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Settembru 2014

September 2014

PARLAMENT TA' MALTA

mill-PARLAMENT

Perjodiku maħruġ mill-Uffiċċju tal-Ispeaker

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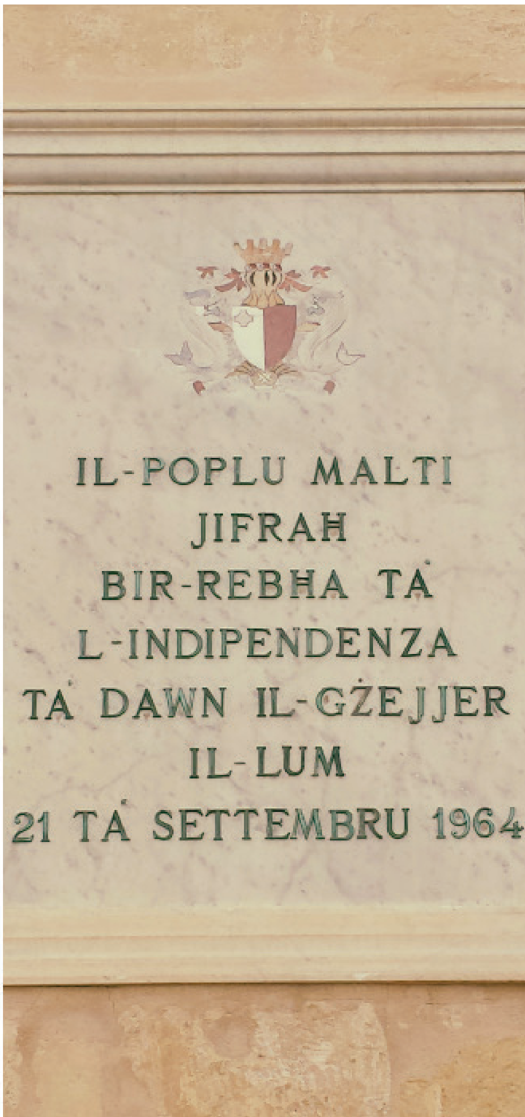

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Bord Editorjali
Editorial Board
Ray Scicluna
Josanne Paris
Ancel Farrugia Migneco
Eleanor Scerri
Sarah Gauci
Kristian Mamo
Eric Frendo

Indirizz Postali
Postal Address
House of Representatives
The Palace
Valletta VLT 1115
Malta

+356 2559 6000

www.parlament.mt
parlinfo@parlament.mt

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3 Daħla
Foreword

4 L-Anniversarji Nazzjonali mfakkra fl-2014
The National Anniversaries commemorated in 2014

10 Il-Parlament u d-Dimensjoni Ewropea
Parliament and the European Dimension

14 L-Att XXII tal-1924 u l-Edukazzjoni f'Malta 90 sena ilu
Act XXII of 1924 and Education in Malta 90 years ago

18 Attivitajiet tal-Parlament
Activities in Parliament

20 Attivitajiet Internazzjonali
International Activities

Qoxra: Sena 2014 - Sena ta' Anniversarji Nazzjonali

***Cover:** 2014 - A Year of National Anniversaries*

Ritratti/*Photos*:
Parlament ta' Malta/DOI

Daħla

Foreword

Is-sitt ħarġa ta' din il-pubblikazzjoni tkopri l-perijodu tas-sajf minn ftit qabel ma l-Parlament aġġorna għall-vaganzi fil-25 ta' Lulju sa Settembru.

Minkejja li l-Parlament ma kienx qiegħed jiltaqa', ix-xogħol parlamentari ma qata' xejn. F'dan il-perijodu ltaqgħu numru ta' kumitati. Barra minn hekk, kemm jien kif ukoll Membri Parlamentari miż-żewġ naħat tal-Kamra, ipparteċipajna f'diversi laqgħat u attivitajiet kemm f'Malta kif ukoll barra.

Bil-għan li din ir-rivista ta' kull tliet xhur tkun dejjem aktar interessanti u informattiva għall-qarrejja tagħha, bdejna żewġ sensiliet ta' artikli minn żewġ esperti fl-istorja ta' Malta. F'din il-ħarġa ssibu l-ewwel parti minn sensiela ta' artikli dwar il-Parlament u d-dimensjoni Ewropea mill-Prof. Godfrey Pirotta, kif ukoll kontribuzzjoni minn Dott. George Cassar dwar id-disgħin anniversarju mid-dħul fis-seħħ tal-liġi li tat bidu għall-edukazzjoni obbligatorja f'Malta.

Barra minn dawn iż-żewġ artikli interessanti ferm, fiż-żmien li Malta qiegħda tiċċelebra tliet anniversarji oħra ta' importanza kbira fl-iżvilupp politiku tagħha, ċjoè 50 sena mill-Indipendenza, 40 sena minn meta saret Repubblika, 35 sena mill-Ħelsien u 10 snin mid-dħul fl-Unjoni Ewropea, għandkom issibu wkoll artiklu tal-Ispeaker Emeritu Anton Tabone fejn jitkellem dwar l-esperjenza tiegħu ta' dawn l-avvenimenti bħala membru u anke Speaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati.

Matul il-perijodu kopert minn din il-ħarġa ġew organizzati diversi attivitajiet fil-Parlament, fosthom il-Parlament taż-Żgħażagħ u s-Science in the House, li t-tnejn saru attivitajiet regolari fil-kalendarju tagħna.

Iżda bla dubju l-akbar parti tal-isforzi u l-ħin tagħna kienu ddedikati għall-mixja ta' din l-istituzzjoni lejn il-binja l-ġdida fid-daħla tal-Belt, mixja li tinvolvi preparamenti estensivi kemm f'dawk li huma servizzi, kif ukoll dawk li huma faċilitajiet. B'sodisfazzjon ngħid illi saru l-arranġamenti neċessarji sabiex malli l-Parlament jiltaqa' fil-binja l-ġdida nibdew inxandru *live* mhux biss il-laqgħat tal-kumitati parlamentari kif konna qegħdin nagħmlu sa issa, iżda wkoll is-seduti parlamentari fil-Plenarja. Ħsibna wkoll sabiex fi ftit żmien ieħor dawn ix-xandiriet ikunu offruti wkoll fuq stazzjon televiżiv tal-Parlament, jew aħjar il-*Parliamentary channel*.

