħħa u li huwa wkoll ta' natura prattika u li jkun ta' benefiċċju dirett lill-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran. Permezz ta' dan il-proġett se nipprovdu faċilitajiet ta' taħriġ f'Malta għall-istaff paramediku tal-isptarijiet l-aktar mill-pajjiżi Għarab li għadhom qed jiżviluppaw. Hemm il-ħsieb li jitwaqqaf ċentru reġjonali bl-għajnuna tal-Borstel Institute ta' Hamburg, l-iżjed għat-taħriġ ta' staff para-mediku u l-aktar fix-xogħol ta' laboratorji mediċi. L-attivitajiet taċ-ċentru li hemm il-ħsieb li jsir jistgħu jiżdiedu biex ikopru servizzi oħra tas-saħħa fosthom l-użu bħala laboratorju għar-reġjun tal-Mediterran għall-istħarriġ ta' każi li jitressqu quddiemu. Il-Borstel Institute diġà qabel li jagħti għajnuna teknika għall-organizzazzjoni u t-tmexxija ta' dan iċ-ċentru waqt li l-*World Health Organisation* ukoll se tgħin fil-proġett billi tipprovdi għajnuna finanzjarja.

Proġett ieħor li għandu x'jaqsqam mas-saħħa u li bħalissa qed jiġi studjat huwa t-twaqqif ta' ċentru għall-kliewi bl-għajnuna finanzjarja tal-Jamahirija Libjana Għarbija. Dan iċ-ċentru se jieħu ħsieb mhux biss il-kura ta' pazjenti Maltin li jbatu minn mard tal-kliewi iżda se jieħu ħsieb ukoll ta' pazjenti minn pajjiżi oħra fil-Mediterran. Hemm il-ħsieb ukoll li fi żmien mhux wisq 'il bogħod studenti minn dawn il-pajjiżi jibdew jitgħallmu fl-Iskola Medika li qed titwaqqaf mill-ġdid skond il-prinċipji tas-servizz mediku ġdid li se jidħol f'Malta.

Il-Gvern Malti fi ħsiebu jgħin kemm jiflaħ u jagħti nkoraġġiment sħiħ lil proġetti bħal dawn fis-snin li ġejjin. Huwa permezz ta' dawn il-proġetti prattiċi illi nistgħu nsaħħu l-koperazzjoni bejn il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran u b'hekk jikbru u jissodaw aktar il-prospetti ta' stabbilità reġjonali. Barra minn hekk, jekk Malta tiġi użata mhux aktar bħala bażi militari iżda bħala ċentru fejn hemm dawn l-attivitajiet prattiċi, il-gżira biż-żmien tinbidel f'ċentru fil-Mediterran li tista' tieħu ħsieb il-bżonnijiet reġjonali fl-oqsma ekonomiċi, politiċi u kulturali. B'dan il-mod, il-proċess ta' djalogu bejn il-pajjiżi tal-Mediterran, li għalih Malta ħadmet b'tant kuraġġ f'dawn l-aħħar snin, jimxi 'l quddiem u l-idejali ta' koperazzjoni reġjonali jissaħħu aktar.

Biex jirnexxu l-isforzi ta' Malta biex issir ċentru reġjonali jinħtieġ li jkun hemm ukoll il-faċilitajiet ta' infrastruttura kollha li hemm bżonn. Biex dawn l-idejat iseħħu u Malta ssir ċentru għall-organizzazzjoni ta' attivitajiet politiċi u kulturali u ta' attivitajiet oħrajn li jgħaqqdu l-pajjiżi kollha tal-Mediterran — kif ukoll bħala ċ-ċentru għall-organizzazzjonijiet nternazzjonali bħalma hija l-Awtorità ta' Qiegħ il-Baħar — Malta jeħtieġ li jkollha ċentru għall-konferenzi nternazzjonali li jkollu l-faċiiltajiet kollha għal laqgħat ta' din ix-xorta. Is-Servizzi Ngliżi dan l-aħħar telqu l-*Officers Transit Centre* f'Ħal Far u l-Gvern għandu l-ħsieb li dan il-blokk ta' bini jibdlu f'ċentru nternazzjonali għall-konferenzi.

Fis-snin li ġejjin se tispiċċa għal kollox l-istampa ta' Malta bħala fortizza qawwija li taqdi lill-pajjiż barrani l-aktar b'saħħtu. Malta se tieħu dehra ġdida ta' pajjiż marbut mal-kawża tal-paċi u ta' ċentru nternazzjonali fejn il-popli tal-Mediterran, wara sekli sħaħ ta' taqlib u ġlied, se jiksbu idejal ġdid li permezz tiegħu l-Mediterran jilbes libsa ġdida ta' rispett u ta' dinjità.

V — GĦELUQ

Malta issa tinsab f'salib it-toroq tad-destin politiku u ekonomiku tagħha. F'inqas minn sentejn oħra, il-bażi militari Ngliża f'Malta tispiċċa għal kollox u l-ftehim mar-Renju Unit dwar l-użu tal-faċilitajiet militari f'Malta jintemm. L-ekonomija Maltija mbagħad ma tkunx aktar tista' tuża l-flus li f'dawn l-aħħar snin daħħlet bħala riżultat tal-Ftehim: Malta lanqas ma jkollha aktar l-qliegħ ekonomiku li ddaħħal mill-preżenza militari Ngliża.

Fl-1979, meta jitilqu għal dejjem l-aħħar suldati Ngliżi, Malta tibda taqsima ġdida fil-ġrajja tagħha. Malta tkun tista' mbagħad għall-ewwel darba tgħix ħajja ġdida u tgħaddi għal kollox mingħajr in-nefqa militari tal-forzi barranin fil-pajjiż. Malta mbagħad tkun tiddependi għal kollox fuq attivitajiet ekonomiċi għall-għixien tagħha.

Il-kobor ta' din il-biċċa xogħol li pajjiżna daħal għaliha huwa kbir wisq għaliex ifisser bidla sħiħa fl-istruttura tal-ekonomija ta' Malta. Dan l-impenn bl-ebda mod ma sar aktar ħafif bil-ġrajjiet ekonomiċi koroh li dgħajfu l-aktar ekonomiji f'saħħithom fl-Ewropa u l-attivitajiet industrjali u kummerċjali li minnhom issa Malta trid tieħu s-saħħa tagħha. B'danakollu, dan bl-ebda mod ma xejjen l-entużjasmu ta'

Malta biex tilħaq l-għanijiet li għandha quddiemha. Dan anzi sewa biss biex inissel fin-nazzjon sens aktar qawwi ta' sodisfazzjon u ta' kburija fit-triq li Malta stess għażlet li taqbad f'Mediterran ħieles, mingħajr l-irbit tal-preżenza tas-superpotenzi.

Hija tassew ħaġa li tqawwi l-qalb li n-nazzjon kollu issa qed iwieġeb għas-sejħa tal-Gvern Malti għal għaqda nazzjonali biex jintlaħaq l-għan politiku ewlieni li għandna quddiemna. Issa hemm ukoll tweġiba li timlina bil-kuraġġ minn inħawi politiċi barra minn Malta u l-għanijiet tagħha issa saru ħaġa waħda max-xewqat politiċi tal-Mediterran kollu. Hekk issa x-xewqa ta' Malta ħielsa għal Mediterran ħieles hija l-pedament li fuqha qed nibnu l-isforzi politiċi tan-nazzjon u issa bdejna resqin sew u qed noqorbu dejjem aktar lejn iż-żmien meta nkunu nistgħu nwettqu bis-sħiħ l-għan ewlieni politiku ta' din il-gżira li għal tant snin kienet il-fortizza tal-Mediterran.

F'dawn l-aħħar sitt snin l-għanijiet soċjali tan-nazzjon ukoll wettaqnihom b'determinazzjoni u l-pajjiż issa jaqbel ħafna ma' politika soċjali li permezz tagħha noħolqu soċjetà aktar ħanina. Id-differenzi li kienu joħolqu firdiet kbar bejn id-diversi klassijiet soċjali ta' Malta issa tnaqqsu sew u issa fil-pajjiż għandna armonija soċjali aktar milli qatt kellna qabel. Minħabba f'hekk, is-soċjetà Maltija issa saret kommunità aktar magħquda, aktar ħanina u aktar marbuta.

Flimkien mal-miżuri maħsuba biex ikun hawn tqassim aħjar tal-qliegħ kien hawn ukoll tqassim aktar ġust tar-riżorsi nazzjonali: dan ġara kemm permezz tal-bosta miżuri li ħa l-Gvern biex il-qliegħ jinqasam aħjar u kif ukoll permezz tal-programm kbir ta' investiment pubbliku l-aktar fis-settur tas-saħħa u fil-bini tad-djar biex l-infrastruttura soċjali tal-pajjiż tkun fuq bażi aktar soda.

Fis-snin li ġejjin il-Gvern fi ħsiebu jkompli jieħu l-miżuri soċjali li jkollhom bħala għan li jgħinu l-aktar lil ċerti gruppi soċjali fil-pajjiż. Diġà twettqu bosta miżuri jew inkella qed jiġu studjati miżuri oħra bħala parti mill-programm tal-Gvern biex isaħħaħ dejjem aktar l-istruttura soċjali tal-pajjiż skond ix-xewqa nazzjonali li f'Malta nwaqqfu soċjetà li tiddependi fuqha nnifisha, soċjetà moderna li tieħu ħsieb dawk li jeħtieġu l-għajnuna.

Fost dawn il-miżuri prattiċi nsibu aktar riformi fl-amministrazzjoni tat-taxxa tad-dħul bl-għajnuna ta' esperti minn barra l-pajjiż bil-għan li nnaqqsu kemm jista' jkun l-evażjoni tat-taxxa; aktar titjib fl-għadd ta' servizzi soċjali li jipprovdi l-Gvern fosthom l-eskema l-ġdida tas-saħħa li permezz tagħha se jitwaqqfu servizzi mediċi komprensivi għall-ħarsien u l-kura tas-sezzjonijiet kollha tal-popolazzjoni; u tqassim aħjar tad-djar u aktar nies li jkollhom id-dar tagħhom stess permezz tal-Awtorità tad-Djar biex hekk niżguraw li anki l-aktar familja fqira f'Malta tista' tgawdi għixien aħjar fi djar komdi.

F'dan l-ispirtu ta' ftehim soċjali, it-triq issa tinsab imwittija għal soċjetà aktar magħquda u li fiha kulħadd jgħix bħal familja waħda, fejn ma jeżistux privileġġi bla bżonn u fejn is-sezzjonijiet l-anqas ixxurtjati tal-komunità Maltija jkunu jistgħu jgawdu huma wkoll il-frott tal-progress nazzjonali.

Fis-snin li ġejjin il-Gvern se jagħmel ħiltu kollha biex jiżviluppa kemm jiflaħ fost il-kommunità kollha nteress akbar u parteċipazzjoni soċjali akbar fil-ħajja tal-pajjiż. Il-Gvern iħoss li wasal iż-żmien li ċ-ċittadini Maltin jibdew jieħdu sehem bil-qalb u b'interess fi ħwejjeġ li jolqtu mill-qrib il-ħajja tagħhom ta' kuljum. It-twaqqif tal-kumitati tal-ġirien se jkun pass lejn din id-direzzjoni — l-ewwel pass f'esperjenza kollha kemm hi ġdida għall-poplu Malti li permezz tagħha d-diversi sezzjonijiet tal-kommunità jkollhom sehem fit-tmexxija tal-pajjiż.

Dan il-proċess ta' parteċipazzjoni se nwessgħuh fis-snin li ġejjin u nifirxuh f'oqsma oħra, l-aktar fil-qasam tax-xogħol. Il-ħaddiema, hu x'inhu x-xogħol li jagħ-

mlu, se jkunu mħeġġa biex jieħdu nteress akbar u anki biex jieħdu dmirijiet fil-post tax-xogħol minn fejn jaqilgħu x'jieklu u se jkunu mħeġġa jieħdu sehem f'forom ġodda ta' djalogu bejn min jaħdem u min imexxi. Bis-saħħa ta' dan, għandu jkun hemm kuntatt aktar ħieles bejn iż-żewġ naħat li għandu jgħinhom aħjar il-problemi ta' xulxin u jkabbar fihom rieda akbar biex jintlaħqu l-għanijiet ġenerali.

Is-sehem tal-ħaddiema fit-Tarzna u f'intrapriżi oħra kienet esperjenza li qawwiet il-qlub u dan issa jista' jservi bħala l-mudell li fuqu nibnu skemi oħra ta' parteċipazzjoni mill-ħaddiema. Is-sehem dirett tal-ħaddiema waqt li qed jittieħdu d-deċiżjonijiet u fit-tmexxija ta' kuljum tal-postijiet fejn jaħdmu, jekk jidħol b'mod għaqli u jekk isir bir-responsabbilità, jista' jwassal għal aktar effiċjenza fuq ix-xogħol u għal livelli ogħla ta' produzzjoni. Dawn huma żewġ affarijiet li tabilħaqq neħtiġuhom fiż-żmien meta l-pajjiż qed iħejji ruħu biex jilqa' l-isfida li għandu quddiemu u l-Gvern mhux fi ħsiebu jibqa' lura iżda lest biex imexxi hu f'din it-triq ta' parteċipazzjoni mill-ħaddiema.

L-ekonomija ta' Malta mxiet 'il quddiem sew f'dawn is-snin l-aktar meta wieħed iġib quddiem għajnejh it-taqlib ekonomiku nternazzjonali li fixkel il-progress ta' pajjiżi mogħnija b'riżorsi nazzjonali ferm akbar minn tagħna. Madankollu, minkejja dak li diġà sar, l-aktar sfida iebsa għal Malta fis-snin li ġejjin se tkun li nlestu fil-ħin il-proċess li permezz tiegħu nbiddlu l-istruttura ekonomika tal-pajjiż.

Hekk kif in-nazzjon qed joqrob lejn il-ħin l-aktar iebes tal-iżvilupp ekonomiku tiegħu, esperti ekonomiċi nternazzjonali qegħdin ibassru ġejjieni aktarx imċajpar għall-bqija ta' dawn l-għaxar snin; id-dinja ndustrjali tal-Punent għad għandha quddiemha prospetti koroh ta' aktar qagħad, rati għoljin ta' inflazzjoni, rati aktar baxxi ta' żvilupp u defiċit fil-bilanċ tal-pagamenti. L-esperjenza ta' dawn l-aħħar erba' snin uriet illi fi żminijiet bħal dawn l-ekonomija ta' Malta li hija miftuħa beraħ u li tista' tintlaqat sew m'għandha ebda tama li teħles mill-effett sħiħ ta' dawn il-problemi u toħroġ bla mittiefsa.

Fi żminijiet ta' risq, l-impenn ta' Malta biex tfassal ħajja ekonomika ġdida ma kenitx tkun xi biċċa xogħol ħafifa, iżda meta l-qagħda nternazzjonali hija daqshekk ħażina, ix-xogħol ta' Malta jsir bil-wisq aktar diffiċli. Wieħed għalhekk jifhem malajr it-talba li għamlet Malta lill-erba' pajjiżi ġirien tagħha — il-Libja u l-Alġerija; l-Italja u Franza — għal garanziji dwar il-vijabbilità tagħha fl-ewwel snin. Malta tabilħaqq qed tagħmel ħilitha biex tqiegħed pedamenti sodi għal bażi ndustrjali b'saħħitha li permezz tagħha tkun tista' tikseb indipendenza ekonomika fl-iqsar żmien possibbli.

Dan is-Suppliment tal-Pjan waqt li tana l-opportunità naraw l-iżvilupp li sar s'issa f'Malta f'diversi setturi, tana l-opportunità wkoll li fl-istess ħin nagħtu ħarsa ġdida lejn kemm hi kbira l-isfida ekonomika li Malta għandha quddiemha u lejn il-mezzi kif nistgħu nsaħħu l-istrateġija ta' l-iżvilupp ta' Malta.

Għalhekk waqt li l-għanijiet ġenerali jibqgħu l-istess li dehru fil-Pjan ta' Żvilupp, it-tattika għall-iżvilupp ekonomiku ta' pajjiżna se nsaħħuha biex nagħmlu użu tal-bidla fiċ-ċirkostanzi u biex l-ekonomija lokali tieħu vantaġġ sħiħ mill-opportunitajiet ġodda li għandna quddiemna l-iżjed fil-Mediterran. Is-settur tal-manifattura xorta għad għandu sehem tassew importanti biex nilħqu l-għanijiet tal-Pjan għalkemm dan is-Suppliment tal-Pjan jagħraf sewwa l-importanza li Malta fi ħsiebha tagħti aktar 'il quddiem lis-settur tas-'servizzi' biex tiżviluppa l-ekonomija.

Dawn huma servizzi, madankollu, li huma differenti mis-servizzi li Malta tat f'dawn l-aħħar snin u li kellhom x'jaqsmu l-aktar mat-turiżmu u ma' servizzi oħra bħalu. Dan huwa settur ta' servizzi li hu differenti mill-oħrajn u li joffru bosta possibilitajiet ġodda li Malta fi ħsiebha tipprova tisfrutta kemm jista' jkun fis-snin li ġejjin.

Din it-triq ġdida ta' Malta bħala ċentru ewlieni reġjonali għal dak li huwa *servicing* se jagħti opportunità sħiħa għall-iżvilupp tar-riżorsi lokali u l-aktar fost-hom l-użu ta' snajja' tekniċi u ta' esperjenza teknika li għandna fil-pajjiż fi żmien meta fl-inħawi ta' madwarna hawn domanda kbira għal dan it-tip ta' servizzi.

Dak li qiegħed jistinka għalih il-pajjiż f'waqt hekk importanti tal-ġrajja poli-tika u ekonomika tiegħu issa qed tapprezzah sezzjoni kbira — u li dejjem qegħda tikber — tal-kommunità Maltija. Il-ħelsien sħiħ minn ħajja li kienet marbuta wisq mal-valur strateġiku tal-pajjiż għall-qawwiet militari barranin, madankollu, diġà ġab responsabbilitajiet u dmirijiet aktar iebsa fuq spallejn iċ-ċittadini kollha Mal-tin — u dawn id-dmirijiet se jkunu aktar tqal fis-snin li ġejjin fuqna.

Fehma soda fost kulħadd, għalhekk, li ma nibżgħux nidħlu għal dawn id-dmi-rijiet ġodda iżda li nwettquhom bl-akbar ħila għandha tkun dik ix-xi ħaġa tant siewja li permezz tagħha nwettqu bis-sħiħ ix-xewqat kollha ta' Malta. U huwa l-aktar f'dan il-kwadru li wieħed għandu jħares lejn is-sehem ta' kull ċittadin Malti fis-snin li resqin.

Huwa minnu li huwa d-dmir tal-Gvern permezz tad-diversi miżuri li jista' jieħu, li joħloq fil-pajjiż klima tajba biżżejjed li ġġib 'il quddiem il-progress ekonomiku u l-iżvilupp soċjali fil-pajjiż. Iżda huwa fl-aħħar mill-aħħar il-ħaddiem Malti li għandu s-sehem l-aktar importanti biex jintlaħqu l-għanijiet ġenerali tal-pajjiż. Dan kien minn dejjem it-twemmin tal-Gvern Laburista — li permezz ta' dixxiplina magħna nfusna, xogħol iebes u ħidma onesta, il-Gżejjer Maltin setgħu jilqgħu l-isfida u jħaddmu d-dmirijiet kollha ta' nazzjon.

Fis-snin li ġejjin, għalhekk, it-titjib fil-livell tal-għixien tal-kommunità Maltija se jkun jiddependi aktar minn ħaġa oħra fuq it-tweġiba li se jagħtu l-ħaddiema Maltin għal din is-sejħa — għall-ħtieġa urġenti li nkabbru l-produttività, inżidu l-produzzjoni u nsiru aktar effiċjenti. Għaldaqshekk, it-titjib fil-livell tal-għixien u fil-kondizzjonijiet tax-xogħol se jiddependi l-aktar fuq l-isforzi tal-ħaddiema kollha Maltin li b'dan il-mod għandhom jgħinu sew fil-mixja tal-pajjiż lejn ġejjieni isbaħ u lejn il-ħelsien, lejn fiduċja akbar fl-isforzi tagħna u lejn l-indipendenza.

Meta wieħed jifhem dawn l-ambizzjonijiet ġodda tal-pajjiż, is-sehem tal-għaq-diet tal-ħaddiema Maltin fiż-żmien li ġej jieħu tifsira wisq aktar kbira. Il-moviment tal-ħaddiema Maltin, li dejjem wettaq id-dmirijiet tiegħu, ħadem bla heda biex itejjeb il-kondizzjonijiet tax-xogħol tal-ħaddiem Malti u mill-1971 ħadem mill-qrib sew mal-Gvern Laburista u sab kull għajnuna minn għandu. F'dan il-ħin fil-proċess tal-iżvilupp ta' Malta u f'soċjetà Maltija li qegħda tinbidel, il-moviment tal-ħaddie-ma f'Malta qiegħed bil-mod il-mod jikseb dejjem aktar bosta esperjenzi ġodda. Hekk, ngħidu aħna, skemi li permezz tagħhom il-ħaddiema jieħdu sehem kemm waqt li qed isiru d-deċiżjonijiet kif ukoll fil-qsim tal-profitti, huma esperjenzi ġodda li żgur se jħallu effett li ma jitħassarx fir-relazzjonijiet ndustrjali f'Malta u fil-proċess ta' żvilupp soċjali u ekonomiku fil-pajjiż.

Fis-snin li resqin l-għaqdiet tal-ħaddiema Maltin għandhom jinteressaw ruħ-hom aktar mill-qrib u jieħdu sehem akbar fi skemi li permezz tagħhom jogħla l-livell ta' edukazzjoni u l-livell tekniku tal-ħaddiema Maltin. Hemm żewġ modi kif nistgħu nilħqu dan l-għan — se jingħata nkuraġġiment sħiħ u l-għajnuna kollha lill-ħad-diema, kemm fis-settur pubbliku kif ukoll fis-settur privat, li jkunu jridu jieħdu sehem bħala studenti/ħaddiema fi skemi ta' edukazzjoni li jgħinuhom jiżviluppaw s-snajja' tekniċi u jakkwistaw kwalifiki li għandhom x'jaqsmu direttament fix-xo-għol jew fil-professjoni tagħhom. L-għaqdiet tal-ħaddiema Maltin għandhom jieħdu ħsieb ukoll li jħejju programmi ta' edukazzjoni għall-ħaddiema tagħhom li permezz tagħhom dawn ikollhom sens akbar tad-dmirijiet u tal-obbligi tagħhom lejn il-pajjiż f'waqt ta' bidla li bħalissa għaddejjin minnu.

Waqt li l-pajjiż iħares lejn il-ġejjieni b'kuraġġ u b'determinazzjoni, il-fatt li wieħed jaf li din il-bidla fl-istruttura ekonomika tagħna se tkun il-pedament li fuqu nibnu l-isforzi nazzjonali tagħna fis-snin li ġejjin, jagħti tifsira akbar lil dak li rridu nagħmlu. Il-pajjiż kollu issa jaf mingħajr l-iċken dubju li l-mixja tiegħu lejn il-progress hi mixja lejn il-kisba ta' dinjità u ta' rispett għalina nfusna — lejn ħajja ġdida mibnija fuq l-isforzi tagħna stess u fuq newtralità attiva li permezz tagħha nkunu qed naħdmu għal stabbilità fir-reġjun tal-Mediterran, għall-progress soċjali u għall-paċi.

Għanijiet u Raġunijiet

L-Għan ta' dan l-Abbozz huwa li l-Kamra tkun tista' tiddiskuti s-Suppliment għall-Pjan ta' Żvilupp għal Malta 1973-80.

A BILL

entitled

AN ACT to make provision in respect of a Supplement to the Development Plan for the period 1973-80.

BE IT ENACTED by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the Development Plan (Supplement) Act, 1978. Short title.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 2 of the Development Plan Act 1976, the Supplement to the Development Plan for Malta 1973-80 contained in the Schedule of this Act shall also serve as a basis for investment programmes and as an instrument for the guidance of economic growth and social progress for the period ending 31st March, 1980. Supplement to the Plan.

SCHEDULE

(Section 2)

DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR MALTA 1973-80

SUPPLEMENT

FOREWORD

Planning is a continuous process, especially in a small developing island economy such as Malta's which is very sensitive to international economic events.

Significant progress has already been achieved in the implementation of various schemes and programmes on the lines of the strategy outlined in the 1973-80 Development Plan. The development exercise in the last years, however, has also spread along other openings which are being discovered with the rapid conversion of Malta

into a major Mediterranean Centre. These new opportunities have already been evaluated by various Ministries and other development-oriented organisations as evidence of a strong contribution towards the attainment of the overall national objectives.

At this stage, the publication of this Plan Supplement will form an adequate basis for discussion by those sections of the Maltese community which are particularly concerned with the Island's process of economic development. In the light of public reaction to this document, the Plan Supplement will be discussed and approved in Parliament, thus ensuring a deeper national commitment to the new tasks ahead which should provide a major stimulus to the more traditional areas of Malta's economic growth.

I — INTRODUCTION

Malta is now about half way through the 1973-80 Development Plan. This is perhaps the right moment to review and assess progress achieved so far in the light of domestic developments and of a changing international environment. This assessment should also provide the opportunity to fit within the overall national strategy new experiences and ideas acquired since the Plan was launched in 1973; these cannot but bolster Malta's development.

This Plan Supplement is therefore divided broadly into three main sections. The first section is an appraisal of the development effort to date — a wide ranging look at the political, economic and social performance of the Maltese Islands since 1971. The second part contains a broad indication of the extent and magnitude of the major tasks and objectives ahead. The final section reviews new opportunities for development which, if grasped and explored fully, would become Malta's additional avenues for development to strengthen the strategy detailed in the Plan.

The basic objective of the 1973-80 Development Plan, and of this Supplement, is to lead the Maltese Islands to a situation of full economic viability whereby the expenditure by British military forces stationed on the Island — on which Malta's economy was traditionally dependent — will be phased out completely by end-March 1979 when the British military base on the Island will be closed down.

The inspiration of this Supplement too remains that of the original Plan itself. Notwithstanding the turbulence of external economic upheavals of 1974 and 1975 from which Malta could not and did not escape unscathed, the Island's political commitment remains solid and unshaken. By the set date — 31st March 1979 — Malta will discard completely its traditional fortress role and fashion a new way of life unlinked in any way to war, a role in which the Maltese people will earn their livelihood through honest endeavour and initiative in the fields of manufacturing, ship repairing, shipbuilding, agriculture, tourism, commerce and other services.

This new role will come about primarily through self-help, because this is the basic philosophy of the Maltese Labour Government. The people of Malta voted for this philosophy in June 1971 and renewed their mandate in September 1976.

The Maltese people are facing this new historic task with courage and determination. The country has embarked with enthusiasm along the path which it has unequivocally chosen, and which has been clearly mapped out in the Development Plan, towards a life of friendly collaboration and harmony with all other countries particularly those nearby, a life of hard work, of moral rejuvenation, of true freedom. On this road of humane democratic socialism, the Maltese people will move forward in peace and prosperity.

II — PLAN PERFORMANCE

POLITICAL FRONTIERS

During the last six years Malta has striven incessantly for the emergence of a new order in the Mediterranean founded on an awareness of the basic interdependence of Western Europe and the Arab States. It is also Malta's firm conviction that it can only pursue this new path of neutrality and non-alignment in the service of peace if her efforts are supported by both Arabs and Europeans.

For this purpose Malta's policies have been aimed at phasing out the country's dependence on the traditional exploitation of its strategic position for military purposes; peace-inspired economic activities and programmes will instead contribute to the prosperity and social progress of the Maltese community within a framework of regional peace and stability.

Malta's foreign policy has undergone a drastic change since 1971. It is now a policy of strict non-alignment to any of the two super powers based on the belief that their permanent military presence in the Mediterranean Sea does not serve the true interests of peace in the region. Thus, in 1971 Malta closed down the NATO Headquarters to free itself from the political affiliations of the past and to lessen extraneous political influences in the central Mediterranean region.

In March 1972 an Agreement was entered into with Britain which laid down the terms of the phasing out of the British military base. The Agreement not only excludes the use of Malta for aggressive purposes against any state but also contains the explicit condition that, whatever the circumstances, Malta will never be used, even defensively, against any of the Arab states. In 1976 Malta joined the Group of 77 as a further indication of Malta's determination to join the ranks of the non-aligned movement, free of any exclusive political attachments and links.

Malta has at the same time striven unceasingly to improve relations and establish closer contacts with various European and Arab countries. As a result of the political and economic initiatives undertaken by Malta at the international level, there now exists close co-operation between Malta and other nations who genuinely share Malta's aspirations and ideals. The successful renegotiation of the Association Agreement with the European Economic Community, and the bilateral agreements on economic and technical co-operation with a wide range of countries including the Libyan Arab Jamahirija, Italy, China, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, France and W. Germany, all bear witness to the success which has been achieved by these new policies.

Only through a deep sense of unity between all the states of the Mediterranean region and by the emergence of a new autonomous region can the vision of Mediterranean peace and prosperity be truly enhanced. This explains the firm stand taken by the Government of Malta at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held in Helsinki in 1975. Malta's initiative resulted finally in an agreement by all participating states that there could be no European security without Mediterranean security. These efforts in Helsinki, as well as those at a later date in Belgrade, will hopefully one day enable all Mediterranean states to speak with a common voice on matters that affect their security and political destiny.

Malta's role as a bridge for peace between the continents of Europe and Africa has now gained recognition and political support by various countries. To these ideological overtures have also been added strong links of an economic nature forged with Malta's Mediterranean neighbours and other friendly countries sharing Malta's aspirations.

Malta's concern to establish a new political horizon for the Mediterranean area based on regional harmony and co-operation has been accompanied by an equally determined effort to modernize and to revitalise its own internal environment. In December 1974 a new Constitution was approved by the Maltese Parliament which made Malta a democratic republic within the Commonwealth founded on work and on respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual. It made Malta fully responsible for the management of its own affairs and allowed full freedom of conscience and religious belief.

These principles, together with others which were enshrined in Malta's new constitution, should help the process of reform of the Maltese society and ultimately lead to the strengthening of national cohesion and solidarity — a spirit which is particularly vital at this crucial stage of the country's development.

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

The attainment of Malta's political, economic and social objectives will not be possible without a restructuring of the economy in such a way as to make it more self-reliant and no longer dependent on earnings derived from the rendering of military services. The strategy to achieve these objectives is based on industrially-oriented growth with a prominent role being also assigned to market services, particularly tourism, shipping and commerce.

By the end of 1976 economic performance in many respects was broadly in line with, or had even surpassed, the targets of the Development Plan. The relative importance of the foreign military base continued to decline. The rate of growth in real gross domestic product was considerably above the average projected for the whole Plan period. The designated growth sectors, particularly industrial enterprises and tourism, made steady progress. The rate of increase in real output was higher than anticipated due to an increase in the number of gainfully occupied persons and, in particular, to a fast rise in output per worker. Productivity was higher than originally assumed in the Plan as a result of increased labour efficiency and a fuller utilisation of available productive capacity.

The Development Plan relies mainly on an economic structure based on a healthy industrial sector, although in the coming years the Government plans to develop fully those service industries which exploit Malta's unique geographic and other advantages. The fact that the directly productive sector increased its share of economic contribution from around 42 per cent in 1973 to about 48 per cent in 1976 is a very encouraging sign. On the other hand, the share of non-market services which include the rendering of military services dropped from 22 per cent in 1973 to 18 per cent in 1976.

Since the Plan was launched, the manufacturing sector has made the desired rate of progress in spite of a background of international crises, including recession and inflation. The major driving force behind the upturn in economic activity during the last four years has been provided by the strong performance and the rapid growth of the export sector. After having successfully managed to survive the abrupt downswing in demand in Malta's principal export markets in the latter part of 1974, manufacturing output recovered sharply, rising from £M65 million in 1973 to £M131.8 million in 1976. The doubling of the value of output in such a short time reflects mainly a fuller utilization of existing productive capacity as well as the successful attraction and setting up of new enterprises since the launching of the Plan.

Since 1973, 116 new manufacturing projects started production, Plan targets for employment in manufacturing enterprises had aimed at an addition of 7,600 jobs during the years 1973 to 1976; in fact by the end of 1976 about 8,700 new jobs

were provided. These additional employment opportunities coupled with the growth in manufacturing output are in themselves a healthy indication of the success achieved by intensive efforts to seek new export outlets and to maintain local competitiveness in foreign markets by judicious control over domestic prices and production costs. Domestic exports grew from £M31.8 million in 1973 to £M80.1 million in 1976, representing an increase in volume of about 67 per cent which is again ahead of Plan target.

The tourist industry too made remarkable progress despite the depressive economic conditions prevailing in countries from which come the majority of tourists visiting Malta. The number of tourist arrivals in 1976 was 339,537 compared with a Plan target of 289,200. This impressive performance was also reflected in the amount of foreign exchange earned from this sector and permitted increased profitability and a higher rate of occupancy in hotels and other tourist accommodation which were previously underutilized.

In 1976 gross national product per head reached an average of £M730 compared to £M413 in 1973. When allowance is made for price increases, this represents an average rate of real increase of about 15 per cent per year, which was above anticipation. The benefits from the increase in national income were fairly apportioned between the various social groups through a conscious policy aimed at improving the relative incomes of the most needy.

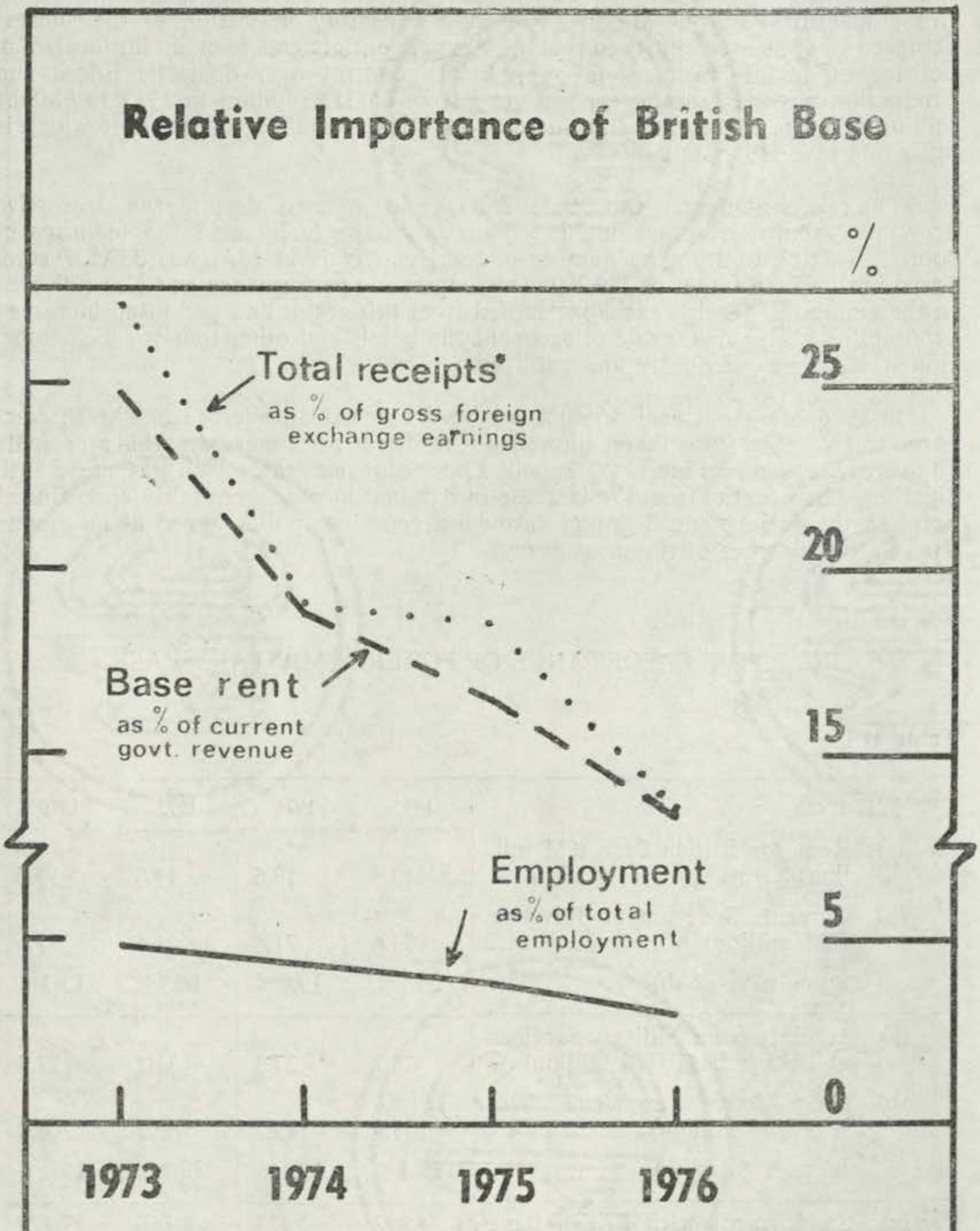
RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN MILITARY BASE