Bla dubju, l-ewwel ġimgħat f'din il-mixja lejn il-binja l-ġdida ma humiex ser ikunu faċli iżda nemmen li bl-għajnuna ta' dawk kollha involuti lkoll ser inkunu parti minn dan l-avveniment storiku fejn għall-ewwel darba l-Parlament Malti ser ikun qiegħed jopera minn binja ddedikata għalih biss.

Anġlu Farrugia

The sixth edition of this publication covers the period from July, just before Parliament rose for the summer recess on 25 July, until September.

Although Parliament was not meeting during this period, parliamentary work was unrelenting. A number of committees met during this period. Moreover, MPs from both sides of the House and myself, participated in various meetings and activities both locally and abroad.

With the aim of making this quarterly periodical more interesting and informative for its readers, in this issue we are including two articles from two experts on Maltese history. Both articles are the first from a series planned to continue in subsequent issues. Prof. Godfrey Pirotta presented the first part of a series of articles about the Parliament and the European dimension and Dr George Cassar presented an article on the occasion of the ninetieth anniversary of the entry into force of the law that made education in Malta compulsory.

In addition to these two very interesting articles, at the time that Malta is celebrating three anniversaries of great importance in its political development, namely 50 years since Independence, 40 years since becoming a Republic, 35 years of Freedom and 10 years since accession to the European Union, you will also find an article by Speaker Emeritus Anton Tabone, where he describes how he witnessed these events as a member and even Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Various activities were organised in the parliamentary precincts during the period under review, including the Youth Parliament and Science in the House, both regular activities in our calendar.

But undoubtedly the biggest part of our time and efforts were devoted to the migration of this institution to the new building at the entrance of Valletta, a move involving extensive preparations both in terms of services and facilities. I am pleased to say that arrangements have been made so that as soon as Parliament starts meeting in the new building, live broadcast of the Plenary, and not only of the parliamentary committee meetings as we are doing now, will commence. We are also planning to broadcast all of these debates live on a dedicated Parliamentary TV channel.

Undoubtedly, the first weeks of the migration will not be easy but I believe that with the help of all those involved we will all be part of this historic event where for the first time, the Maltese Parliament will be functioning from its own premises.

Anġlu Farrugia

L-Anniversarji Nazzjonali mfakkra fl-2014

Kif kulħadd jaf, matul din is-sena qed infakkru u niċċelebraw erba' anniversarji nazzjonali li sawru lil pajjiżna billi għamluh stat sovran, demokratiku, ċivili, modern, b'ekonomija żviluppata, u b'rappreżentanza f'kull forum dinji. Pajjiż indipendenti, ħieles, repubblika u membru tal-Unjoni Ewropea. Pajjiż li għandu għad-dispożizzjoni tiegħu l-istrumenti amministrattivi u istituzzjonali meħtieġa daqs dawk ta' pajjiżi ferm ikbar fit-territorju mill-Arċipelagu Malti.

Infatti, il-kapulavur ta' pajjiżna kien, għadu u jibqa' li minkejja ċ-ċokon u l-limitazzjonijiet tar-riżorsi tiegħu, kapaċi jakkwista, isostni u jkabbar l-infrastruttura sħiħa meħtieġa u jagħmilha paragunabbli ma' ta' pajjiżi ġganti f'termini territorjali u ta' popolazzjoni. Kien proprju għalhekk li f'ħamsin sena rnexxielu jeħles mix-xkiel tal-kolonjaliżmu, li kien ilu jaħkmu taħt forom u dominazzjonijiet varji, għal mijiet ta' snin.

L-anniversarji li ninsabu nfakkru huma dawk tal-Indipendenza, tar-Repubblika, tal-Ħelsien u tas-sħubija fl-Unjoni Ewropea.

Għamilt tnejn u erbgħin sena membru tal Parlament Malti. Bejn l-1966 u l-1971 kont membru ġdid u backbencher fuq in-naħa tal-Gvern. Bejn l-1971 u l-1987, kont Membru fuq in-naħa tal-Oppożizzjoni. Mill-1987 sal-1996 okkupajt il-pożizzjoni ta' Ministru; mill-1996 sal-1998 mill-ġdid Membru fuq il-bank tal-Oppożizzjoni, u bejn l-1998 u l-2008 kont l-Ispeaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati. Għalhekk kelli x-xorti nkun parti minn, jew fil-qrib sew ta', dawn l-anniversarji li qed nitkellmu fuqhom proprju meta seħħew.

Kont fil-Parlament fl-okkażjoni tar-Repubblika, f'dik tal-Ħelsien u fid-dħul ta' Malta fl-Unjoni Ewropea. Ma kontx Membru fl-okkażjoni tal-Indipendenza, iżda għandi s-sodisfazzjon li missieri, it-Tabib Anton Tabone, kien Membru Parlamentari u vvota favur il-Kostituzzjoni tal-Indipendenza meta tressqet għall-vot. Bħala informazzjoni ta' dettall nista' ngħid li kienu erbgħa minn ħamsa l-Membri ġejjin mid-Distrett Elettorali ta' Għawdex li f'dik l-okkażjoni vvutaw favur l-akkwist tal-Indipendenza ta' Malta. F'dik il-leġiżlatura l-ebda rappreżentanza fil-Kamra tad-Deputati fuq bażi ta' distretti elettorali ma kellha l-istess maġġoranza li kellha dik Għawdxija, ta' erba' membri fuq in-naħa tal-gvern u wieħed fuq in-naħa tal-oppożizzjoni.

Meta waslet l-okkażjoni tar-Repubblika, f'Diċembru 1974, għaxar snin wara l-Indipendenza, kelli l-okkażjoni, din id-darba bħala Membru Parlamentari fuq in-naħa tal-Oppożizzjoni, inqum bilwieqfa ħalli nirreġistra b'leħni l-vot tiegħi favur Malta Repubblika flimkien mal-maġġoranza kbira ta' sħabi Membri tal-Oppożizzjoni, fosthom iz-ziju tiegħi, Dr Ċensu Tabone. Immedjatament wara l-vot dħalna lkoll fis-Sala ta' San Mikiel u San Ġorġ, fil-Palazz stess, biex nieħdu l-ġurament dovut quddiem Sir Anthony Mamo, li aktar tard dakinhar stess, quddiem il-Membri Parlamentari, ħa minn idejn l-Ispeaker il-ġurament tal-ħatra bħala l-ewwel President tar-Repubblika.