Table II.1

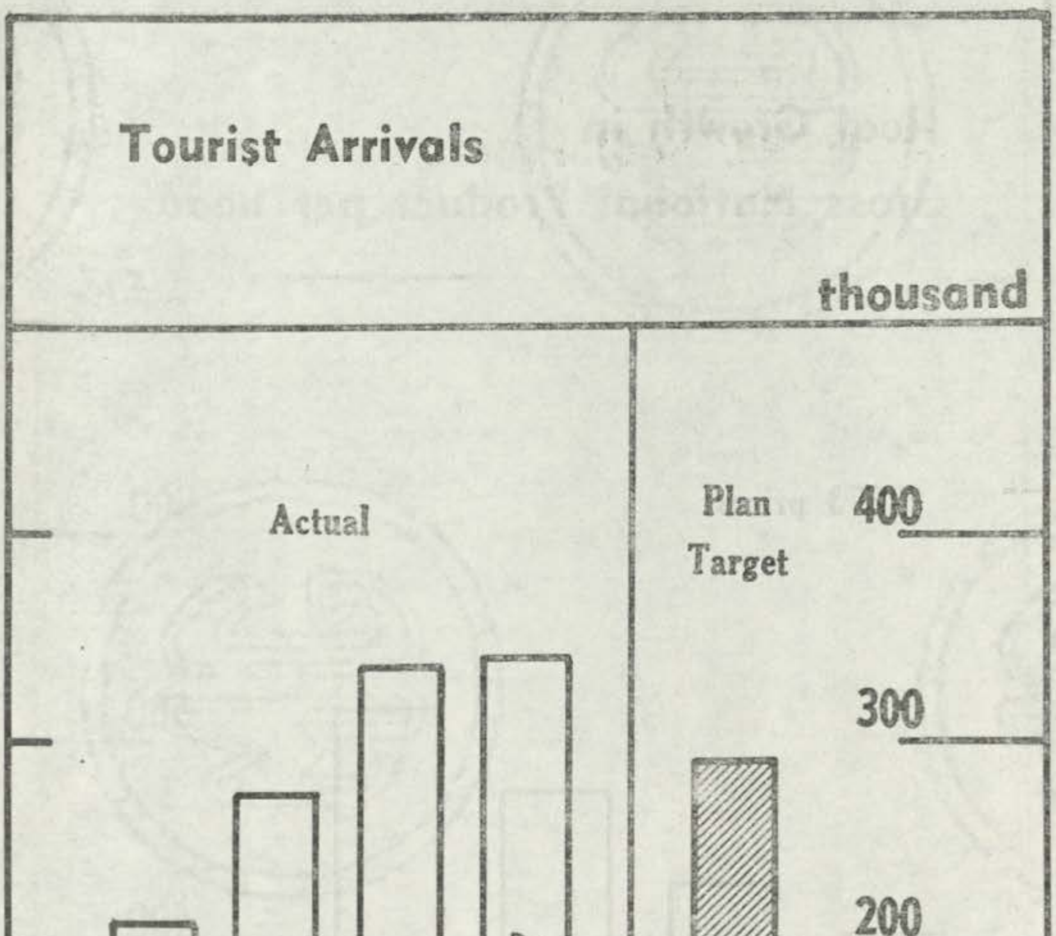
			1973	1974	1975	1976
A.	(a)	Rent for British Base (£M million)	13.5	13.6	13.5	13.0
	(b)	Current Government Revenue (£M million)	54.6	71.6	81.6	97.6
		(a) as a % of (b)	24.7%	19.0%	16.5%	13.3%
B.	(a)	Receipts from Military Services at British Base (£M million) ...	28.7	27.3	31.1	27.7
	(b)	Gross foreign exchange earnings (£M million)	105.9	142.7	168.2	206.0
		(a) as a % of (b)	27.1%	19.1%	18.5%	13.4%
C.	(a)	Employment with British Base	4,892	4,423	4,166	3,329
	(b)	Total Employment	102,981	102,310	107,814	110,518
		(a) as a % of (b)	4.8%	4.3%	3.9%	3.0%

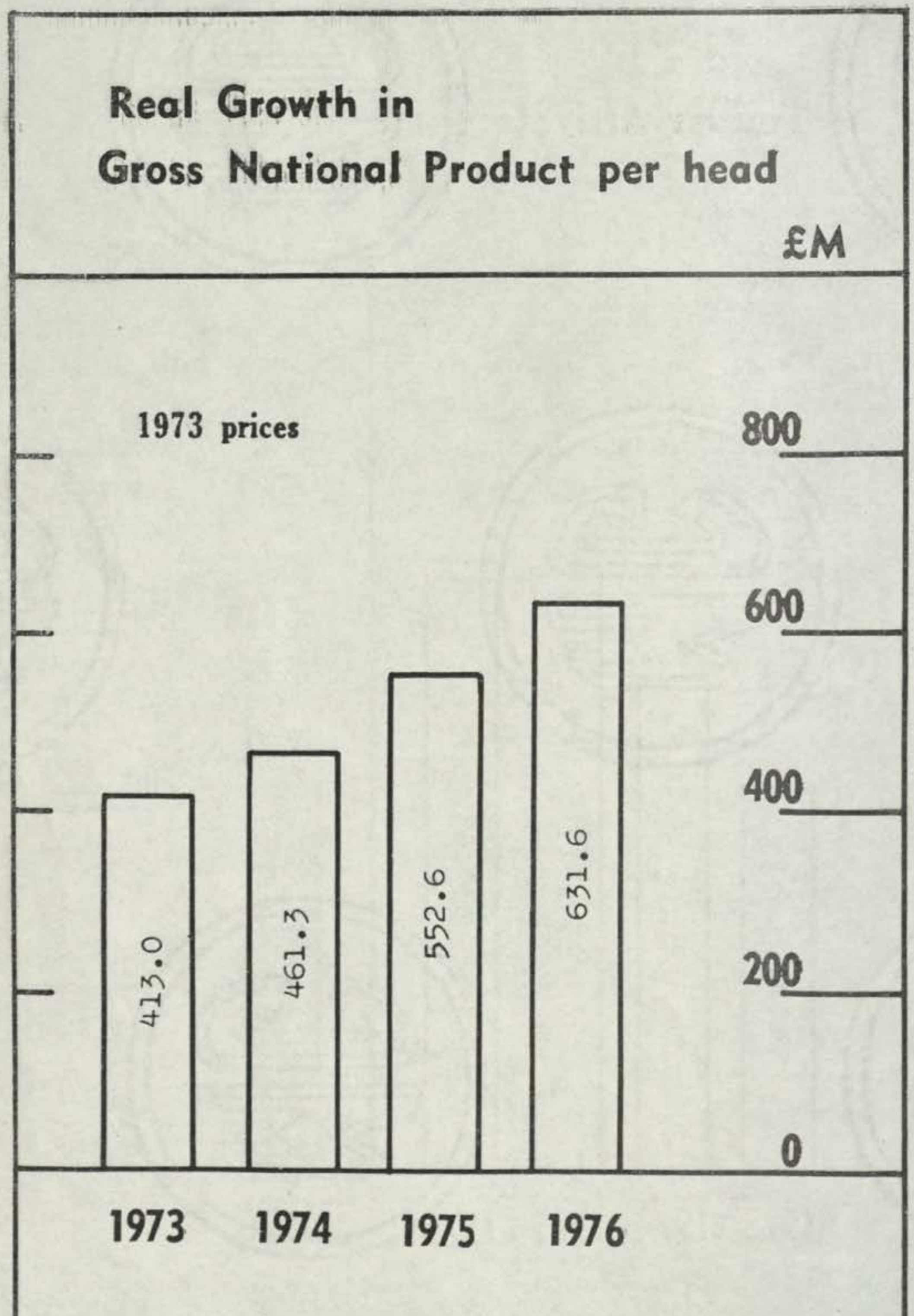
Notes: A (a) and (b): Amounts refer to financial years which start in April and end in March of the following year.

B (a): Made up of sales to British Servicemen and dependents, materials and contracts, payments for public utilities, wages earned by Maltese employees and Base Rent.



* Made up of sales to British Servicemen and dependents, materials and contracts, payments for public utilities, wages earned by Maltese employees and Base Rent.


Tourist Arrivals
thousand
Actual
Plan
Target
400
300
200
100
0
211,196
272,516
334,519
339,537
289,200
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Real Growth in
Gross National Product per head
£M
1973 prices
800
600
400
200
0
413.0
461.3
552.6
631.6
1973
1974
1975
1976

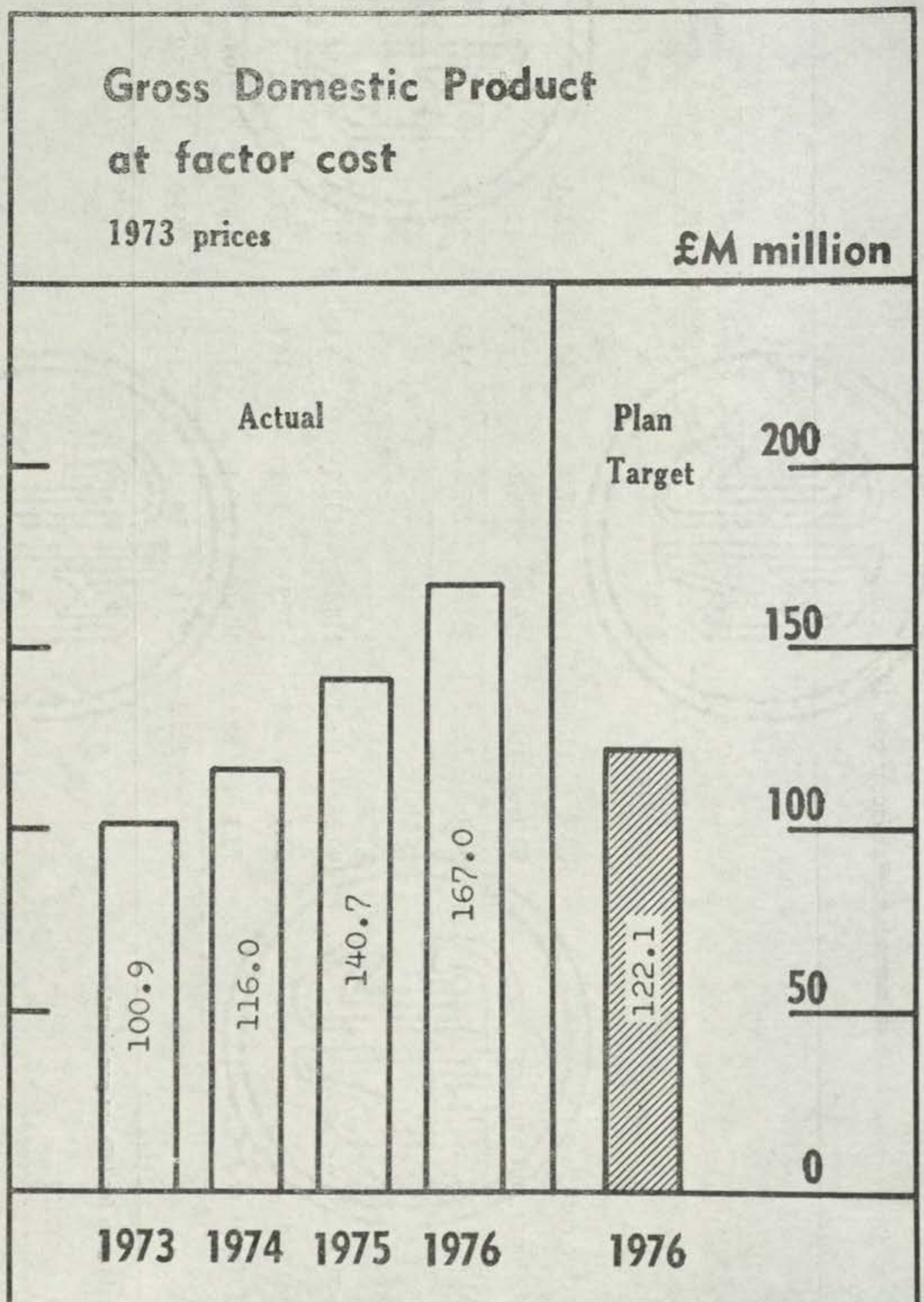
SOURCE AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

(at factor cost 1973 prices)

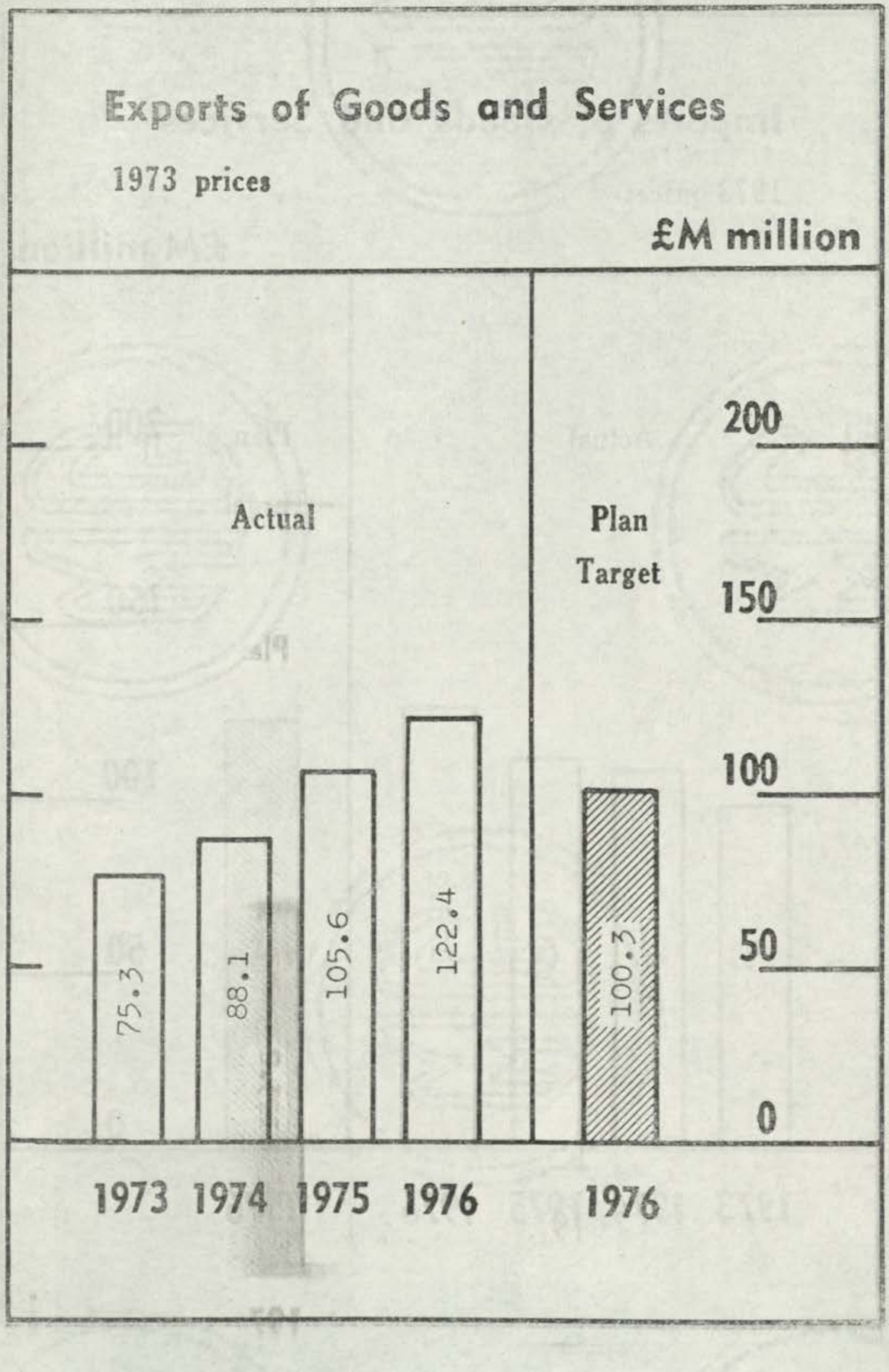
Table II.2

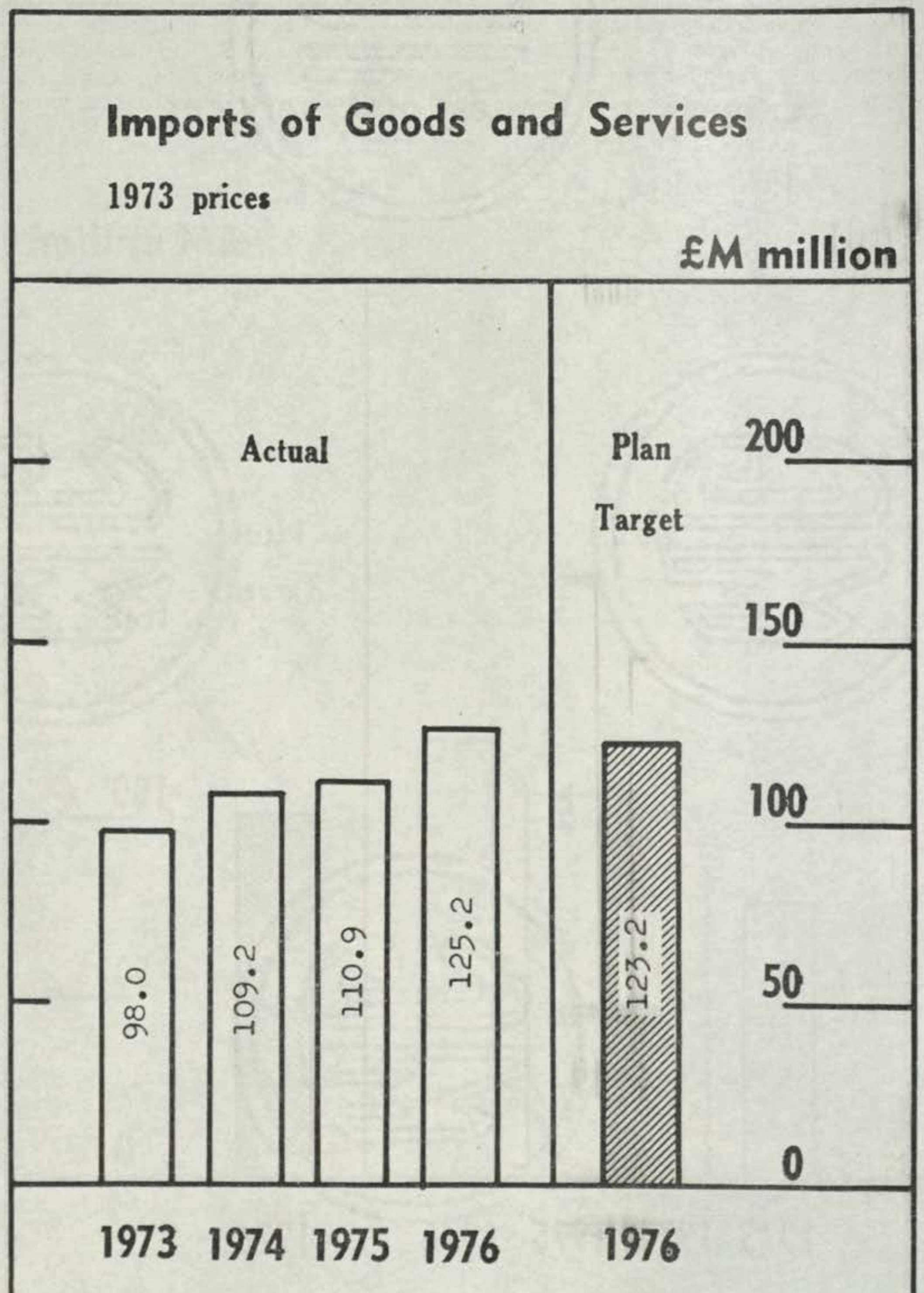
	1973 £Mm	1974 £Mm	1975 £Mm	1976 Actual £Mm	1976 Average Annual Rate of Change	1976 Plan £Mm	1976 Average Annual Rate of Change
					%		%
SOURCE							
GDP at factor cost	100.9	116.0	140.7	167.0	18.3	122.1	6.6
Imports of Goods and Services	98.0	109.2	110.9	125.2	8.5	123.2	7.9
TOTAL	198.9	225.2	251.6	292.2	13.7	245.3	7.2
ALLOCATION							
Consumption	100.2	110.3	118.1	132.9	9.8	112.8	4.0
Gross Investment	23.4	26.8	27.9	36.9	16.4	32.2	11.2
Exports of Goods and Services	75.3	88.1	105.6	122.4	17.6	100.3	10.0
TOTAL	198.9	225.2	251.6	292.2	13.7	245.3	7.2

NOTE: Actual figures for 1976 are provisional.



Gross Domestic Product
at factor cost
1973 prices
£M million
Actual
Plan
Target
200
150
100
50
0
100.9
116.0
140.7
167.0
122.1
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Exports of Goods and Services
1973 prices
£M million
Actual
Plan
Target
200
150
100
50
0
75.3
88.1
105.6
122.4
100.3
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976



Imports of Goods and Services
1973 prices
£M million
Actual
Plan
Target
200
150
100
50
0
98.0
109.2
110.9
125.2
123.2
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976

Expenditure on consumption as a proportion of income during the years 1973-76 moved in the desired direction with an increasing volume of consumption being accompanied by a higher proportion of income saved. Consumption in real terms grew by about 9.8 per cent; this is substantially higher than the projected growth rate of 4 per cent envisaged in the Plan. The growth of income was, however, also much higher than anticipated. Consumption expenditure in money terms rose at an average annual rate of 14.6 per cent during the last three years compared with an increase of 22 per cent in gross national product.

The real gross fixed capital formation and expenditure on investment up to 1976 were also broadly in line with Plan targets. Considering that during the initial years of a plan period the rate of investment is normally expected to be on a lower scale, gaining momentum in later years, investment by the private sector was in line with anticipated requirements, while public sector investment increased in fact at a faster pace than projected.

INVESTMENT

(at factor cost 1973 prices)

Table II.3

	Plan 1973/79	Actual 1973/76
	£M million	£M million
Public investment	94.2	46.9
Private investment	119.0	54.9
Total gross fixed capital formation ...	213.2	101.8

The vast programme of public sector investment to strengthen the infrastructure and embark on new productive projects was well in advance of Plan targets. In the four year period between April 1973 and March 1977 total capital expenditure reached £M102.4 million. This expenditure was incurred on fixed capital and by way of capital subscriptions in commercial and other ventures.

Major infrastructural projects which have already reached an advanced stage of execution include the airport extension, harbour development, improvement in the road network, the extension of the sewage system and the borehole and water conservation schemes. The internal and external telecommunications systems too are being vastly expanded to meet existing and future demand.

Several other facilities and services essential for development were improved or introduced. An efficient commercial banking system in which the people of Malta have a direct interest is now in operation, while the Investment Finance Bank has been established as provided for in the Plan to make available investment finance for industrial projects on terms beyond those normally provided by commercial banks. Thus, the Investment Finance Bank can provide medium and long term finance and can also take equity participation in productive activities. It is also geared to underwrite stocks issued on the local money market and to channel domestic savings to industrial, tourist and other development projects by launching development stocks or bonds for public subscription.

The national air and shipping lines were set up to ensure better means of communication in the interest of Malta's expanding manufacturing and tourist industries. Other essential services, such as oil importation and storage, and telecommunications including broadcasting were brought under Maltese ownership and control.

Capital expenditure was also incurred by the Government on directly productive ventures such as the *"Iżra' u Rabbi"* project for the development of agriculture and the trawler fishing project. In the industrial field the Government supplemented private investment initiatives by setting up a number of enterprises on its own with foreign technical assistance or on a joint venture basis with foreign private investors and public agencies.

The Drydocks was reorganised and turned into a viable enterprise. At the same time a vast programme to increase ship repair facilities and to introduce shipbuilding facilities on a large scale was embarked upon and is well in progress. This programme includes the construction of a 300,000 ton dock with Chinese

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Table II.4 £M million

	1973/74*	1974/75*	1975/76*	1976/77*	Total
INVESTMENT					
Ship repair and Shipbuilding	1.1	1.1	3.7	4.3	10.2
Development of Industries	6.1	2.0	12.7	8.9	29.7
Tourism	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	1.5
Telecommunications ...	0.2	0.6	3.9	2.5	7.2
Agriculture and Fisheries ...	0.5	1.3	0.7	0.9	3.4
	8.3	5.4	21.3	17.0	52.0
INFRASTRUCTURE					
Airport Development ...	0.5	1.5	2.4	3.2	7.6
Port Development	0.4	0.8	1.8	1.7	4.7
Electricity**	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.9	3.9
Water	0.3	0.5	1.1	0.9	2.8
Roads	1.1	1.8	2.0	1.4	6.3
Sewers	0.3	0.4	1.8	1.4	3.9
	3.6	6.1	10.0	9.5	29.2
SOCIAL					
Health	0.2	0.5	1.1	1.2	3.0
Education	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.9
Housing	1.8	2.6	4.1	4.6	13.1
Public Property, etc. ...	3.0	0.3	0.5	0.4	4.2
	5.3	3.7	5.9	6.3	21.2
TOTAL	17.2	15.2	37.2	32.8	102.4

* Financial years starting in April and ending in March.

** Including expenditure by the Malta Electricity Board.

technical and financial assistance and the construction of the Marsa Shipbuilding Yard in which an equity participation from the Libyan Arab Jamahirija has been secured. These two projects should help to establish Malta as the leading ship repair and shipbuilding centre in the Mediterranean.

The overall trend in the volume of imports was consistent with Plan anticipations while exports were ahead of projections. The trade deficit, which widened considerably during 1974 due to a marked rise in the value of imports caused by the rise in oil prices and inflation abroad, was narrowed in later years. The proportion of exports to imports also improved from 41 per cent in 1973 to 54 per cent in 1976.

Notwithstanding the adverse effects of external price increases and depressed market conditions in Malta's major trading partners, the balance of payments turned out to be healthier than anticipated. The rise in exports, the increased income from tourism and the substantially higher income accruing from Maltese investments abroad generated handsome surpluses on current account, and total foreign reserves rose from £M160.2 million in 1973 to £M286.6 million in 1976.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS CURRENT ACCOUNT

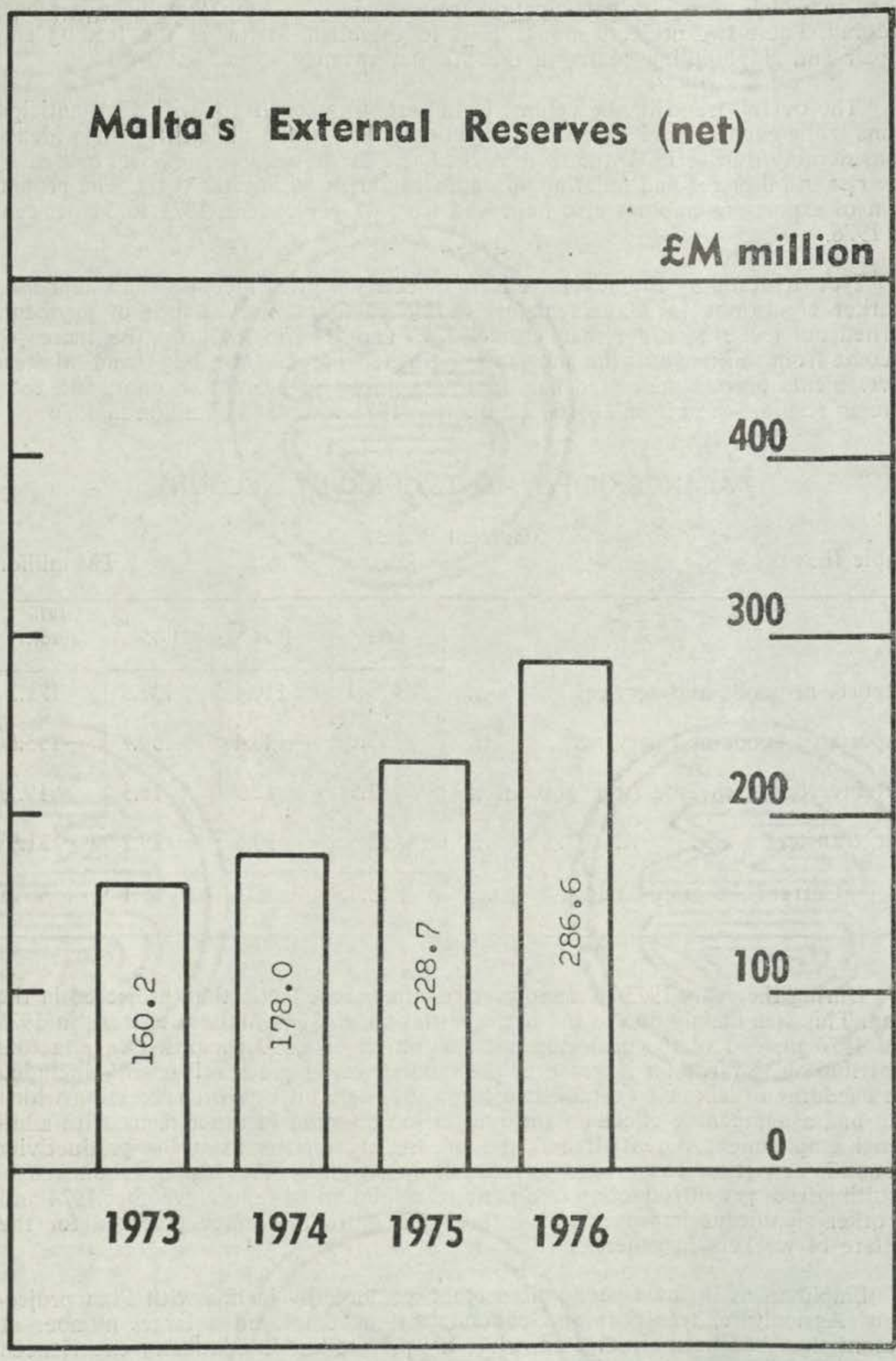
(Current Prices)

Table II.5 £M million

	1973	1974	1975	1976 (Prov.)
Exports of goods and services	75.3	110.4	137.3	171.7
Imports of goods and services	−98.0	−148.4	−159.7	−195.8
Net investment income from abroad ...	7.5	12.5	18.3	19.2
Net transfers	28.5	30.6	29.2	31.9
Current Account Balance ...	+13.3	+ 5.1	+ 25.1	+ 27.0

During the years 1973-76 manpower resources rose faster than projected in the Plan. This was mainly due to the net repatriation of 2,698 Maltese citizens in 1975 and 1976 instead of the projected net emigration of 6,000 persons. Other factors contributing towards an increase in the number of people seeking work included the shedding of labour by established firms adversely hit by world recession which also had a dampening effect on the rate of job creation in other firms with additional employment potential; and the release of workers from low-productivity economic activities. These were unable to absorb fully the higher labour costs resulting from the introduction of a national minimum wage in November 1974 and of other significant improvements in labour conditions deemed essential for the welfare of workers in general.

Employment in most economic sectors was broadly in line with Plan projections. Agriculture, transport and communications employed a larger number of persons than had been anticipated, while the private building industry experienced a net shortfall as a substantial part of the public works programme previously performed by private contractors was undertaken directly by workers in the labour corps.


Malta's External Reserves (net)
£M million
400
300
200
100
0
160.2
178.0
228.7
286.6
1973
1974
1975
1976

The rate of providing new jobs in the manufacturing sector was maintained at a steady pace, even though these efforts were severely affected by the adverse conditions in foreign markets and by a marked reluctance by some prospective entrepreneurs to take investment decisions during such an internationally difficult period. The fact that the net increase in employment in the manufacturing sector was lower than projected while the growth in production was much higher than expected can be explained by the marked rise in output per worker. It is estimated that the value of real output per worker in this sector since 1973 increased by an average annual rate of around 8 per cent against 4.5 per cent originally assumed in the Plan.

EMPLOYMENT

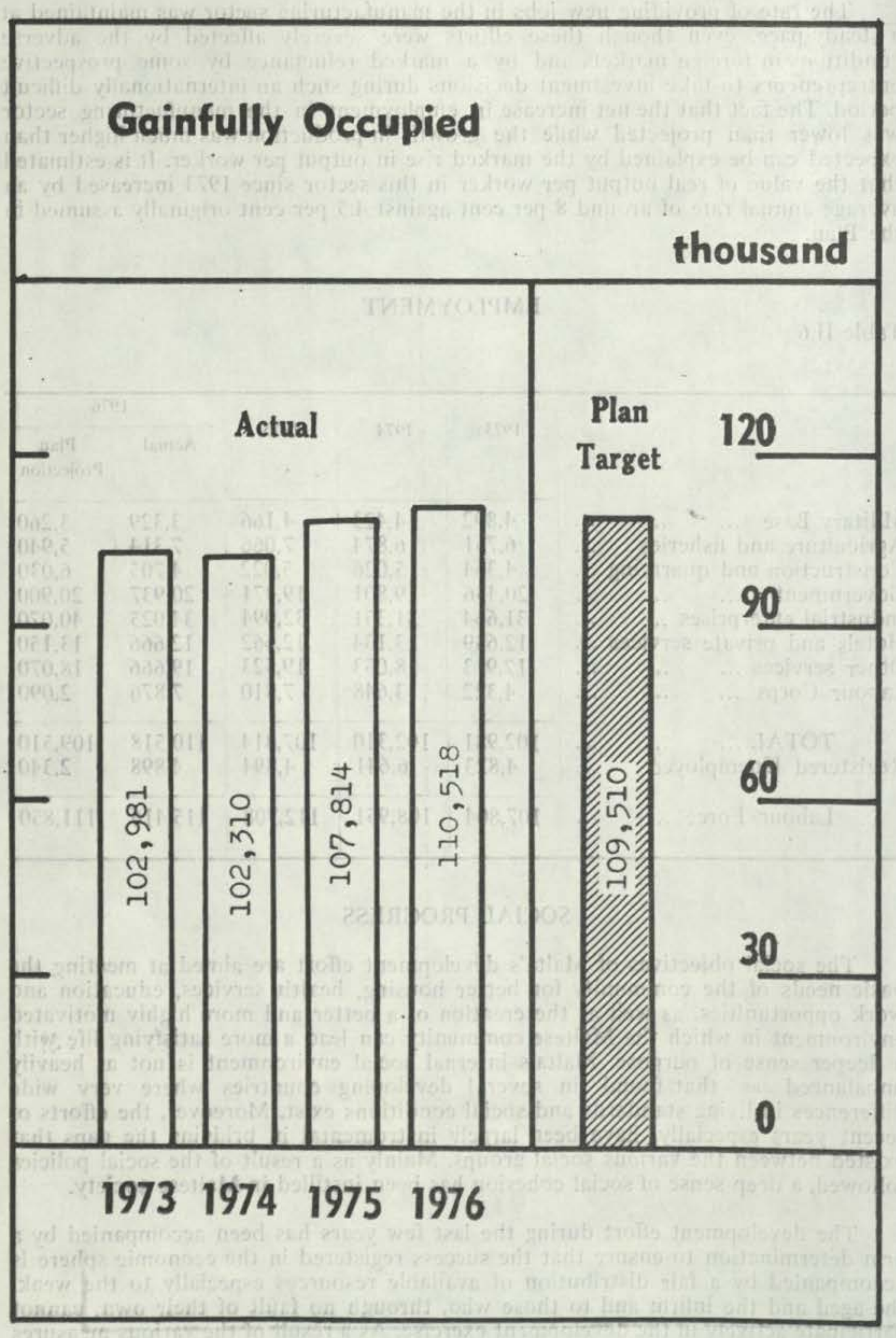
Table II.6

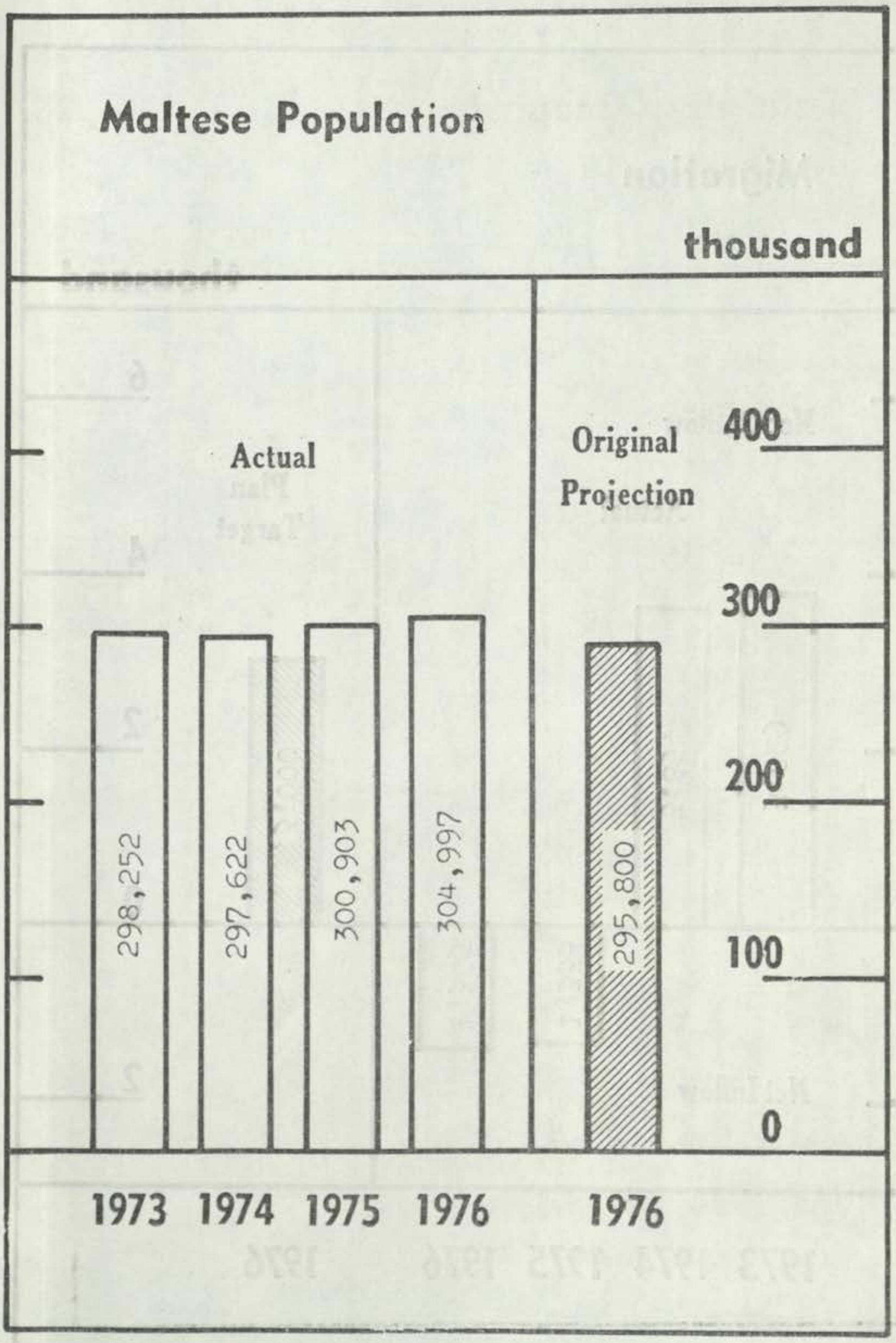
	1973	1974	1975	1976	
				Actual	Plan Projection
Military Base	4,892	4,423	4,166	3,329	3,260
Agriculture and fisheries ...	6,751	6,874	7,066	7,314	5,940
Construction and quarrying ...	4,364	5,026	5,022	4,705	6,030
Government	20,436	19,801	19,471	20,937	20,900
Industrial enterprises	31,664	31,351	32,094	34,025	40,070
Hotels and private services ...	12,639	13,134	12,662	12,666	13,150
Other services	17,913	18,053	19,523	19,666	18,070
Labour Corps	4,322	3,648	7,810	7,876	2,090
TOTAL	102,981	102,310	107,814	110,518	109,510
Registered Unemployed ...	4,823	6,641	4,894	4,898	2,340
Labour Force	107,804	108,951	112,708	115,416	111,850