Fl-okkażjoni tat-tmiem tal-bażi militari f'pajjiżna, magħruf uffiċjalment bħala Jum il-Ħelsien, ma niftakarx li kien hemm xi vot speċifiku fil-Parlament u lanqas niftakar xi manifestazzjoni pubblika jew mod ieħor ta' reżistenza. It-Trattat ta' Difiża u dak Finanzjarju bejn Malta u r-Renju Unit magħmul fl-1964 kellu jiskadi fl-1974, liema Trattat ġie minflok emendat u mtawwal, sas-sena 1979. Għaldaqstant anki dan l-avveniment għadda b'wiċċ il-ġid, mingħajr konfrontazzjonijiet jew kuntrasti żejda. B'hekk l-istess

L-Anniversarji Nazzjonali mfakkra fl-2014 (Kont.)

okkażjoni u s-sinifikat tagħha nħassu bħala paċifiċi.

Imbagħad waslet l-okkażjoni tad-dħul ta' Malta fl-Unjoni Ewropea, għaxar snin ilu. B'differenza għaċ-ċirkostanzi li kienu jeżistu qabel l-avveniment ta' Jum il-Ħelsien, dwar is-sħubija ta' Malta fl-Unjoni Ewropea għal perjodu twil ta' żmien kienu jeżistu bosta kuntrasti u konfrontazzjonijiet. Viżibilju ta' dibattiti parlamentari, ħafna drabi sħan, tpoġġew fuq l-aġenda. Dak iż-żmien, bħala Speaker, jien u kollegi tiegħi ta' dawk il-pajjiżi kandidati biex fil-mument opportun jissieħbu fl-Unjoni Ewropea konna nkunu mistiedna għal konferenzi msejħin apposta minn Brussell biex niffamiljarizzaw ruħna mal-użanzi u anke mas-suġġetti topiċi fl-Unjoni. Dawn il-laqgħat, bħala regola, kienu jsiru darbtejn fis-sena f'pajjiż kandidat differenti u kienu magħrufin bħala laqgħat tal-President tal-Parlament Ewropew mal-Presidenti tal-Parlamenti tal-pajjiżi parteċipanti fil-proċess tat-tkabbir tal-Unjoni. Nistqarr li kont inħossni ħarira skomdu nattendi din il-kwalità ta' laqgħat peress li l-uniku Parlament maqsum fuq id-dħul fl-Unjoni Ewropea kien dak Malti, filwaqt li l-parlamenti tal-pajjizi kandidati l-oħra kienu lkoll manifestament ħerqanin biex jissieħbu fl-akbar tkabbir mistenni.

Dak iż-żmien kont ħadt ħsieb li f'dawn il-laqgħat nieħu miegħi, bħala parti mid-delegazzjoni parlamentari Maltija, rappreżentanza tal-Gvern kif ukoll tal-Oppożizzjoni u nista' nirreġistra bla tlaqliq li l-kontribut kien dejjem favur l-interessi nazzjonali. Anzi, jekk niftakar sew, f'waħda minn dawn il-laqgħat, dik li saret fl-2001 fi Bratislava, matul id-diskussjoni fuq wieħed mill-punti fuq l-aġenda, daħħalna l-provvediment, li aktar tard kellu jkun parti mill-komunikat uffiċjali u finali ta' dik il-konferenza, li fil-każ li Malta ssir parti mill-Unjoni, fil-Parlament Ewropew għandha tkun rappreżentata minn sitt membri u mhux ħamsa. Jien infurmat li x'aktarx din kienet l-ewwel darba li din it-talba ta' Malta ġiet espressa fil-miftuħ f'xi forum internazzjonali. Sintendi b'daqshekk m'iniex neskludi l-possibbiltà li diġà kienet teżisti korrispondenza interna f'dan is-sens bejn il-Gvern ta' Malta u Brussell.

F'dik l-istess okkażjoni kien hemm żewġ pajjiżi kandidati oħra li talbu żieda ta' membri fil-Parlament Ewropew. Il-komunikat uffiċjali li kien ħareġ mil-laqgħa kien inkluda t-talbiet li saru.

Kellhom ikunu referendum u elezzjoni ġenerali li fl-aħħar mill-aħħar iddeċidew id-destin tal-pajjiż u wasslu biex Malta llum hija, kif inhu xieraq, membru tal-Unjoni Ewropea.

Fuq nota personali rrid ngħid li nħossni tassew ipprivileġġjat li għext dawn l-esperjenzi parlamentari li wasslu għall-avvenimenti li bnew u seddqu lil Malta u Għawdex kif nafuhom illum - Indipendenti, Repubblika u Ħielsa fl-Unjoni Ewropea.

Anton Tabone
Speaker Emeritu

Is-Sur Anton Tabone ġie elett l-ewwel darba fil-Parlament fl-1966 u serva bħala Membru Parlamentari għal aktar minn 42 sena. Hu sar l-ewwel Ministru għal Għawdex bejn l-1987 u l-1996 u serva wkoll bħala Speaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati bejn l-1998 u l-2008.

National Anniversaries commemorated in 2014

As everyone should be aware by now, Malta is this year commemorating and celebrating four national anniversaries which have transformed our country from a colonial past into a sovereign, democratic, modern state, with a developed economy and with official representation in all global fora. A country which now possesses the administrative and institutional instruments, on a par with those of countries much larger than the Maltese Archipelago. Indeed, our country's greatest achievement has been and remains the capability to build, maintain and expand the full infrastructural requirements and make them comparable to those of much larger countries despite size and very limited resources. I believe that it was precisely for that very reason that fifty years ago Malta succeeded In liberating itself from the yoke of colonialism, which had held it under its sway for hundreds of years under various forms and dominations, and has managed to make a success story out of its Independence.

It so happens that I spent forty- two years as a member of the Maltese Parliament. A backbencher on the Government side between 1966 and 1971. A member on the Opposition side between 1971 and 1987. I then occupied the position of Minister from 1987 to 1992 and again from 1992 to 1996. I was again a member on the Opposition Bench from 1996 to 1998.Between the years 1998 and 2008 I served as a Speaker of the House of Representatives. I therefore had the good fortune of being part of, or very close to, precisely the anniversaries we are currently commemorating.

I was an MP on the occasion of Malta becoming a Republic; on the closure of the British military base and on Malta's accession to the European Union. On the other hand I was not an MP on the occasion when Malta gained its Independence, but I am very proud to declare that my late father Dr Anton Tabone was then a Member of Parliament and that his vote was cast in favour of the Independence Constitution. For the record I would like to point out that on that occasion four out of the five members elected from Gozo's electoral district voted for Malta's Independence. On that same occasion, no other representation in the House on the basis of electoral districts spread throughout Malta had a similar majority as the Gozitan one had, namely four members on the Government side and a single member of the Opposition side.