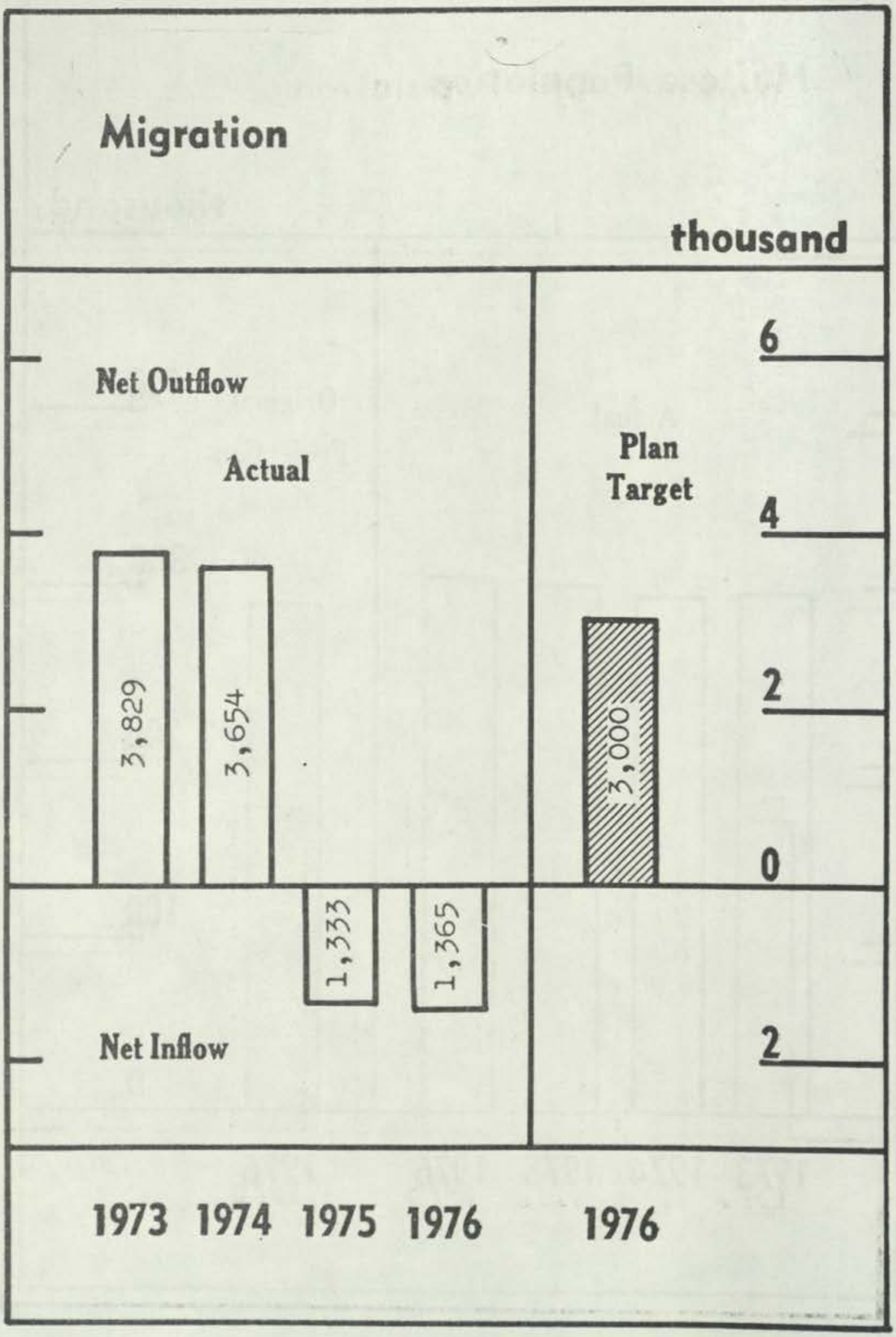
SOCIAL PROGRESS

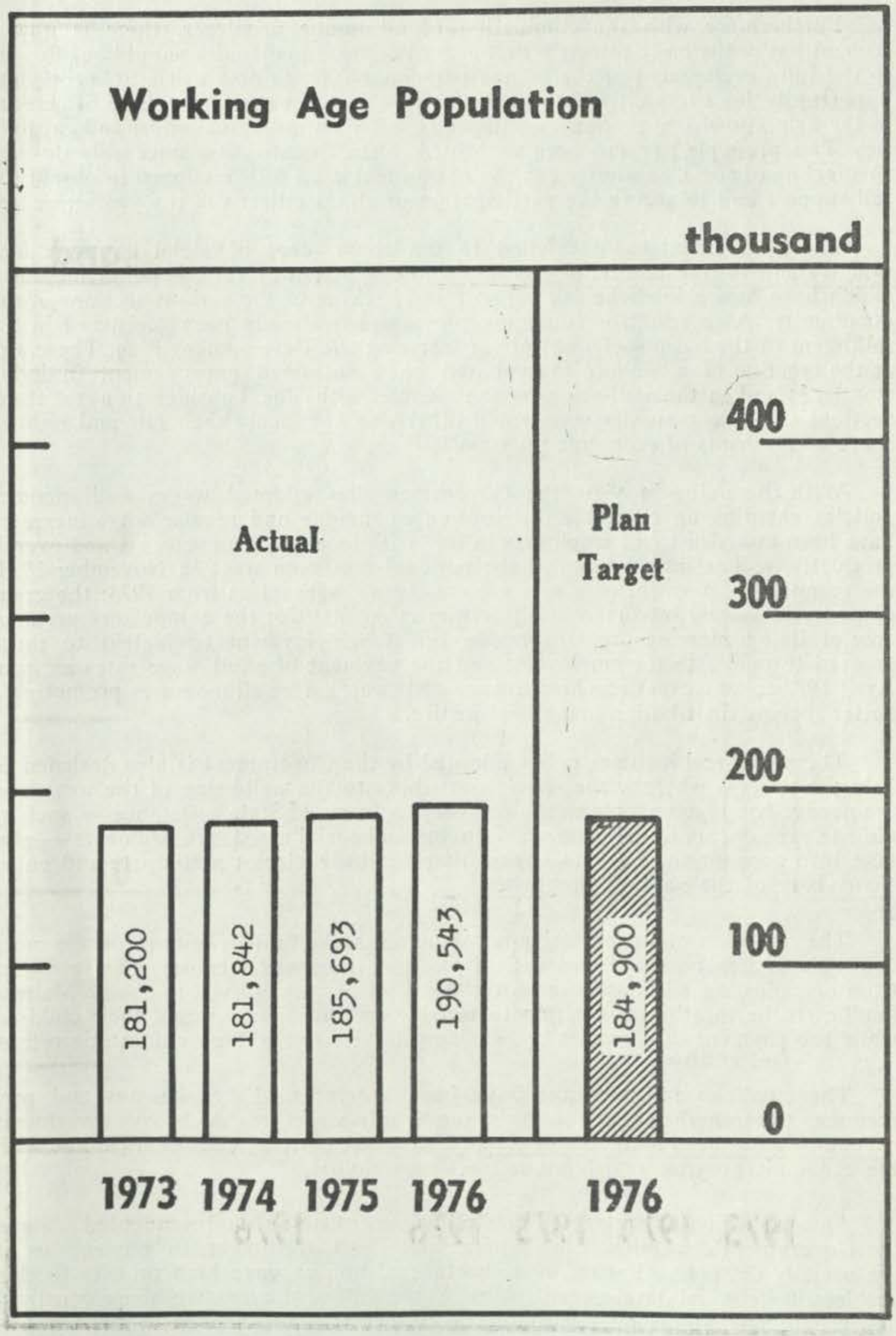
The social objectives of Malta's development effort are aimed at meeting the basic needs of the community for better housing, health services, education and work opportunities, as well as the creation of a better and more highly motivated environment in which the Maltese community can lead a more satisfying life with a deeper sense of purpose. Malta's internal social environment is not as heavily unbalanced as that found in several developing countries where very wide differences in living standards and social conditions exist. Moreover, the efforts of recent years especially, have been largely instrumental in bridging the gaps that existed between the various social groups. Mainly as a result of the social policies followed, a deep sense of social cohesion has been instilled in Maltese society.

The development effort during the last few years has been accompanied by a firm determination to ensure that the success registered in the economic sphere is accompanied by a fair distribution of available resources especially to the weak, the aged and the infirm and to those who, through no fault of their own, cannot participate actively in the development exercise. As a result of the various measures which have been undertaken to ensure a more equitable distribution of national resources, the Maltese community is now more alert and alive to the need of ensuring adequate living standards for all its members.


Gainfully Occupied
thousand
Actual
Plan
Target
120
90
60
30
0
102,981
102,310
107,814
110,518
109,510
1973
1974
1975
1976


Maltese Population
thousand
Actual
Original
Projection
400
300
200
100
0
298,252
297,622
300,903
304,997
295,800
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Migration
thousand
Net Outflow
Actual
Plan
Target
6
4
2
0
2
3,829
3,654
1,333
1,365
3,000
Net Inflow
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976


Working Age Population
thousand
Actual
Plan
Target
400
300
200
100
0
181,200
181,842
185,693
190,543
184,900
1973
1974
1975
1976
1976

Furthermore, with the elimination of all undue privileges, there is now a recognition of the basic principle that every possible opportunity should be afforded to the full development of the human personality. There now exists full scope and opportunity for every citizen to come forward in his particular sphere of activity in the firm knowledge that success depends solely on individual effort and capabilities. This principle has also been enshrined in the Constitution since only through this feeling of social solidarity can the nation feel itself fully equipped to obtain the full support and to secure the participation of all its citizens in the years to come

The Government has not failed to put these ideas of social harmony into practice and to translate its beliefs into a line of action by various policy measures which have now gained the full support and backing of the various sections of the community. As a result, encouraging progress has already been registered in the fulfilment of the basic social objectives inspiring the Development Plan. These aim at the creation of a welfare state based on a sustained improvement in living standards and in the well-being of the people with due consideration to those sections of the community who would otherwise not secure their fair and rightful share of the fruits of economic progress.

With these aims in view the Government has adopted wages and incomes policies ensuring an equitable distribution of income and regular wage increases have been awarded to all employees in line with local price movements and overall productivity. The introduction of the national minimum wage in November 1974; the compulsory payment of a yearly bonus to all workers as from 1975; the grant of parity in wages to women in all sectors in April 1976; the compulsory grant of cost of living increases to workers in private employment equivalent to those granted to public sector employees; and the payment of adult wage rates as from April 1977 to employees reaching the age of 18 years were all measures promoting a better income distribution and social justice.

The prices and incomes policy adopted by the Government is also designed to help the process whereby the strong contribute to the well-being of the weak and the needy. The regular increases in the various forms of State assistance — such as old age pensions, national insurance benefits and social assistance payments — also take into account the need to ensure that the beneficiaries participate and enjoy their share of the nation's progress.

The operation of a progressive tax structure seeks to distribute resources more equitably and to narrow down wide disparities in earned incomes. The introductiton of children's allowances in November 1974 has also served to enable Maltese families to be in a better position to provide for the upbringing of their children while the payment of subsidies has cushioned the effect of higher domestic prices.

These policies and measures have been accompanied by schemes and programmes to strengthen the country's social infrastructure. A heavy investment expenditure has been incurred for the improvement of living conditions in line with the economic progress registered as the Plan unfolds.

An area which has attracted public investment on an unprecendented scale is the Government's social housing programme. The Government, fully conscious of the socially disruptive impact of a shortage of houses, gave high priority to this problem in its social development plans. As a result of the massive house construction programme which has been undertaken directly and financed by the Government, a large number of housing schemes in various districts in Malta and Gozo have either already been completed or have reached an advanced stage of completion. Slum clearance schemes have also been given priority in an effort to eliminate slums where people often live in an unhealthy environment.

As part of the continuing drive to raise health standards and in view of the growing demand for hospital services, the Government embarked on a vast programme of hospital improvement in accordance with Plan objectives. The projects undertaken include, among others, the modernisation of the operating theatres and maternity facilities at St Luke's Hospital, Malta's major acute general hospital; and the modernization of various wards and services in other State hospitals in line with modern standards of patient treatment. New basic health services are also being provided under the Plan. Such projects include the intensive Therapy Unit inaugurated in the summer of 1976 and the Children's Unit and the Geriatric Unit which are both under construction.

The educational system too has been considerably strengthened in line with the industrial and social objectives of the Development Plan. In order to build Malta's economic future on a healthy industrial base, a number of trade schools have been opened to cater for manpower skills required by the expanding industrial sector. The rapid expansion of Malta's educational system especially at the technical level will ensure a more productive labour force adequately equipped to fulfil its important function in Malta's industrial society.

A great deal of attention has recently been focussed on the need to secure closer coordination between the efforts of the two institutions of higher education in Malta — the Polytechnic and the University. These two institutions have a particularly vital part to play in the island's development process by providing the required technical and professional personnel. Consequently, the activities of the two institutions are kept under constant review so that their output is of direct relevance to the manpower needs of the island. In this connection certain courses of study are being restructured and given a more practical basis so that the two institutions, while working closely together, will also endeavour to establish closer links particularly with industry and contribute positively towards the process of economic transformation.

Rapid progress has already been registered in the fulfilment of the basic social objectives underlying the Development Plan. The creation of a humane community where a sense of social justice prevails has been accomplished and the whole nation is now fully aware of the strong binding force of social harmony and stability. Moreover, the fact that the Government is responding positively and swiftly to the social needs of the community by its housing, health and educational programmes, is a further indication of the firm commitment to make Malta a small but modern welfare state, fully aware of its responsibilities in the fulfilment of basic personal values and needs.

III — BROAD ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES

The principal development objective remains the attainment of self-reliance mainly through export-oriented expansion. To attain a viable economic position and maintain self-sustaining progress implies a rate of growth of output and income which would:

(a) replace income and employment derived from the rendering of military services;

(b) make optimum use of available human resources;

(c) permit a fair distribution of income and a continuous improvement in the quality of life of the whole Maltese community;

(d) generate sufficient foreign exchange earnings to meet import requirements without balance of payments constraints;

(e) make possible a sufficient level of saving to match investment needs so as to ensure healthy and balanced economic growth; and

(f) raise sufficient government revenue to finance public sector commitments.

POPULATION AND MANPOWER

Prior to 1975 emigration was a major factor affecting changes in the Maltese population. In 1975, for the first time ever, the number of Maltese citizens returning from abroad was greater than the outflow of emigrants with the result that there was a net addition to the population. The new population projections assume that during the coming years net emigration will be nil. The Maltese population projected on this basis is estimated to increase by around 3,700 per year during the period 1976 to 1981.

MALTESE POPULATION PROJECTIONS *

Table III.1

	1976	1979	Change 1976/79	1981	Change 1979/81
Males	147,000	153,000	+ 6,000	156,800	+3,800
Females	158,000	163,200	+ 5,200	166,600	+3,400
TOTAL	305,000	316,200	+11.200	323,400	+7,200

* Death rates and birth rates are based on averages recorded during the years 1974 to 1976.

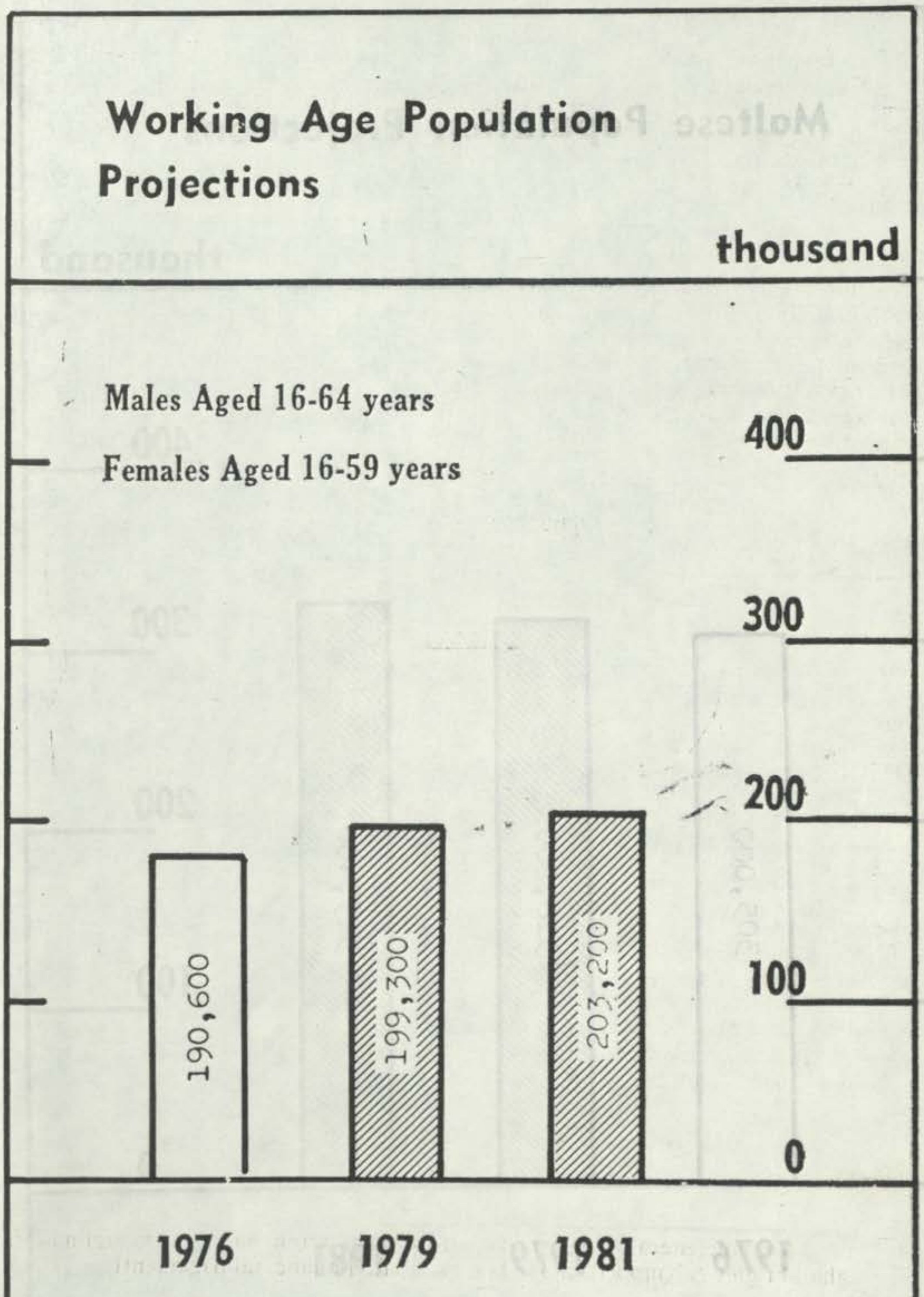
Labour Supply

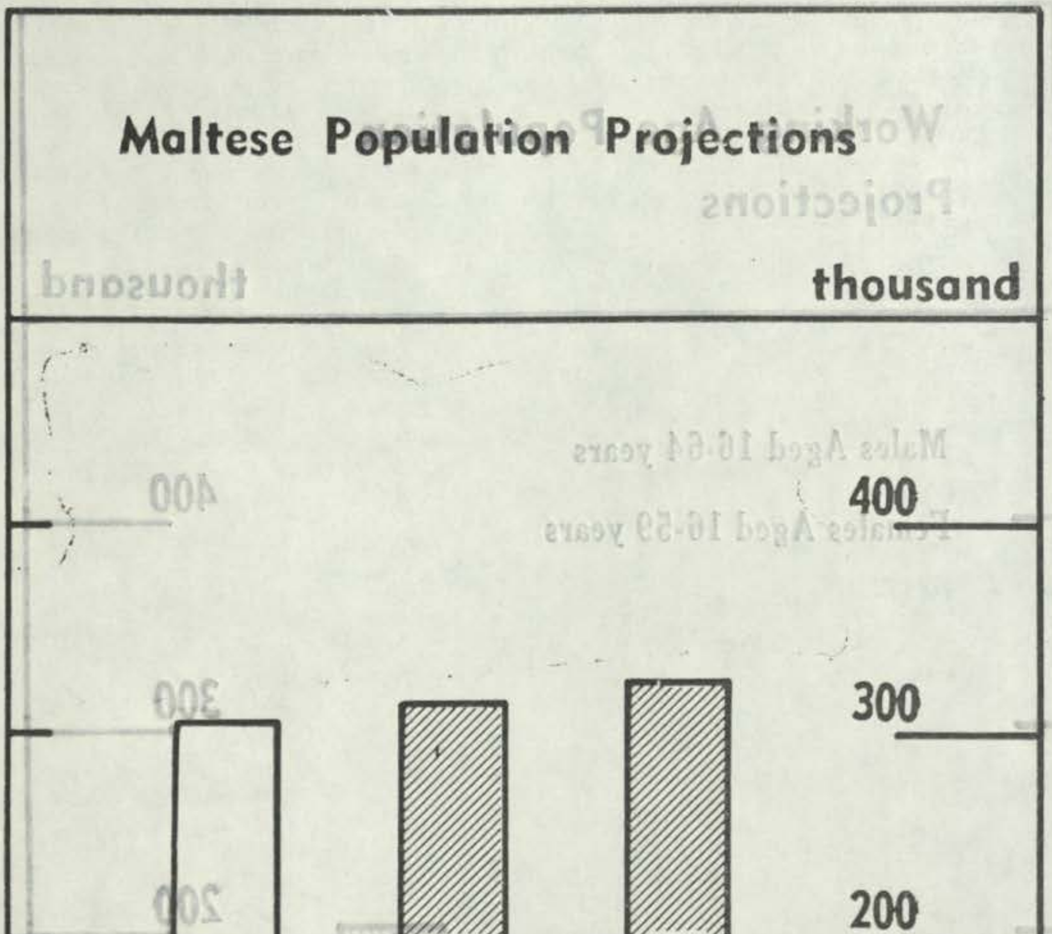
Projections of the working-age population (males aged 16 to 64 years and females aged 16 to 59 years) show that the pool of potential workers will be increasing significantly during the next five years if net emigration will be nil as assumed. The average annual increase in the number of persons of working age is estimated at around 2,500 (1,500 men and 1,000 women).

WORKING AGE POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Table III.2

	1976	1979	Change 1976/79	1981	Change 1979/81
Males aged 16-64	93,000	97,800	+4,800	100,400	+2,600
Females aged 16-59	97,600	101,500	+3,900	102,800	+1,300
TOTAL	190,600	199,300	+8,700	203,200	+3,900


Working Age Population Projections
thousand
Males Aged 16-64 years
Females Aged 16-59 years
400
300
200
100
0
190,600
199,300
203,200
1976
1979
1981


Maltese Population Projections
thousand
400
300
200
100
0
305,000
316,200
323,400
1976
1979
1981

Not all persons of working age will join the labour force as, for various reasons, not everyone within the active age group will necessarily be able or willing to work. To make an assessment of job requirements an estimate must therefore be made of the participation rates, that is, the proportion of persons in search of work out of the total active population.

Separate participation rates operate for males and for females; one of the main reasons being that the majority of women give up employment after marriage. In 1976 the participation rate for men was about 92 per cent; it is assumed that this rate will continue to obtain during the next five years.

The female participation rate in Malta — which was just over 30 per cent at the end of 1976 — is, of course, far below the rates obtaining in industrialised countries where the rates are about 50 per cent and over. It may be realistically assumed, however, that the participation rate for women in Malta is likely to rise with changes in social customs and increasing educational opportunities for girls. The supply of female labour is also affected by employment opportunities; in this respect the increasing demand for jobs by men may serve as a constraint on the increase in female participation.

Demand for Manpower

At the end of 1976 the number of gainfully occupied persons stood at 110,500. There were also about 4,900 registering for employment, bringing the total available labour supply to 115,400. On the basis of revised projections the labour force is expected to rise by about 9,600 to 125,000 by 1979.

The total number of new jobs which must be provided, however, besides taking into account the projected increase in the labour force, must also cope with the various labour redeployment programmes in line with the structural change in the Maltese economy. These new jobs must therefore also cater for the need to provide alternative employment to workers now employed by the British Services and who will be discharged by 1979; the loss of jobs in other sectors where declining employment levels are being anticipated; and the creation of employment opportunities in directly productive activities for a number of workers now serving in the various labour corps.

Projects in hand or in the pipeline — such as the Red China Dock; the Marsa Shipbuilding Yard; new tourist projects; manufacturing firms which are still in the pre-production stage; and related activities — are together expected to provide around half of the total planned job requirements. The balance is expected to be provided by projects which should get under way in the coming years as a result of the various initiatives which are reviewed in the third section of this Plan Supplement.

OUTPUT

In order to meet the employment targets and make the best use of the projected manpower resources, it is estimated that the real gross domestic product will have to grow at an average annual rate of around 8 per cent. The expansion in real output will be the result of the increase in the number of workers as well as of an annual overall increase of about 5 per cent in real output per worker.

The 1977-79 period will witness the complete phasing out of the British Military Base and its substitution by the generation of economic activity, particularly of a directly productive nature. The volume of output of the directly productive sector will have to grow at a relatively fast rate in order to absorb the projected number of workers.

Within the directly productive sector, manufacturing firms and ship repairing and shipbuilding enterprises will be required to raise substantially their contribution to gross domestic output and to increase the proportion of output intended for export. Market services, which include tourism, personal services, banking and the distributive trades, will also be expected to raise their contribution to gross domestic product in line with the increase in directly productive activities, even though probably at a slower rate.

In this respect tourism remains as one of the leading growth sectors in the coming years and still retains a particularly important role both as regards the earning of foreign exchange and as a source of employment. Recent experience in the tourist industry has shown that the Maltese Islands have now succeeded in building a reputation among international travel circles of being a pleasant holiday resort.

However, although the attraction of higher levels of tourist traffic to Malta within the limits imposed by the island's size and other social constraints still remains one of the major objectives of tourist development policy, it is felt that increasing attention should be given to higher standards and more efficient service in the tourist trade. Other main objectives remain a more even distribution of tourist arrivals during the year and the tapping of new tourist sources through effective promotion campaigns and easier communications.

It is of course equally vital to ensure that the Maltese Islands maintain their competitive position in relation to other tourist destinations in the Mediterranean and that the availability of facilities for tourist accommodation is kept under constant review. In this connection, due consideration is being given to the conversion of premises vacated by the British Services which could be utilized for this purpose.

INVESTMENT

In order to achieve the projected growth in domestic production, a relatively heavy amount of investment expenditure is needed. Investment needs comprise both the procurement of capital equipment for direct production as well as outlays for the execution of infrastructural projects. As regards the infrastructural programme outlined in the Seven Year Plan, a number of public sector projects have either already been completed and the necessary expenditure committed, or are nearing completion. Projects due for completion before 1979 include the airport and Grand Harbour development, internal and external telecommunications, the expansion of the electricity generation system, the extension of the sewage system, the modernization of hospitals and the housing programme.

Directly productive projects already under way include the Drydocks development, the Marsa Shipbuilding Yard, the factory building programme, the agricultural and fisheries projects and the modernization of the milk pasteurization plant. Other projects earmarked for implementation during the coming years include the development of Marsaxlokk to provide modern port facilities especially for transhipment; and the recycling of solid and liquid wastes to ensure a safe method of disposal and at the same time provide compost for soil enrichment and land reclamation, and irrigation water for agriculture. A subsequent stage of the latter project currently under consideration will be to treat water to render it suitable for recharging the aquifer. This would be supplementary to the other projects already in hand to increase water resources by the borehole and water catchment schemes.

In addition to the capital expenditure by the Government on these major public sector projects and others of relatively lesser importance, further capital will also be needed for investment in directly productive activities such as manufactur-

ing and other enterprises which the Government will be undertaking on its own or on a joint venture basis with local and foreign enterpreneurs in line with the efforts of the last few years to establish in Malta a mixed economy.

In order to finance this relatively heavy capital expenditure the Government will continue to rely on the buoyancy of the local economy to generate sufficient revenues from internal sources as well as income from foreign investments. This revenue will be supplemented by the exceptionally favourable finance facilities already at the Government's disposal from the European Economic Community, China, W. Germany, Saudi Arabia and other friendly countries.

Indeed, the Government's intensified efforts to secure additional financial resources for investment purposes have recently had very encouraging results. It is the Government's intention to tap these sources still further in the years to come since loan monies on concessional terms from foreign Governments or organizations, when used to finance important development projects, are of great benefit to Malta's economy.

The Saudi Fund for Development for instance has already agreed to provide a loan of fifteen million dollars on soft terms for the Marsaxxlokk project. Other Arab countries will also be encouraged by Saudi Arabia to provide additional finance for the project.

The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development too has agreed to consider the provision of concessional finance for the solid and liquid wastes recycling project. The detailed preparation of the scheme will soon be assigned to one of a panel of consulting firms. The major beneficiary will be the *"Iżra' u Rabbi"* co-operative project which has also been promised further technical assistance from foreign sources.

The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has also agreed to help in the financing of the fisheries development project on the basis of the feasibility and project preparation reports which were drawn up by the FAO. The main aim of the project is to build a modern fishing fleet of medium-powered trawlers which can exploit on a commercial basis the fish resources in the unexploited and fairly productive fishing grounds which have been identified by the research vessel "Jurong" which was made available to Malta in 1976/77 under FAO/UNDP auspices. It is planned that a number of vessels of the trawler fleet will be built by Malta Drydocks although it is expected that other arrangements will have to be worked out, including the chartering of vessels, in order to enable the project to be launched during the first half of 1978.

FOREIGN TRADE AND PAYMENTS

During this period of accelerated economic expansion there will be an increasing need for all types of imports, particularly for capital goods and for industrial supplies required to sustain the projected volume of industrial output. It is therefore felt that it is the demand for consumer goods which has to be carefully watched; and every effort will be made during this period to restrain as much as possible the growth in imports for consumption, especially items of a non-essential nature.

In order to avoid balance of payments difficulties it will be necessary to restrain the growth of imports of goods and services to a relatively slower rate than the desired increase in earnings from exports of goods and services. This is necessary to keep down the traditional deficit on goods and services transactions to a sufficiently low limit which can be adequately compensated for by transfers of money on current and capital account without any undue strain on reserves. The balance of payments outturn will of course depend to a considerable extent on price increases abroad and changes in the terms of trade.

IV — NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Labour Government has worked unceasingly since assuming office in 1971 to give a new dimension to the Maltese way of life. As a result of its efforts, the will to translate this new vision of Malta as the centre in the Mediterranean, free from all super power affiliations but deeply committed to the cause of hard work and peace, has now gained considerable strength and depth among the Maltese community.

Malta's search for a new role has been accompanied by vigorous efforts to fulfil these proposals on a practical basis that will be of lasting value to the Maltese economy and to a wider regional understanding. At a time when the nation faces its most formidable task in peace time, the Labour Government has constantly advocated the application of a philosophy of self-help and considers the work ethic as forming the keystone on which national efforts must mainly rely. These characteristics will feature on an increasing scale in the years to come as the nation tackles the clearly identified tasks that must be undertaken in preparation for the start of Malta's new role in April 1979, and beyond.

Since the Maltese electorate renewed its mandate in September 1976, the Labour Government has intensified the preparation of logistics for tackling the major tasks ahead. The rhythm of work on major development projects has been stepped up. The campaign to attract foreign investment is being undertaken with renewed vigour, and work will soon start on two new industrial estates at Ricasoli and at Ħal Far to provide sufficient factory space.

At the same time, various other projects and schemes which can make a positive contribution to Malta's development effort are under active consideration by the Government. All these initiatives are moreover being accompanied by other measures to increase national productivity and to eliminate wasteful practices inherited from the past and which have no place in a modern community, firmly committed to the objectives that lie ahead.

MANUFACTURING

The Government, faithful to the role assigned to manufacturing industry in the Development Plan, still regards industrial production as Malta's vital growth sector and has already greatly intensified its efforts to encourage and promote the setting up of manufacturing firms.

An aggressive campaign is therefore being embarked upon to attract investment from various countries in Europe, the American continent and Asia. The Government is fully determined to ensure the success of this campaign and foreign assistance is being sought to organize on modern professional lines an efficient team of Maltese personnel trained in investment promotion and other related techniques. It will be the main task of this group to seek vigorously and to establish and maintain contact with prospective foreign state and private investors and to sell Malta as an industrial location which offers great potential and distinct possibilities for the future. It is felt that by creating this new image, Malta's industrialisation process will be backed by the type of investment on which its economic destiny so heavily relies.

In this connection it is felt that, at this stage, local commercial banks and the Investment Finance Bank should participate more actively in the exercise to attract foreign investment to Malta. These institutions, through their contacts abroad, with their resources and experience, should now be more directly involved in

identifying Malta's partners in development and, in collaboration with the Malta Development Corporation, promote the participation of foreign state and private capital in Malta to sustain the tempo of industrial growth.

The encouraging results which have recently crowned local efforts to attract strong British companies to invest in Malta have shown that even at a time when entrepreneurs in industrialized countries are somewhat reluctant to take investment decisions, Malta can still offer considerable advantages as an industrial location to potential investors that far outweigh any other considerations. Thus Malta can offer a highly disciplined and resourceful labour force, relatively low production costs, political and industrial stability and access to European and Arab markets. Malta can also, of course, offer firms outside the EEC the possibility of duty free access to Common Market countries.

These attractions are further enhanced by the fact that through the joint venture model that has been constantly advocated by the Maltese Government, advanced industrial technology, coming mainly from developed Western countries, can be readily linked in Malta with Arab financial resources, thus securing for this partnership access to the relatively untapped Arab markets. By bringing these two partners together to set up industrial processes in Malta, these joint initiatives will not only generate productive employment opportunities for the Maltese labour force but will also help to establish Malta's industrial sector on a sound basis that will make a lasting contribution to Malta's economic development.

Complementing this approach, will be the role that enterprises currently owned by the nation through the Government will be expected to play. The main emphasis will be on the need to rationalize their activities and to strengthen their organization to enable them to make a more effective contribution to Malta's industrial strategy. During the coming years, problems of technical organization and of social innovation will remain in the forefront. A first priority will therefore be the generation of local management knowhow, geared to autonomous action in the achievement of production and marketing objectives.

At the same time, increased participation by workers in decision making at plant level will require the emergence of flexible and innovative leadership styles. Naturally, there are learning costs associated with these processes which have to be borne by the country. These costs, however, are themselves part of the learning cycle through which the Maltese economy, as a whole, is passing. The final objective of these industrial enterprises is workers' management and ownership. But it will be a mistake to expect the workers alone to shoulder the full burden of running them before these industries are set firmly on their feet.

Joint Ventures

The fact that Malta is attracting to its shores the investment of Arab funds in productive enterprises on a joint venture basis with local and other foreign capital is a firm indication of the wide confidence which exists in the growth potential of the Maltese economy. These efforts to attract and promote further involvement of Arab capital in the Maltese economy and to increase the range and extent of Arab participation in the local manufacturing sector will be actively pursued in the coming years.

It is with this aim in view that in October 1975 the Maltese and Libyan Governments reached agreement on the setting up of the Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited to develop and execute industrial, commercial, financial and fishing projects and related activities and in this way promote the process of industrialisation in the two countries in a complementary manner. The original capital of the Holding Company which stood at £M2 million was subsequently increased by £M6.4 million in July 1976.

The activities of the Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited have so far been extremely encouraging and the results already achieved show there is ample scope for increased industrial contacts and joint investment projects between the two countries. In August 1976 the Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited made its first major decision when it acquired a fifty per cent share-holding in the Malta Shipbuilding Company Limited which is responsible for the construction and running of the new shipbuilding yard at Marsa.

The Holding Company took its second big step in March 1977 when in collaboration with the giant Brazilian consortium, Madebras, it set up the Marlibras International Trading Company Limited with an authorised capital of two million Malta pounds. On the basis of the agreement reached with Madebras, Malta will be used as a centre to import, warehouse, kiln-dry and distribute Brazilian timber to European, Middle East and African markets (for the time being with the exclusion of Algeria, Spain and Iraq). Marlibras International Trading Company Limited will not, however, concern itself exclusively with importing, processing and re-exporting timber. The agreement also stipulates the setting up of various subsidiary companies to manufacture wood products, including panellings, mouldings, doors and windows, handles for hand tools, and domestic and industrial furniture.

This is the type of joint venture that Malta's industrial sector requires — a form of association with strong foreign interests which links access to foreign technical know-how with good marketing prospects on the basis of combined local and foreign capital. In the relatively short period since it has been set up, the Libyan Arab Maltese Holding Company Limited has already established itself as a dynamic organization. Various areas of joint development are constantly being identified and active consideration is also being given, among other projects, to the setting up of a sugar refinery in Malta capable of supplying the requirements of Malta and Libya and also of exporting to other countries.

The bilateral economic and technical co-operation agreement which have been entered into with various countries, including Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Spain and other friendly countries should help to stimulate stronger economic links with these countries including the possibility of setting up joint ventures with private and/or public investment organizations. These new relations can play a very useful part in Malta's industrialization process since they serve to establish contacts and to identify the range of products that could be of mutual interest both for production and marketing purposes.

Development of Metal Industries

As regards the range of industrial activities which is considered to offer the greatest potential for investment in Malta, metal industries and the industrial engineering sector in particular, offer considerable advantages. Malta has traditionally possessed engineering skills due to its long association with ship repair activities and can therefore readily provide the skilled labour required by this sector of industry. Moreover, higher and more sophisticated skills can be added and developed within a short time.

Engineering products are relatively labour intensive and possess a high content of locally added value. Consequently, the development of metal industries is being given priority since this will also in the long run help to diversify Malta's manufacturing sector away from an unduly excessive reliance on textiles and clothing manufactures which are acknowledged to be very sensitive to fluctuating and unstable market conditions and which accounted for some 38% of the gross output of manufacturing industry in 1976.

No opportunity must therefore be lost to locate these industrial activities in Malta and prospective entrepreneurs willing to establish these processes — besides being encouraged by the existing range of inducements — should also be attracted by the Government's decision to set up a central foundry to service local requirements. Active consideration is also being given by the Government in close collaboration with UNIDO to the setting up of a Metal Industries Development Centre. Once this centre is established and starts to function on a regular basis, Malta should become an even more attractive location for new metal engineering industries especially in view of its manpower resources trained specifically for this type of activity. Existing metal industrles will also stand to benefit from the operations of the proposed Metal Industries Development Centre which will promote improved production techniques and marketing facilities.

The Metal Industries Development Centre will also contribute positively towards the expansion and possible diversification of existing industries. Another important task of the Centre will consist in identifying the new metal processes and the new types of engineering activities which could be undertaken in Malta on the basis of their marketing prospects overseas.

Moreover, this Centre — which is expected to be run initially under an expatriate project manager — will also seek to provide the required technical support and knowhow in the manufacture of various engineering products in existing and new industries; it will also seek to develop and upgrade local skills in the design, planning and production stages, including on the job training in modern manufacturing techiques. The Centre could also be instrumental in the setting up of new industries in the field of metal working precision engineering.

Malta-EEC Relations

These practical initiatives to stimulate Malta's industrial capacity are however in themselves not enough. They have to be backed by other efforts to secure and maintain access to larger foreign markets for the widest possible range of Maltese products as well as by measures to ensure that in the years ahead Maltese industries can stand on their own and compete on even terms in foreign markets.

The involvement of the European Economic Community in Malta's development process has therefore been of the utmost concern to the Government, and although relations with the Community have been strengthened, Malta is still seeking to enter into a more profitable partnership with the Community which will positively help Malta to build up its economic strength.