On the occasion of Republic Day, in December 1974, ten years after Independence, I had the opportunity, this time as a Member of Parliament on the Opposition side, to stand up and register my vote orally in favour of a Republic together with the vast majority of my Opposition colleagues, including my uncle Censu Tabone. Immediately after the vote we all proceeded to the Saint Michael and Saint George Hall, to take our oath in the presence of Sir Anthony Mamo who on that same day received from the then Speaker the oath of Office as the first President of the Republic in the presence of all the Members of Parliament.

One has to say that on the occasion of the closure of the military base in our country, officially known as Freedom Day, I do not remember any specific vote called in Parliament, nor do I have any recollections of some public manifestations for or against. The Defence and Financial Agreement between Malta and the United Kingdom signed in 1964 was due to expire in 1974, but instead it was amended and extended to 1979. Consequently even that event passed serenely, without any undue confrontation.

National Anniversaries commemorated 2014 (Cont.)

Therefore that occasion and its significance was perceived as peaceful.

Then came the occasion of Malta's accession to the European Union, a decade ago. In contrast with the circumstances prevailing in the run up to Freedom Day, Malta's accession to the European Union had for a long time been fraught with divergent opinions and confrontation. Parliamentary debates, often heated ones, were placed on the agenda. In that period as Speaker of the House, I was invited several times along with colleagues from other EU candidate countries to attend conferences in Brussels and elsewhere to familiarize ourselves with EU practices and current affairs. As a rule these meetings would be held biannually in a different candidate country and were known as meetings between the President of the European Parliament with Presidents coming from the EU enlargement countries. I confess that I felt somewhat uncomfortable attending such meetings since my Parliament was divided on the EU issue, while the other candidate countries' Parliaments were united and all very keen awaiting to join at the next largest enlargement envisaged.

At that time I made sure to be accompanied to those meetings by a Parliamentary delegation made up from both sides of the House, and I can state without any hesitation that our contribution was unfailingly addressed in the national interest. I remember very well one such meeting held in Bratislavia way back in 2001, wherein my delegation managed to insert the provision that should Malta become an EU Member, it should be represented in the European Parliament by six members and not five. Subsequently that provision became part of the official final communiqué coming out of that conference, possibly stating publicly for the first time Malta's request in an international fora.

Of course I am not excluding the possibility or rather the probability that there already existed internal correspondence on this matter between the Maltese Government and Brussels. On that same occasion two other candidate countries had also requested an increase in the number of members from their respective countries to be sent to the European Parliament. The official communiqué issued after the meeting included these requests.

A referendum and a general election later were necessary to settle finally the country's destiny and grant Malta its rightful place as a Member of the European Union.

On a personal note I would like to state how truly privileged I feel to have lived those parliamentary experiences which led to the events that built and fostered the Malta and Gozo we know today—a free independent republic within the European Union.

Mr Anton Tabone was first elected to Parliament in 1966 and served as an MP for more than 42 years. He was appointed the first Minister for Gozo between 1987 and 1996 and also served as Speaker of the House between 1998 and 2008.

L-Anniversarji Nazzjonali mfakkra fl-2014

Il-Prim Ministru George Borg Olivier jgħolli d-dokument li permezz tiegħu Malta saret indipendenti fil-21 ta' Settembru 1964

Prime Minister George Borg Olivier raising the document which made Malta independent on 21 September 1964

Il-Prim Ministru Dom Mintoff jitla' t-telgħa tal-Monument tal-Ħelsien fil-Birgu u jixgħel il-fjamma tal-Ħelsien nhar il-31 ta' Marzu 1979

Prime Minister Dom Mintoff climbing up to the Freedom Monument in Birgu and lighting the flame of Freedom on 31 March

National Anniversaries of 2014

Il-President tar-Repubblika Anton Buttigieg ixejjer lill-aħħar vapur tal-Flotta Navali Ingliża li ħalla Malta fil-31 ta' Marzu 1979

President of the Republic Anton Buttigieg waving at the last Brisith Navy ship leaving Malta on 31 March 1979

Il-firma tat-Trattat ta' Sħubija ta' Malta fl-Unjoni Ewropea mill-Prim Ministru Eddie Fenech Adami u mill-Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin Joe Borg, fis-16 ta' April 2003, f'Ateni

Treaty of Accession of Malta to the European Union signed by Prime Minister Eddie Fenech Adami and Foreign Minister Joe Borg on 16 April 2003 in Athens

Il-Parlament u d-Dimensjoni Ewropea - l-Ewwel Parti 1962-1964

Fl-2014 Malta tiċċelebra tliet anniversarji importanti: ħamsin sena mill-indipendenza, ħamsa u tletin sena mill-ħelsien u għaxar snin mis-sħubija fl-UE. Iżda għall-kuntrarju ta' dak li huwa komunament magħruf, l-għeruq ta' kull wieħed minn dawn l-anniversarji jmorru lura għall-aħħar tal-ħamsinijiet meta l-idea proprja li Malta tista' ssir indipendenti jew tabilħaqq indipendenti u newtrali jew b'xi mod assoċjata ma' blokka ekonomika Ewropea emerġenti, kienet għadha kemm tibda tifforma. Kien fl-1957 li l-Komunità Ekonomika Ewropea (il-KEE jew is-Suq Komuni) bdiet teżisti b'mod formali, l-istess sena meta Malta bdiet il-vjaġġ tagħha lejn l-indipendenza. Dan sar fit-30 ta' Diċembru f'seduta tal-Assemblea Leġiżlattiva meta l-Parlament ta' Malta vvota b'mod unanimu favur riżoluzzjoni storika li saret magħrufa bħala l-'Break with Britain Resolution'.[1] Dakinhar, ir-rappreżentanti ta' Malta ddikjaraw b'mod inekwivoku l-pożizzjoni tagħhom favur l-indipendenza. Ġie deċiż dak li ħasbu li se jkun l-aħjar għal Malta. Wieħed jista' jgħid ukoll li minn dakinhar 'il quddiem, it-triq li kellha tieħu Malta u x'kellha tagħmel ladarba ssir indipendenti saret suġġett ta' dibattitu importanti f'Malta. X'kellha tagħmel Malta? Tinqata' kompletament mir-Renju Unit, tibqa' fil-Commonwealth jew tipprova tikseb assoċjazzjoni mal-KEE? Dan l-artiklu jħares lejn il-mod kif il-Parlament ittratta l-kwistjoni tal-KEE tul is-snin. L-ewwel parti tittratta l-perjodu 1962-64, il-perjodu li matulu l-proċess tal-indipendenza laħaq il-quċċata tiegħu. Fiha nistgħu naraw li l-ħolqien tal-KEE kien qanqal interess kbir f'Malta u li r-relazzjoni potenzjali tal-gżira ma' dan il-blokk kien se jkun diskuss b'mod intensiv f'diversi seduti.