The main weaknesses of the Association Agreement with the EEC which was signed in 1970 were blatantly obvious. The gradual dismantling of tariff barriers, while providing Maltese industry with the opportunity to tap and exploit European markets to counterbalance the obvious limitations of the domestic market, also meant, however, that Malta's industry was exposed to the direct competition of its much stronger European counterparts when it was clearly not equipped to do so. Malta's infant industrial sector is still relatively inexperienced and vulnerable; it severely lacks managerial skills and technological capacity, and it relies heavily on imported raw materials. In the circumstances, the original Association Agreement made insufficient allowance for Malta's budding industry and did not protect it sufficiently against its more powerful industrial counterparts in the EEC. The Association Agreement also failed to involve the EEC more directly in the attraction to Malta of strong European industrial firms in order to contribute directly to the development of Malta's industrial sector.

The efforts of the Government to revise the Association Agreement with the EEC were finally rewarded in March 1976. The revised agreement not only includes measures to reinforce and extend economic relations existing under the original

agreement but also binds the Community and Malta to institute forms of co-operation with the aim of contributing to Malta's development and of strengthening existing economic links. This co-operation between the Community and Malta will seek to promote, in particular, participation by the Community in efforts to develop Malta's production and economic infrastructure in order to diversify the island's economic structure; in the marketing and sales promotion of Maltese exports; and in the implementation of Malta's industrial development programmes including the fostering of links and contacts between Community industrial policy-makers, promoters and firms and their Maltese counterparts.

The revised Association Agreement also includes a Financial Protocol whereby the Community has committed a total of 26 million units of account to participate in the financing of projects designed to contribute to the economic and social development of Malta. This amount is made up of 16 million units of account in the form of loans from the European Investment Bank on normal terms; 5 million units of account in the form of loans on special terms; and 5 million units of account in the form of grants. These funds are earmarked for the financing, or part financing, of projects such as capital projects in the fields of production and economic and social infrastructure and for programmes of technical co-operation.

The Financial Protocol to the Revised Agreement required ratification by the Member States; but the Community has recently agreed that co-operation with Malta on the terms of the revised Agreement can take place even though the Protocol has not yet been ratified. This in effect means that Malta can now start availing itself of technical and financial assistance from the Community; and it has accordingly been agreed that a team of European experts should be formed to identify Malta's industrial needs including the identification of European partners for joint ventures.

Malta has also secured, through the revised Agreement, access to European technological know-how suited to its specific needs. It is the Government's firm intention to tap this opportunity fully in the years ahead to enable Maltese institutions to keep abreast with technological progress abroad that may be of practical benefit and of direct interest to the local situation. This access to European research knowledge is particularly vital since, in view of local limitations, Malta can never aspire to build its own technological base and must necessarily depend on similar contacts with European research and development institutions.

The initial contacts which have been established with the Directorate General for Research, Science and Education and with the Joint Research Centre of the Commission of the European Communities have proved encouraging. As a result, it is now hoped that co-operation in this field between Malta and the EEC will include the provision of technical documentation relevant to Malta's requirements; visits by Maltese scientists to the establishments of the Joint Research Centre, and attendance at courses organized by these establishments; expert advice on specific technical enquiries including visits to Malta by officials of the Commission and the acceptance of Maltese trainees in the establishments of the Joint Research Centre according to existing Community procedures. The specific areas which have already been identified for scientific and technological co-operation include the application of solar energy to heating, cooling, refrigeration, desalination and the production of electricity; environmental protection, with special emphasis on problems of air and water pollution, and of toxic chemicals; and standardization in areas linked with industrial activities.

The obvious advantages of a freer flow of Maltese products into European markets need hardly be stressed. The increase in the scale of manufacturing exports required to fulfil Malta's economic targets presupposes success in marketing strategies and, although the merit of a product is a vital consideration, the

availability of markets which are receptive to local products is equally important. In this respect, trade agreements with foreign countries, and concessional arrangements to promote an easier flow of Maltese exports, are obviously of great benefit to local industry. It may be added that since the volume of local production can only cover a very insignificant proportion of European requirements these arrangements pose no real problems to European firms.

Under the first phase of the 1970 Association Agreement, Malta's industrial exports to the Community, apart from certain exceptions notably major textile items, were accorded a reduction of 70% of the EEC tariff, subject to specific rules of origin. In 1974, the Labour Government succeeded in having removed the remaining 30% on the basis of an annual unilateral arrangement whereby the Community accords Malta treatment equivalent to GSP. In June 1976, moreover, the EEC accorded Malta tariff reductions ranging from 40 to 60% on the main agricultural exports.

Following further negotiations between Malta and the EEC which were aimed at cushioning the effect on Malta of Britain's full absorption into the EEC as from the 1st July 1977, and which also sought to obtain improvements for Malta in the existing arrangements, agreement was reached between the two sides on the 29th June, 1977. As a result, the first stage of the Association Agreement, which had in fact already expired, was extended until 31st December, 1980. It was also agreed that the content of the second stage will only be defined during negotiations to be held during 1980. Moreover, the provisions governing the first stage of the agreement were supplemented by other provisions ensuring concessionary terms of entry for Maltese goods, particularly textiles and agricultural products, in EEC countries. By ensuring a more favourable reception for Malta-made goods in EEC markets, the magnitude of the challenge facing Malta's exports in an extremely competitive environment is thus somewhat eased.

Industrial Management Education

Malta's main concern in the last few years has been to set up industrial enterprises to provide employment opportunities for the local labour force and to increase production output mainly for the foreign market. Although manufacturing exports have been rising consistently, it will henceforth be necessary to direct greater attention than has perhaps been given up to now to the challenges faced by Maltese exports in an increasingly competitive marketing environment.

Malta's industrialisation process cannot at this stage fail to give due attention to the development of the required managerial and technical skills on which the industrial strategy so heavily relies for the attainment of the country's set economic targets. Only in this way can local products reach standards which will enable them on their own merits to withstand the pressures of overseas markets which are bound to get increasingly stiff in the years ahead.

At this stage the development of a comprehensive policy for industrial management education in Malta is of the utmost importance if Maltese products are to compete on an equal footing with other products in terms of function, design, quality and price. In this respect, the organisation of specialised practically-oriented management courses in Malta and schemes whereby Maltese students can participate in business management courses abroad that are of direct relevance to the local situation should help to lessen the traditional weaknesses of the Maltese industrial sector in these areas.

MALTA AS A MAJOR SERVICING CENTRE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

One of the most important attitudes which the Government has constantly urged and encouraged the nation to adopt as part of the Plan strategy is a readiness to discard traditional avenues when these no longer form an adequate basis for the achievement of expected results, and a willingness to grasp other new opportunities. A flexible approach to the solution of the country's development problems is an attitude which, while taking full advantage of local circumstances, would enable the nation to draw upon newly found resources and experiences to supplement other initiatives.

Thus the Plan expressly states: "Planning in Malta must be particularly flexible. Flexibility means the creation and encouragement of attitudes and institu tions that are capable of making good use quickly of a favourable turn of events in the world economy, and of adjusting speedily to unfavourable circumstances. To make flexibility possible the Plan aims at a diversified economy and at reserves of various kinds to be drawn upon for unforeseen requirements. Flexibility also means devising alternative strategies for the objectives that have been set and keeping continually abreast of developments at home and abroad." (page 51).

And again in the Plan's last page: "It (the Plan) has flexibility built into it, so that new avenues can be explored, as Malta proceeds along the development path, and responses changed should events turn out to be substantially different from what they were expected to be. Development consists in the removal of rigidities and the danger that the Plan becomes just an added rigidity in the system must be avoided at all costs. But flexibility, which is a recurring theme in the Plan, must not be an excuse for absence of planning. On the contrary, it is the only way in which effective planning can be implemented in a small, open society like Malta."

True to its words, the Government has in recent months given very serious and active consideration to the new possibilities which have emerged since the Plan was launched, convinced that these new opportunities can make a major contribution to stimulate further the island's process of development.

The Plan strategy had placed the onus of development mainly on the build up of productive activities to provide employment opportunities and to attain the target of manufacturing output on which the achievement of Malta's overriding economic objectives so heavily relies. The Plan sought to accelerate Malta's industrialization process at all levels by the development, the improvement and the strengthening of the isalnd's crucial industrial sector. These efforts to build a new industrial society in Malta have already proved successful, but the increase in production required to attain the set development objectives clearly shows that the role of the directly productive sector within the local economic scene in the years ahead is far from insignificant.

However, in its efforts to expand economic activity in Malta to the full, the Government has not restricted itself to the traditional areas of deveolpment; it has also explored new ideas and fresh possibilities. Ever on the alert to tap fresh sources and to open new avenues, the Government has embarked with vigour and enthusiasm on other schemes which, if successfully implemented, should help in the realization of the set targets and of Malta's development objectives.

These new ideas are mainly based on the potential benefits and advantages which can be derived from a full exploitation of Malta's geo-strategic position in the centre of the Mediterranean region. It is true that Malta has traditionally fulfilled this role, but whereas it historically utilized its strategic position for military purposes, the new vision of Malta relies exclusively on peaceful activities in the interests of a new economic structure in collaboration with the widest possible range of partners.

Thus Malta's new strategy will supplement the traditional activities by seeking to turn Malta into a major centre where raw materials or semi-processed goods from distant countries in South America and Asia may be processed and distributed to other countries in Europe and North Africa. In this new partnership with other developing countries from other continents, Malta will provide the required infrastructural services and facilities and will serve as an outlet for the distribution of products and/or raw materials from far away countries on a more competitive basis than if these processes are carried on elsewhere.

Other opportunities exist in the conversion of Malta into a base from which certain types of industries in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East can be serviced. Moreover, it is felt that there are also distinct possibilities if Malta is developed into a Mediterranean centre where various countries can participate in practical forms of co-operation in the fields of culture, trade, economics, communications media, book publication, environment and political non-alignment. These new initiatives are discussed in greater detail in the next few pages of this Supplement.

TRANSHIPMENT/PROCESSING ACTIVITIES

The idea to convert Malta into a centre for the processing and distribution of raw materials and semi-processed goods is a direct consequence of the success registered by the national shipping company Sea Malta in its transhipment activities. When Sea Malta was set up in November 1973, the intention was mainly to serve Malta's export-oriented industrial sector by establishing or improving direct links with countries which import locally manufactured goods. It was felt that Malta's export drive should not be hampered by a heavy dependence on the services provided by foreign shipping lines and that such a vital service to the growth of the national economy should be operated under Maltese control.

Sea Malta developed rapidly as a major factor in the island's infrastructure by providing efficient links with various shipping points and gradually the activities of the company were expanded to an area of even more direct relevance to development. The shipping company secured an agreement with the China National Chartering Corporation under which Chinese merchandise is transhipped in Malta by Sea Malta's feeder services to its Mediterranean points of destination.

This agreement soon demonstrated the potential benefits which could accrue to the local economy if Malta could be converted into a major transhipment centre. Moreover, the experiences gained as a result of this new venture showed clearly that Malta could plan to expand the scope of these activities and embark on more ambitious schemes which would exploit more fully Malta's strategic geographical position and its proximity to European markets and the fast growing markets in North Africa and the Middle East.

It also emerged that there were three types of activity in this sector which could be undertaken in Malta, namely: transhipment operations; storage and distribution; and processing of raw materials. It is the Government's intention to develop Malta still further as a distribution centre where transhipment cargo can be unloaded on Sea Malta feeder vessels for shipment to other destinations. Efforts are also under way to attract to Malta producers and exporters of raw and/or semi-processed materials especially from far away countries. These materials could then be processed locally for onward selling to other markets. This is the type of activity which will be generated as a result of the joint venture agreement with the Brazilian concern Madebras. There is, moreover, the further possibility of extending the processing stage still further by the production of finished articles in Malta for export, and this too is being actively explored.

Contacts have already been established with a number of countries which have shown an interest in these activities and official delegations have already visited Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, the Philippines, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela. The interest which has been generated by the Maltese proposals among public organizations and private investors in these countries has been highly encouragnig and it is hoped that other agreements, on the lines of the Madebras agreement, will be successfully negotiated.

There are distinct mutual advantages to be derived from these initiatives. Malta will be placing at the disposal of this new partnership with other developing countries local infrastructural facilities at more attractive rates than those found in other countries. These new forms of co-operation will at the same time secure for Malta access to technical knowhow as yet not available in the island as well as the possibility of diversifying still further the range of Maltese exports. These joint ventures will no doubt benefit by such basic considerations as Malta's relationship with the European Economic Community which gives to these locally processed products access to European markets at concessional tariff rates, and by Malta's increasing political and economic links with Arab states.

Another important factor which has made Malta's overtures a particularly attractive proposition is the fast turn round at the Grand Harbour which is in complete contrast with the congestion known to exist in various Mediterranean and other ports from which Malta's new trading contacts normally conduct their business in the area.

Marsaxokk Port Project

In view of the encouraging response to Malta's proposals and the possibility that other countries will be similarly attracted, it is vital to ensure that Malta's main infrastructural facilities — which these schemes will be utilizing to the full and on which the success of these ventures will ultimately depend — are able to cope with the volume of work generated by the new transhipment/processing projects when these are fully operational.

Although existing port facilities in the Grand Harbour are sufficient to cater for present levels of general cargo traffic, the increase in transhipment activities on the scale envisaged cannot be met by a strengthening of these facilities; this will require the development of a second port at Marsaxlokk. This is also regarded as essential in view of the projected increase in ship repair and shipbuilding work within the Grand Harbour and the insufficient land area available in the Grand Harbour waterfront for the installation of adequate additional port facilities.

The Government has accordingly decided to develop a new port at Marsaxlokk. This area is considered to offer the best location for port and maritime orientated development, with adequate adjoining land areas suitable for industrial development.

Plans have already been prepared for the development of the new Marsaxlokk harbour — and the scheme is shown in this Supplement. The commercial port facilities which have been planned include berths for container, general and bulk cargo vessels, a container park, a groupage shed, stores, port offices, workshops and other ancillary facilities, including adequate road connections and the provision of electrical, water and communication services. The new industrial estate, which is also earmarked for construction in the vicinity of Marsaxlokk harbour, will be an added attraction for the type of industrial development planned for this area.

Top priority is being given to the Marsaxlokk project, and the Saudi Fund for Development has already approved a loan of fifteen million dollars on soft terms to the Government to finance this important project. A delegation from the Abu Dhabi Fund has also visited Malta and will be recommending the project for concessional financing assistance to their Board.

Shipping Activities

In view of the great potential offered by this new form of development, it is also the Government's intention to streamline and expand the operational capacity and the range of services of the national shipping line Sea Malta. The company will also be organised on more efficient lines so as to be able to cope with the additional volume of work generated by the transhipment activities. This is a vital requirement if Malta's shipping company is to derive the maximum economic benefit and to participate as actively as possible in this new sphere of maritime activity.

Sea Malta has also been strengthened institutionally by the addition of new foreign partners. Following discussions in Algeria, the Algerian National Shipping Company, CNAN, has recently agreed to take up a shareholding in Sea Malta. Thus, besides MDC and other local shareholding, Sea Malta will also have Algerian participation in addition to Libyan shareholding through the General National Maritime Transport Company.

Algerian co-operation with Sea Malta has been further enhanced by time chartering for long periods to CNAN ships belonging to Sea Malta which are not for the time being required by the local company. The two shipping lines have also agreed to exploit in common regular maritime traffic routes.

The success of these efforts, besides serving as an indication of the interest in the growth potential of Sea Malta, is a good sign of the interesting possibilities of the ventures which are being launched and in which Sea Malta will be participating.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICES

The second new area of activity which has recently been considered as offering exciting prospects in the years ahead relates to the provision of services which can be undertaken by Maltese personnel for foreign companies working in the Mediterranean region. This envisages the development of Malta as an international regional centre for repairs, maintenance, servicing and other related operations required by international companies operating in the Mediterranean area.

The Mediterraean region is at the moment undergoing a period of vast economic change: its immense natural resources are being explored and developed, and huge programmes of industrialization are under way. Indeed, never has this region witnessed the present high levels of economic activity. At a time of such rapid regional development, Malta must seek to assert itself as a regional centre of excellence for the servicing of industries now flourishing in the Mediterranean, particularly in North Africa.

Malta possesses distinct advantages in its attemps to establish itself as a leading regional servicing centre in the Mediterranean. Besides its favourable strategic location and its reliable links with neighbouring countries and other countries in the Middle East, Malta can also offer valuable and highly experienced manpower resources for the type of work it is now seeking to undertake.

Malta must endeavour to gear itself rapidly to the new opportunities ahead and to respond adequately to the region's needs for servicing personnel and facilities. There are three types of activity in this sector which can be profitably undertaken by Maltese workers whose experience, training and skills are directly relevant to the openings which are being envisaged. These are the oil exploration sector; the maintenance of electrical and mechanical plant; and the repair and servicing of aircraft of international airlines.

The withdrawal of the British military presence by March 1979 and the phased dismantling of military facilities used by the British Services will, in accordance with the 1972 Agreement with Britain, also mean the phased reduction of manpower levels with the British military base in Malta. Although civilian employees will be assuming direct responsibility for certain essential services — such as fire fighting, sea rescue and aviation services — which are now provided by British Base personnel, the British withdrawal will however mean that there will still remain a pool of skilled Maltese personnel available for eventual re-deployment if their technical experience can be fully utilized.

These men, in view of their experience in carrying out servicing and maintenance work in British miltary installations and other facilities in Malta including the repair of various types of machinery and equipment, are eminently suited to perform these new jobs in accordance with Malta's new role as a maintenance depot in the Mediterranean. The organization of these manpower resources on the lines of an efficient labour unit, ready to carry out this type of work both in Malta and abroad, should help to ensure success in Malta's efforts to break new grounds and to branch out towards these activities in the service of regional needs.

Oil Exploration Industry

The experiences gained as a result of the setting up in Malta in 1974 of Mediterranean Services Ltd. — Medserv — to service the oil exploration industry both on land and offshore in the Middle East and North Africa have served the nation well. The encouraging results achieved by the company have underlined the great potential offered by this sector as a source of employment opportunities and of foreign exchange earnings.

The activities of Medserv have so far centred mainly on the procurement and storage of supplies and equipment for oil drilling companies and on the recruitment of qualified personnel for work on board oil rigs. The range and scope of these activities should now be expanded to cater for other services which are equally essential for oil exploration companies and which in view of their distance from their home base can be more economically provided from a central depot which is more easily accessible and nearer to their area of operations.

Thus, for instance, in direct collaboration with the oil companies, an air transport service has already been provided for oil drilling personnel. Other attractive possibilities will also be encouraged. These include the use of repair faciltes at the Malta Drydocks by offshore oil rigs thereby providing additional work for the yard's labour force, and the promotion of Malta as the island where the families of men working in the oil industry in the Mediterranean region can take up temporary residence and make regular family reunions an attractive and feasible proposition.

Another possibility is the use of Malta as an educational centre for the children of men working in the oil exploration industry. The agreement reached with Reading and Bates Drilling Company for the setting up of an international school at Verdala based on the American educational system is a clear indication of the way in which existing educational facilities can be fully utilised in the best interest of the island.

Due consideration will also be given to the best possible utilization of the extensive oil storage facilities now belonging to the British Services and which will be handed over to the Maltese Government shortly. These facilities are an essential pre-requisite in Malta's plans to establish itself as the leading servicing centre in the Mediterranean region. The former Nato bunkering facilities, besides being made available for normal commercial shipping, could serve the requirements of the oil industry and thus attract higher levels of bunkering and other related activities to the island.

Elctrical and Mechanical Equipment

The trades and skills of Maltese workers now serving with the British forces can also be utilized for other regional requirements of a servicing nature since there are other activities, besides those directly linked to the oil industry, which can be adequately performed by local personnel who possess the necessary technical experience.