Il-Parlament u d-Dimensjoni Ewropea

Il-ġeografija għoġobha tpoġġi lil Malta mhux biss fiċ-ċentru tal-Mediterran, iżda wkoll fil-fruntiera bejn żewġ kontinenti: l-Ewropa u l-Afrika. Konsegwentement, l-istorja ta' Malta hija kkaratterizzata mill-impatt li dawn iż-żewġ kontinenti kellhom fuq il-ħajja Maltija. Huwa ta' tentazzjoni li wieħed jgħid, għall-finijiet ta' sempliċità, li l-Maltin ħadu l-lingwa tagħhom min-Nofsinhar u r-reliġjon mit-Tramuntana. Il-problema hi li minħabba l-lingwa l-Ewropej spiss iddefinixxew lill-Maltin bħala Għarab, filwaqt li l-abitanti tal-gżira kienu jqisu lilhom infushom, pjuttost b'qilla, bħala Ewropej, minħabba l-antenati u l-fidi Kattolika tagħhom kif ukoll is-simboli kulturali tagħha. Fi studji ppubblikati oħra, diġà wrejt l-impatt politiku u psikoloġiku li din id-dualità kellha fuq l-iżvilupp storiku Malti.[2] Madankollu, eżempju wieħed jista' jkun biżżejjed biex juri kif din il-kwistjoni tal-identità kienet għadha teżerċita influwenza fuq il-Maltin wara kważi erbgħin sena ta' indipendenza. Fl-1993, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea, fl-*avis* tagħha dwar l-applikazzjoni ta' Malta għas-sħubija fl-UE, iddikjarat li Malta kellha d-dritt li tasserixxi l-vokazzjoni tagħha biex tidħol fl-UE peress li kienet stat Ewropew. M'hemmx dubju li kien hemm dawk f'Malta li kienu stennew żmien twil għal din l-approvazzjoni tal-identità Ewropea ta' Malta mill-istati ewlenin tal-Ewropa. Dan jista' jidher mid-dikjarazzjoni espliċita li saret proprju mill-Istitut tad-Diretturi tal-Kunsill ta' Malta li ddikjara li l-*avis* "jikkonferma dak li minn dejjem konna nassumu f'Malta iżda li mhux dejjem kien aċċettat lil hinn minnha, jiġifieri li aħna poplu Ewropew li jgħix f'pajjiż Ewropew."[3] L-istqarrija tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea tabilħaqq kienet misset punt sensittiv u dan jispjega għala d-dibattitu dwar il-KEE fis-sittinijiet xi kultant kien jenfasizza aktar il-ħtieġa li tiġi żgurata l-identità kulturali Ewropea ta' Malta permezz tal-assoċjazzjoni jew sħubija mal-KEE milli l-fatturi ekonomiċi.

Għalkemm inkiteb ħafna dwar ir-relazzjonijiet politiċi u ekonomiċi ta' Malta mal-Afrika ta' Fuq, ħarsa ta' malajr lejn il-manifesti tal-partiti politiċi Maltin tiżvela li kollha jagħmlu referenza espliċita għall-identità Ewropea tagħna, filwaqt li stqarrijiet pubbliċi oħra juru li l-Ewropa kienet tat id-direzzjoni li l-gvernijiet Maltin suċċessivi segwew fl-isferi ekonomiċi, politiċi u kulturali. Tabilħaqq, huwa interessanti li wieħed jinnota li fid-Diskors mit-Tron li inawgura l-Parlament il-Ġdid fl-1962, kien sar aċċenn għal dak li jista' xi darba jseħħ mir-relazzjoni potenzjali ta' Malta mas-Suq Komuni, kif il-Komunità Ekonomika Ewropea kienet ta' spiss tissejjaħ.[4]

Id-dibattitu dwar il-KEE

Wara l-elezzjonijiet ta' Frar tal-1962, il-Parlament il-ġdid elett ta' Malta ltaqa' għall-ewwel darba fis-26 ta' April, 1962. Wara li ġew segwiti l-proċeduri normali, il-membri pproċedew għas-Sala ta' San Mikiel u San Ġorġ biex jisimgħu d-Diskors mit-Tron mill-Gvernatur ta' dak iż-żmien, Sir Maurice Dorman. Waqt id-diskors tiegħu l-Gvernatur, wara li kkunsidra ħafna mill-aspetti ekonomiċi u politiċi tal-programm tal-gvern, b'mod pjuttost sorprendenti għamel aċċenn għall-kwistjoni tar-relazzjonijiet ta' Malta mas-Suq Komuni. Skont Dorman, il-ministri kienu qed jikkunsidraw b'attenzjoni l-implikazzjonijiet għal Malta ta' sħubija eventwali jew parteċipazzjoni fis-Suq Komuni. Dan kien sorprendenti għaliex Malta ma kinitx għadha indipendenti u l-kapaċità tagħha biex tingħaqad ma' din l-assoċjazzjoni kienet tiddependi kompletament fuq il-kunsens tar-Renju Unit. Il-Kostituzzjoni tal-1961 tat lill-Gvern Malti iktar libertà fir-rigward tar-relazzjonijiet kummerċjali ma' pajjiżi oħrajn, b'mod partikolari dawk mhux fil-Commonwealth. Iżda l-kunċett ta' Suq Komuni, għalkemm kien kunċett ekonomiku fil-prinċipju, kien jippunta lejn integrazzjoni politika akbar fost is-sitt stati membri. Sa dak iż-żmien, ir-relazzjonijiet li kellhom il-kolonji Franċiżi mal-KEE kienu mmexxija minn Franza. Dan kien sorprendenti wkoll għaliex Malta ma kellha ebda xorta ta' kapaċità industrijali li kienet tippermettilha tikkompeti fi ħdan il-KEE. L-ekonomija ta' Malta kienet għadha bbażata prinċipalment fuq l-infiq militari tar-Renju Unit u r-rieda tajba tal-Ingliżi, meta kienu jkunu jridu huma. Konsegwentament, l-interess li kien qed jikber malajr tar-Renju Unit stess fi sħubija mal-KEE naturalment qanqal f'Malta interess fil-benefiċċji li jistgħu jiksbu l-gżejjer minn relazzjoni mill-qrib mas-Suq Komuni. Is-

Il-Parlament u d-Dimensjoni Ewropea - l-Ewwel Parti 1962-1964 (Kont.)

sħubija tar-Renju Unit innifsu bilfors kien ser ikollha impatt qawwi fuq Malta.

Għalhekk, ma kienx sorprendenti meta l-Prim Ministru tkellem dwar din il-kwistjoni fil-qosor waqt id-dibattitu tal-Aġġornament wara d-Diskors mit-Tron. Borg Olivier informa lill-Kamra tad-Deputati li r-relazzjonijiet ta' Malta mas-Suq Komuni kienu inklużi fid-diskussjonijiet tal-gvern tiegħu f'Londra meta ġew diskussi r-riżervi tal-partit tiegħu dwar għadd ta' kwistjonijiet Kostituzzjonali.[5] Il-kwistjoni ġiet indirizzata minn membri parlamentari oħrajn waqt id-diskussjonijiet li saru matul id-dibattitu dwar ir-Risposta għad-Diskors tal-Gvernatur, indikazzjoni ċara ta' kemm il-kwistjoni tas-Suq Komuni kienet tema importanti għal-leġiżlaturi Maltin. Xi wħud indirizzaw il-benefiċċji ekonomiċi jekk Malta jkollha xi tip ta' relazzjonijiet, filwaqt li oħrajn tkellmu dwar l-idea li l-identità Ewropea ta' Malta kienet tagħmilha *sine qua non* li l-gżira għandha tipprova tikseb sħubija fi ħdan il-blokk, li dak iż-żmien kien jikkonsisti f'sitt membri.

Il-kwistjoni kienet ukoll ta' importanza għall-Oppożizzjoni, peress li sa mill-bidu nett kienet ippressat lill-gvern biex jagħti iktar informazzjoni dwar l-intenzjonijiet tiegħu, filwaqt li fl-istess ħin kienet tesprimi l-evalwazzjoni tagħha stess tal-iżviluppi fi ħdan il-KEE. Pereżempju Dom Mintoff, il-Mexxej tal-Oppożizzjoni, ried ikun jaf mingħand il-Gvern jekk kienx jaqbel miegħu li s-Suq Komuni kien qed jittrasforma ruħu minn blokk ekonomiku għal blokk politiku. Mintoff argumenta li ħarsa lejn il-gazzetti Ġermaniżi kienet turi li minbarra kwistjonijiet ekonomiċi, il-blokk kien qed jikkunsidra dejjem iktar li jersaq lejn l-idea ta' Ewropa federali jew magħquda, li tkun b'saħħitha biżżejjed biex tieqaf liż-żewġ blokok eżistenti. Huwa osserva li l-Iżvizzera kienet applikat għal Sħubija Assoċjata iżda ġiet irrifjutata minħabba l-mentalità indipendenti tagħha. Huwa qal li dak li riedu l-pajjiżi tas-Suq Komuni kien li jaħdmu għal Ewropa li jkollha armata waħda u Parlament wieħed. Għalhekk, huwa kellu dubji li Malta ser jirnexxilha fejn falliet l-Iżvizzera. Huwa spiċċa billi insista li l-gvern iżomm lill-Kamra infurmata bl-intenzjonijiet tiegħu dwar is-suġġett.[7]

L-importanza li kienet qed tingħata lil dan is-suġġett mill-membri parlamentari kienet tant kbira li xi jiem wara, membri parlamentari oħra ħassew li kien reġa' meħtieġ li jqajmu l-kwistjoni tas-Suq Komuni fil-Kamra. Membru parlamentari tal-Oppożizzjoni tal-MLP ħaseb li l-kwistjoni kienet importanti ħafna għal Malta u ried li l-gvern jagħti lill-Kamra l-opportunità biex jiddiskutiha. Il-mod kif din il-kwistjoni kienet ser tiġi ttrattata kien ser ikun fattur li fuqu jiddependi l-iżvilupp tal-futur innifsu tal-gżejjer. Huwa enfasizza li kellha tiġi studjata b'attenzjoni għaliex il-gżira ma setgħetx tieħu ċerti direzzjonijiet fl-iżvilupp industrijali u mbagħad tabbandunahom għaliex dawn ma jirriflettux il-kundizzjonijiet tas-suq fil-KEE.[8]

Dr Herbert Ganado, mexxej tal-Partit Demokratiku Nazzjonalista qabel mal-membru tal-MLP meta qal li l-kwistjoni tas-Suq Komuni kienet waħda kruċjali għal Malta għaliex għalkemm kien blokk ekonomiku relattivament ġdid, wieħed kellu jeżamina x'vantaġġi jista' jipprovdi għal Malta.[9] Huwa saħaq li Malta kienet tifforma parti mill-Ewropa u jekk l-Ewropa kienet se torganizza l-affarijiet tagħha b'dan il-mod, hekk kif anki r-Renju Unit kien qiegħed jikkunsidra b'serjetà l-idea ta' sħubija, kif jista' jkun li din il-gżira ċkejkna tibqa' barra? Qal li Malta kellha żewġ riżorsi ta' importanza kbira: il-pożizzjoni strateġika tagħha u l-port tagħha li seta' jgħin biex jgħaqqad ir-rotot bejn l-Ewropa u l-Afrika u r-rotot taż-żejt lejn il-Lvant. Skont Ganado, ir-rapporti finanzjarji tal-Ewropa kellhom tendenza li jissuġġerixxu li minħabba s-swieq, ir-riżorsi u l-għarfien tagħha, l-Ewropa dalwaqt kienet ser tkun sinjura daqs l-Istati Uniti. Għalhekk appella lill-gvern biex jgħin lill-industrija f'Malta u jġib lejn Malta esperti mis-Suq Komuni biex jistudjaw is-sitwazzjoni lokali u jagħtu parir. Huwa ħeġġeġ ukoll li l-Ministru responsabbli mill-industrija jmur hu stess Brussell biex jeżamina l-kwistjonijiet rilevanti.