A new area of possible deployment is the maintenance, servicing and repairs of heavy electrical and mechanical equipment in other developing countries in the Mediterranean — and particularly in Libya — where these technical skills are still lacking.

Plans to set up a labour unit to recruit men who already possess the required skills and abilities have reached an advanced stage. An encouraging sign is the interest which this new initiative has already generated among companies of international repute which are considering the extent of their participation in the proposed venture.

Aircraft Maintenance and Other Services

Moreover, there are other opportunities within this servicing sector which Maltese personnel should be ready to grasp since available local skills and experiences can be drawn upon. This new activity consists in the maintenance of aircraft in Malta, where besides an efficient and reliable service in full conformity with international standards, clients will benefit from the highly competitive rates which can be offered in Malta in comparison with other servicing centres.

Negotiations are now in progress with airlines of international repute for the setting up of aircraft maintenance and repair workshops in Malta and for the updating and training of local technicians in relevant specialized fields. For this purpose as much use as possible will be made of the facilities which will be vacated by the British Air Force when the base agreement expires.

Malta's potential development as a regional servicing and maintenance centre on the lines above, besides tapping the skills of Maltese workers now carrying out similar duties with the British forces, would also serve to absorb students who have completed relevant courses in local trade schools and technical institutes. Moreover, the recruitment of men who will be participating in these schemes and projects in one central organization will ensure better conditions of work and more attractive terms. Other advantages will include a direct participation in the management of the unit.

One other important benefit which would accrue to the Maltese economy through the full range of servicing activities which could be provided, could be the utilization of the financial services of the local banking sector.

POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

The third dimension of Malta's new role owes its inspiration largely to the new vision of Malta as a politically non-aligned nation but firmly committed to the cause of peace and regional understanding.

Malta's initiative to promote regional co-operation between all the states in the Mediterranean has now gained the support of all the peace-loving countries in the area. Mediterranean unity however, should not consist only of declarations of intent; it should be actively backed by and translated into positive actions and practical initiatives which serve and interpret regional aspirations in a concrete form. Malta can thus be of real service to its Mediterranean neighbours since — given the vast wealth of Mediterranean life and traditions — there is great scope for a vigorous pursuit of Malta's objective to develop the island as a major centre where practical forms of co-operation can be undertaken in the political, cultural, social and economic fields.

Malta's Mediterranean partners have now fully recognized the implications of Malta's political overtures in the last few years to promote political stability in the region. Malta's message was loud and clear at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held in Helsinki in 1975 when it was agreed that there could be no real security in Europe without security in the Mediterranean region. Similarly no economic co-operation, no cultural exchanges and no social understanding are possible without security.

The relaxation of political tensions is an essential pre-requisite if measures aimed at fostering and increasing co-operation between countries are to be useful. Indeed, experience has invariably shown that co-operation can only flourish in an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding. When political clouds darken, the relations between countries, economic or cultural exchanges pale into insignificance.

Malta has striven unceasingly for the emergence of a new political order in the Mediterranean based on the tenets of detente and non-alignment. The large military presence of the two super powers in the Mediterranean Sea might have been inevitable before Helsinki; the gradual departure of the American and Soviet fleets from Mediterranean waters would now make a great contribution towards the security, peace and independence of this region. Moreover, this vision of the Mediterranean is also based on a recognition among all States of the need to take a common and united stand on matters which directly affect their political and economic destinies. This sense of Mediterranean unity and co-operation is a vital link within the chain now being forged for European security and stability.

Malta's dogged perseverance at the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe eventually led to the historic Mediterranean Document which was included in the Final Act of the Conference. The Mediterranean Document runs across political concepts and beliefs and urges all the Mediterranean states to participate in efforts to improve security by the strengthening of their cultural, economic and scientific links with the other European states.

Although these intensions were clearly written into the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, very little if anything has been translated into firm and positive actions. Indeed, few are the practical initiatives which have been undertaken in support of the obligations entered into the Final Act.

It is therefore within this context that Malta's efforts to establish itself as a centre for Mediterranean political, cultural, social and economic co-operation can best be seen. Although the march towards Mediterranean identity and security has now begun in earnest, it is also true that Mediterranean dialogue on a number of

issues needs further stimulation for it to become effective. Only if regional relationships are strengthened and established on a sounder basis can the future stability and harmony of the Mediterranean area be guaranteed as the vital prelude to European unity.

It is this void which Malta's efforts in the years ahead will seek to fill. Malta's new initiatives will honour the commitment to launch concrete and positive proposals that will enhance Mediterranean co-operation and in the long run open the new avenues which will lead to the fulfilment of regional aspirations.

Political Initiatives

On the political front, Malta has not failed to continue to give the lead which a combination of historical events compelled her to assume at the Helsinki Conference on behalf of its Mediterranean partners. As a result. there now already exists a deeper awareness of the advantages which can be derived from the awakening of a special relationship based on political unity among Mediterranean states. One recent initative which falls within these efforts to promote stronger political ties in the Mediterranean region is the setting up in Malta of a secretariat elected by and in the service of all the Socialist youth movements of the Mediterranean.

Another joint Mediterranean venture with far reaching political implications for the whole area was the successful conference held in Malta in June 1977 for the Socialist parties and other progressive political organizations of the Mediterranean. Similar political gatherings will be fully encouraged in the years ahead since in this way Malta's claim to be among the political front runners of the region will be duly enhanced. Moreover, the contacts which are established through these activities will expose the Maltese Islands to new ideas and new experiences which will prove invaluable for her social progress.

Cultural Exchanges

One of the most distinct aspects of the Mediterranean is the richness of its history and the dominant role it has played in Western European civilization. Throughout the ages the Mediterranean was the meeting place of various cultures, religions and traditions, and the diversity of its heritage offers wide possibilities to the states of the Mediterranean for cultural exchanges at regional level.

There is thus ample scope for an initiative by Malta to serve as a cultural centre in the Meidterranean where the varied aspects of Mediterranean life and its cultural achievements may be propagated and where interest in the Mediterranean heritage may be stimulated. The various activities of a cultural nature which Malta might seek to sponsor and organize along with the other Mediterranean states might arouse enthusiasm and foster a deeper awareness of the common Mediterranean heritage. By the development of these cultural exchanges, Malta can adequately fulfil its new role and contribute towards the further development of healthy relations between all Mediterranean states.

The initiatives which can be undertaken by Malta to promote and enhance the development of regional cultural exchanges in the Mediterranean can cover a very wide range of activities. The exchanges and arrangements which can be worked out between interested Mediterranean groups could cater for:

— co-operation among mass media organizations including press agencies and journalists' organizations for the collection, exchange and dissamination of information especially on matters having a distinctly Mediterranean flavour and of particular relevance to the region's aspirations;

— contacts and meetings between journalists, national radio and television companies for the exchange of views and experiences;

— the distribution of radio and television programmes of special interest to a Mediterranean audience;

— the organization of book exhibitions and the improvement of facilities for the loan and exchange of films and documentaries;

— the encouragement and development of Mediterranean literature to enable it to reach a wider audience;

— the promotion of non-commercial film shows in the countries of the Mediterranean through film festivals etc. to promote a deeper awareness of the common destiny of Mediterranean countries;

— the joint organization of regional events such as art exhibitions; theatrical shows; ballet and music performances; archaeological studies; summer schools; sporting activities; operatic and dramatic works; performances by artistic groups; cultural youth events; etc.

Technical and Scientific Co-operation

One practical form of co-operation between Mediterranean states in the scientific field is the Regional Oil-Combating Centre which was opened in Malta in December 1976 under the auspices of UNEP and the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (IMCO). The functions of the Centre include co-operation among Mediterranean coastal states to combat large oil spillages in the Mediterranean especially in emergencies and assistance to member states in the development of their national capabilities to combat oil pollution. The activities of the Centre also include the collection and the distribution of information to member states; the preparation of emergency plans to tackle oil pollution; the development of an effective communications link between the Centre and the Mediterranean coastal states; and the encouragement of technological co-operation and training programmes. In this way Malta is already participating actively in solving one of the major problems now facing the Mediterranean Sea; it is hoped that similar initiatives of a practical nature will be undertaken during the coming years as part of a larger concerted effort by all Mediterranean states to protect the environment of the whole region and to improve the living conditions of their people.

In this context, and within the framework of joint inter-country ventures and programmes to promote further regional technical co-operation, Malta has already sought the assistance of the United Nations and its specialised agencies including UNEP, ECE and UNDP for the setting up of a regional centre in Malta for the practical development and application of solar and wind energy for the benefit of the countries in the region. This project is now under active consideration and efforts to obtain the co-sponsorship of other countries for the Maltese proposal have already proved successful. Indeed, Libya, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, Italy and Spain have all supported Malta's request.

A health project of a similar practical nature and of direct benefit to other Mediterranean states is also now receiving attention. This project seeks to provide training facilities in Malta for para-medical personnel coming mainly from developing Arab countries. A regional centre is planned to be set up in collaboration with the Borstel Institute of Hamburg, mainly for the training of para-medical personnel particularly in medical laboratory techniques. The range of activities of the proposed centre could also be expanded to cover other health services including its utilization as a regional reference laboratory for the investigation of cases referred to it. The Borstel Institute has already agreed to give the technical support for its organization and management while the World Health Organization will also collaborate in this project by providing financial assistance.

Another health project now under consideration is the setting up of a Renal Unit with the financial assistance of the Libyan Arab Jamahirija. The Unit will cater

not only for Maltese patients needing renal dialysis and treatment but also for patients coming from other Mediterranean countries. It is also intended that in the near future students from these countries will be able to make use of the Medical School which is being re-established in accordance with the principles of the new health service to be introduced in Malta.

The Maltese Government intends to give full scope and encouragement to similar schemes in the years ahead. It is through these concrete projects that co-operation between all Mediterranean states is secured and the prospects of regional stability enhanced and strengthened. Moreover, by using Malta as a base no longer for military purposes but for the promotion of these activities, the island will be gradually converted into a Mediterranean centre which can service regional requirements in the economic, political and culture spheres. In this way, the process of Mediterranean dialogue for which Malta has striven resolutely in the last few years will be gaining ground and the ideals of regional co-operation will be more firmly upheld.

Malta's efforts to establish itself as a regional centre must be backed by the availability of adequate infrastructural facilities. If these ideals are to come true and Malta is to serve as a venue for the organisation of political, cultural and other activities linking all the Mediterranean states — and also as the seat for international organisations such as the Seabed Authority — Malta cannot fail to have at its disposal a fully-equipped international conference centre for the hosting of meetings. The British Services have recently vacated an Officers Transit Centre at Hal Far and it is the intention of the Government to convert this conglomeration of buildings into an international convention centre.

In the years to come the image of Malta as the impregnable fortress in the service of the most powerful foreign nation will fade away. A new image will come into focus of a Malta dedicated to the cause of peace and as an international centre where the people of the Mediterranean after centuries of turmoil and strife will gain a new sense of purpose which will bestow upon the region self-respect and dignity.

V — CONCLUSION

Malta now stands at the crossroads of its political and economic destiny. In less than two years' time, the British military base on the island will be completely dismantled and the Agreement with Britain on the use of military facilities in Malta will expire. The Maltese economy will then no longer have at its disposal the financial returns arising out of the Agreement: nor will Malta have any longer the economic returns of the British military presence.

In 1979, with the final departure of the last British military forces Malta will start a new chapter in its history. It will be possible for Malta to lead for the first time a new way of life and to dispense completely with the military expenditure of a foreign power on its shores. The country will then rely exclusively on economic activitites for its livelihood.

The magnitude of the task which the nation has set itself is formidable because it implies a radical change in the structure of the whole economy. This task has not been rendered any easier by the hostile economic forces which have weakened the larger European economies and international industrial and trade activities from which Malta must henceforth draw its strength. This has not, however, in any way dampened Malta's enthusiasm to reach the set goals. It has only served to instil in the nation a deeper sense of satisfaction and pride in the role it has itself chosen to play in a free Mediterranean, unshackled by the presence of super powers.

It is indeed a source of great satisfaction that the whole nation now responds to the call of the Maltese Government for national solidarity to reach the main political objective ahead. A heartening response now comes also from foreign political circles and Malta's objectives are now identified with the region's overall political aspirations. A free Malta for a free Mediterranean now forms the keystone of the nation's political endeavours and the countdown has begun for the full realisation of this political objective by the Mediterranean's ertswhile island fortress.

The nation's social objectives too have been pursued with vigour in the last six years and the country is now deeply committed to the social policies for a more humane society. The gaps which tended to create deep divisions between the island's various social groups have been consistently narrowed down and there is now a greater measure of social harmony than the nation has ever enjoyed. As a result, Maltese society is now a more compact, compassionate and homogeneous community.

Measures to ensure a fairer distribution of income have been accompanied by a more equitable apportionment of national resources; these include various redistributive measures adopted by the Government to equalise incomes and vast public investment programmes especially in housing and health to establish the country's social infrastructure on a sounder basis.

In the coming years the Government will still pursue social policies directed particularly towards certain social groups. Various measures are already being implemented or are under active consideration as part of the Government's drive to develop still further Malta's social environment in line with the national commitment to establish a self-reliant and modern welfare state.

These practical measures include further reforms in income tax administration with expert assistance from overseas to eliminate the possibility of tax evasion; the continued improvement in the range of social services provided by the State including the proposed new health scheme which will provide comprehensive medical services for the care and treatment of all sections of the population; and a better distribution of houses and home ownership through the Housing Authority to ensure that even the most humble Maltese family can enjoy improved living standards and housing conditions.

In this spirit of social consensus, the stage is now set for a more united and more brotherly society where no undue privileges exist and where the less fortunate sections of the community will also be able to enjoy all the fruits of national progress.

In the years ahead the Government will also encourage to the fullest possible extent a deeper sense of social commitment and of greater participation in the country's affairs by the whole Maltese community. It is felt that Maltese citizens should now participate willingly and more actively in matters that directly affect their everyday life. The setting up of neighbourhood committees will be a step in this direction — the initial step in a completely new experience for the nation whereby the various sections of the Maltese community will share in the process of the country's management.

This process of participation will be broadened in the coming years to cover other fields of activity particularly the field of employment. Workers at every occupational level will be encouraged to take greater interest, and even to assume responsibilities, in the activity which is the source of their livelihood and to participate in new forms of dialogue between workers and management. This will help to establish an easier flow of communications between the two sides, a better understanding of their separate problems and a deeper sense of motivation in the attainment of the overall targets.

The encouraging experience which has been gained by workers' participation in the Malta Drydocks and in other enterprises can now serve as a basis for the development of similar participation programmes. The direct involvement of workers in the process of decision making and in the day to day running of their places of work can, if wisely introduced and if exercised with due responsibility, lead to greater efficiency and to higher levels of production. This is essential at a time when the nation is bracing itself for the challenges ahead and the Government will not fail to give the lead in this direction.

Malta's economic performance has also been quite encouraging especially when considered against a background of international economic upheavals which have hampered the progress of countries endowed with much greater national resources. However, in spite of what has already been achieved, Malta's stiffest challenge in the years ahead lies in completing in time its process of economic restructuring.

As the nation enters the most crucial phase of its economic take off, international economic experts are predicting a rather gloomy outlook for the rest of the decade: the industrial Western world is still facing grim prospects of rising unemployment, high rates of inflation, slower growth rates and balance of payments deficits. The experience of the last four years has shown that in similar circumstances Malta's extremely open and vulnerable economy stands no chance of avoiding the impact of these calamities and escape unscathed.

In prosperous times, Malta's commitment to steer a new course would have been no easy economic task. Against today's background of international economic malaise Malta's task is immensely harder to achieve. Malta's approach to its four neighbouring states — Libya and Algeria; Italy and France — for guarantees concerning its initial viability is therefore easily understood. Malta is indeed striving to lay the foundations of a healthy industrial base which will ensure a position of economic self-reliance in the shortest possible time.

This Plan Supplement while providing an opportunity for an assessment of Malta's performance in various sectors to date, will, it is earnestly hoped, represent a fresh rehearsal of the magnitude of Malta's economic challenge and a review of Malta's development strategy.

Thus while overall objectives remain basically those originally stated in the Development Plan, Malta's tactical approach will be reinforced and strengthened to take due account of changing circumstances and to enable the local economy to take full advantage of new openings particularly in the Mediterranean region. The manufacturing sector is still assigned a particularly onerous role in the attainment of Plan targets, atlhough this Plan Supplement recognizes the importance Malta will be attaching to the "services" sector in its development efforts in the years ahead.

These are services, however, which go beyond the traditional sector limited almost exclusively to tourism and related services. This is a services sector with a difference, offering a new range of possibilities which Malta will seek to exploit to the fullest extent possible. The new role for Malta as a major regional servicing centre will give full scope for the development of local resources incuding in particular the utilization of available technical skills and experiences at a time when regional demand for these services is particularly heavy.

What the nation in striving for at this crucial phase of its political and economic history is now being appreciated by a large and growing section of the Maltese community. The total detachment from a way of life relying heavily on Malta's strategic value to foreign military powers, however, has already brought about — and will bring about to an increasingly greater extent in the future — heavier responsibilities and obligatons upon the shoulders of every Maltese citizen.

A national commitment not to shirk away from these responsibilities but to undertake boldly the tasks ahead is therefore an essential feature for the full realisation of Malta's aspirations. And it is against this background that the efforts of every Maltese citizen in the years to come must be viewed.

It is of course the duty of the Government, through the range of policy measures at its disposal, to seek to create an environment conducive to the country's economic progress and social development. But it is ultimately the Maltese worker who has the major role to play in the full attainment of the nation's overall objectives. This has always been the basic philosophy of the Labour Government — that through self-discipline, hard work and honest endeavour the Maltese Islands will rise to the occasion and assume the full responsibilities of nationhood.

In the years ahead therefore, the basic improvements in the quality of life of the Maltese community will be determined largely by the response of Maltese workers to this call — to the urgent need to raise productivity, increase output and improve efficiency. Thus, improvements in living standards and in conditions of work will depend to a large extent on the collective efforts of the Maltese labour force which should provide a major thrust to the nation's march towards a brighter future and towards freedom, self-reliance and independence.

When viewed against these new national demands, the role of Maltese trade unions in the next few years assumes a deeper significance. The Maltese trade union movement, faithful to its responsibilities, has worked unsparingly to improve the working conditions of the Maltese worker and since 1971 it has worked in close collaboration with, and found the full support of, the Labour Government. At this stage of Malta's development and in a changing Maltese society, various new experiences are being gradually assimilated by the Maltese labour movement. Thus workers' participation schemes — both in the process of decision making and in profit sharing — are new experiences that are destined to make a lasting impact on industrial relations in Malta and on the island's process of social and economic development.

In the years ahead Maltese trade unions should involve themselves more directly and participate more actively in schemes intended to strengthen the educational and technical background of Maltese workers. This can be tackled on two fronts — full encouragement and support will be given to workers, both in the public and in the private sector, willing to participate on a student/worker basis in educational schemes which will enable them to upgrade their technical skills and to acquire qualifications that are of direct relevance to their occupation or profession. Maltese trade unions should also concern themselves more vigorously in the organization of educational programmes for workers calculated to instil a deeper awareness of their duties and obligations towards the country in this transitional phase.

As the nation faces the future with courage and determination, the knowledge that the restructuring process will serve as the keystone of all future national efforts gives a deeper dimension to Malta's commitment. The nation now stands resolute in its awareness that its march towards progress is a march towards dignity and self-respect — towards a new way of life based on self-reliance and active neutrality in the service of regional stability, social progress and peace.

Objects and Reasons

The Object of this Bill is to enable the House to discuss the Supplement to the Development Plan for Malta 1973-80.

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