Il-Prim Ministru ma setax ma jirreaġixxix għal dawn il-kummenti mill-Oppożizzjoni. Huwa stqarr li dak li qal il-Mexxej tal-Oppożizzjoni dwar il-mossa tal-Ewropa lejn dimensjoni politika kien magħruf minn kulħadd. Madankollu, huwa ddikjara li l-Oppożizzjoni kienet għadha ma fehmitx is-sitwazzjoni li kien qed jiffaċċja l-gvern li f'qasir żmien seta' jkollu jieħu deċiżjoni ta' importanza kbira għal Malta. F'dan l-istadju l-aktar li seta' jgħid lill-Kamra kien li l-gvern kien qed jistudja l-implikazzjonijiet tas-sħubija għal Malta u l-Membri Parlamentari m'għandhomx jagħtu interpretazzjoni ulterjuri lill-aċċenn tal-Gvernatur għas-suġġett. Il-gvern ħass li qabel ma jressaq il-kwistjoni quddiem il-Kamra jew jistaqsi l-opinjoni tagħha, il-gvern stess għandu jitgħallem x'kienu l-vantaġġi u l-iżvantaġġi għal Malta.[10]

(Ikompli fil-ħarġa li jmiss)

1. *Pirotta, Godfrey, 2006, Malta's Parliament: An Official History, p131.*
2. *Ara pereżempju Pirotta, Godfrey, (1996), The Maltese Public Service 1800-1940: The Administrative Politics of a Micro-State, Mireva Publications, Malta; u "Maltese Political Parties and Modernisation" f'Baldacchino, G., u Sultana, R., (1993), Maltese Society: A Sociological Inquiry, Mireva Publications, Malta.*
3. *The Malta Independent, 4th July 1993.*
4. *Pirotta, 2006, p137.*
5. *Dibattiti tal-Assemblea Leġiżlattiva, 26 April 1962.*
6. *Dibattiti tal-Assemblea Leġiżlattiva, 2 May 1962.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Dibattiti tal-Assemblea Leġiżlattiva, 7 May 1962.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Dibattiti tal-Assemblea Leġiżlattiva, 10 May 1962.*

Il-Prof. Godfrey A. Pirotta huwa Professur fil-Public Policy fil-Fakultà tal-Ekonomija, il-Management u l-Accounts (FEMA) u Direttur tal-Istitut tal-Amministrazzjoni Pubblika u l-Management fl-Università ta' Malta.

Parliament and the European Dimension - Part 1 1962-1964

In 2014 Malta celebrates three important anniversaries: fifty years since independence, thirty-five years of freedom and ten years of EU membership. But, contrary to common knowledge, each of these anniversaries has roots that go back to the late 1950s when the very idea that Malta could become independent or indeed independent and neutral or somehow associated with an emerging European economic bloc, was just beginning to take shape. It was in 1957 that the European Economic Community (EEC or Common Market) came formally into existence, the very same year in which the Maltese began their quest for independence. This took place on December 30th at a sitting of the Legislative Assembly when Malta's Parliament voted unanimously in favour of a historic resolution which became known as the 'Break with Britain' resolution.[1] On this day Malta's representatives unequivocally declared their stand in favour of independence. What they thought would be the best for Malta had been decided. One can also say that from this day onwards the path that Malta should take and what it ought to do once independent became a subject of important debate in Malta. Should Malta break off completely from Britain, remain in the Commonwealth or seek association with the EEC? This article looks at the way Parliament dealt with the EEC issue over the years. The first part deals with the period 1962-64 the period during which the independence process reached its climax. In it we shall see that the creation of the EEC had provoked great interest in Malta and that the island's potential relationship with this bloc was to be intensely debated over several sittings.

Malta and the European Dimension

Geography has been pleased to place Malta not merely at the centre of the Mediterranean but at the border of two continents: Europe and Africa. Consequently, the history of Malta is characterised by the impact that these two continents had on Maltese life. It is tempting to say, for simplicity's sake, that the Maltese got their language from the South and their religion from the North. The problem with this is that their language sometimes made Europeans define the Maltese as Arabs while the islanders saw themselves, quite vehemently, because of their ancestry and Catholic faith and its cultural embodiments, as European. I have already shown in other published studies, the impact, politically and psychologically, that this duality had on Maltese historical development.[2] One example, however, may suffice to show how this issue of identity was still exerting influence on the Maltese after nearly forty years of independence. In 1993, the European Commission, in its *avis* on Malta's application for EU membership, declared that Malta had a right to assert its vocation to join the EU because it was a European state. There is no doubt that there were those in Malta who had waited a long time for this endorsement of Malta's European identity from Europe's leading states. This can be seen from the explicit declaration made by no other than the Council of Malta's Institute of Directors which stated that the *avis* 'confirms what has always been assumed in Malta but not always accepted outside it, namely that we are a European people living in a European country.'[3] The European Commission statement had indeed touched a sore point and this will explain why the debate on the EEC in the 1960s sometimes placed more stress on the need to ensure Malta's cultural European identity through association or membership of the EEC than on economic factors.

Although much has been written about Malta's political and economic relations with North Africa, a cursory look at the political manifestos of all Maltese political parties will reveal that all of them make explicit reference to our European identity while other public declarations will demonstrate that Europe has provided the direction which successive Maltese governments have followed in economic, political and cultural spheres. Indeed, it is interesting to note that what Malta's potential relationship with the Common Market, as the European Economic Community was frequently called, might one day come to be, had featured in the Address from the Throne which inaugurated the new Parliament in 1962.[4]

Debating the EEC

Following elections in February 1962, Malta's newly elected Parliament met for the first time on April 26, 1962. After the normal procedures had been followed members proceeded to the Hall of St Michael and St George to hear the Speech from the Throne by the Governor of the time, Sir Maurice Dorman. During his speech the Governor, having gone over many of the economic and political aspects of the government's programme, touched, rather surprisingly, on the issue of Malta's relations with the Common Market. According to Dorman, ministers were carefully considering the implications for Malta of eventual membership or participation in the Common Market. It was surprising because Malta was not yet independent and its ability to join this association depended entirely on British consent. The 1961 Constitution had granted the Maltese Government greater freedom in respect of trade relations with other, notably non-Commonwealth, countries. But the Common Market concept, though economic in the main, pointed towards greater political integration among the six member states. Up to that time the relations enjoyed by French colonies with the EEC were conducted through France. Surprising too because Malta did not enjoy any sort of industrial capacity which would allow it to compete within the EEC. Malta's economy was still mainly based on British military spending and British goodwill when this was forthcoming. Consequently, Britain's own fast growing interest in EEC membership could not but provoke in Malta interest in the benefits that may accrue to the islands from a close relationship with the Common Market. Britain's own membership was bound to impact strongly on Malta.

PARLIAMENT AND THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION - PART 1 1962-1964 (CONT.)

Not surprisingly, therefore, the matter was briefly elaborated on by the Prime Minister during the Adjournment debate following the Speech from the Throne. Borg Olivier informed the House that Malta's relations with the Common Market had featured during his government's discussions in London when his party's reservations on a number of Constitutional issues were discussed.[5] The issue was taken up by other MPs during the speeches made during the debate on the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech, a clear indication of how much the Common Market issue was an important theme for Maltese legislators. Some addressed the economic benefits of Malta having some sort of relations while others the idea that Malta's European identity made it a *sine qua non* that the island should look for membership within the then six-member bloc.[6]

The issue was also of importance for the Opposition, for from the very beginning it pressed the government to give more information on its intentions while, at the same time, expressing its own evaluation of developments within the EEC. For example, Dom Mintoff, the Leader of the Opposition, wanted to know from the government whether it shared its view that the Common Market was shifting from an economic to a political bloc. Mintoff argued that a look at German newspapers would show that in addition to economic matters the bloc was increasingly considering moving towards the idea of a united or federal Europe strong enough to stand up to the two existing blocks. He observed that Switzerland had applied for Associate Membership but had been rejected because of its independent mindedness. What the countries of the Common Market wanted, he said, was to work for a Europe which would have one army and one Parliament. He doubted, therefore, whether Malta would succeed where Switzerland had failed. He ended by demanding that the government should keep the House informed of its intentions on the subject.[7]

Such was the importance being given to this subject by MPs that a few days later other MPs felt it necessary again to raise the Common Market issue in the House. An MLP Opposition MP thought the issue very important for Malta and wanted the government to provide the House with an opportunity to discuss it. On how it was approached, he argued, depended the very future development of the islands. He stressed that it needed to be studied carefully because the island could not take certain directions in industrial development and then abandon them because these did not quite reflect market conditions within the EEC.[8]

Dr Herbert Ganado, leader of the Democratic Nationalist Party agreed with the MLP member saying that the Common Market issue was a crucial one for Malta for although it was a relatively new economic bloc, one had to examine what advantages it might provide for Malta.[9] Malta, he stressed, formed part of Europe and if Europe was going to organise its affairs in this way, and with even Britain giving the idea of membership serious consideration, would it be possible for this tiny island to remain outside? Malta, he said, had two resources of great importance: its strategic position and its harbour which could help bridge the commercial routes between Europe and Africa and the oil routes to the East. According to Ganado, financial reports from Europe tended to suggest that because of its markets, resources and know-how, Europe will soon be as rich as the United States. He therefore appealed to the government to help industry in Malta and to bring over to Malta experts from the Common Market to study the local situation and provide advice. He also urged that the Minister responsible for industry should himself go to Brussels to examine the relevant issues for himself.

The Prime Minister could not but react to these comments from the Opposition. He said that what the Leader of the Opposition had said about Europe's move towards a political focus was known to everyone. He, however, claimed that the Opposition had not yet grasped the situation facing the government which in short time might be called to a decision of great importance for Malta. At this stage he could not tell the House more than that the government was studying the implications for Malta of membership and MPs should not read more into the Governor's mention of the subject. The government felt that before it brought the matter before the House or ask its opinion the government itself should learn what the advantages or disadvantages for Malta were.[10]

(continues in the next issue)

1. Pirotta, Godfrey, 2006, Malta's Parliament: An Official History, p131.
2. See for example Pirotta, Godfrey, (1996), The Maltese Public Service 1800-1940: The Administrative Politics of a Micro-State, Mireva Publications, Malta; and "Maltese Political Parties and Modernisation" in Baldacchino, G., and Sultana, R., (1993), Maltese Society: A Sociological Inquiry, Mireva Publications, Malta.
3. The Malta Independent, 4th July 1993.
4. Pirotta, 2006, p137.
5. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 26 April 1962.
6. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 2 May 1962.
7. Ibid.
8. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 7 May 1962.
9. Ibid.
10. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 10 May 1962.

Prof. Godfrey A. Pirotta is Professor in Public Policy in the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accounts (FEMA) and Director of the Institute of Public Administration and Management at the University of Malta.

L-Att XXII tal-1924 u l-Edukazzjoni f'Malta disgħin sena ilu

llum f'Malta kulħadd jieħu l-edukazzjoni bħala element u servizz naturali u awtomatiku li kull ċittadin għandu dritt għalih. Il-liġijiet nazzjonali jobbligaw lil kull ġenitur u kustodju ta' persuni minorenni li jibagħtuhom l-iskola sa 16-il sena. Imma dan ma kienx minn dejjem għax sal-1924 il-ġenituri kellhom għażla jibagħtux lil uliedhom jew le l-iskola u ma kien hemm ebda rabta jekk fl-aħħar mill-aħħar ikomplux iħeġġuhom biex jattendu wara li jkunu kitbuhom l-ewwel darba. Kull direttur tal-iskejjel elementari tista' tgħid kien jilmenta minn dan in-nuqqas u kollha ppruvaw iħajru lill-ġenituri Maltin biex jaraw fl-iskola mezz kif uliedhom setgħu javvanzaw fil-ħajja u jkollhom futur aħjar.

Meta Dott. Albert V. Laferla laħaq Direttur tal-Iskejjel Elementari, fl-14 ta' Awwissu 1920, ħass li fl-ewwel rapport tiegħu kellu jagħti stampa tal-istat tad-dipartiment li kien wiret mill-awtoritajiet kolonjali ġewwa Malta kif ukoll bħala preparazzjoni għal meta jibda jiffunzjona l-Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni li kellu jitwaqqaf għall-ewwel darba mal-Kostituzzjoni tal-1921. Laferla stqarr li l-qagħda tal-edukazzjoni primarja tant kienet lura li ddeskrivieha bħala inkwetanti. Id-Direttur identifika numru ta' kawżi għal din il-qagħda. L-ewwel fattur, skont hu, kienet l-età ta' meta t-tfal jidħlu l-iskola għall-ewwel darba. Osserva li waqt li f'pajjiżi oħra Ewropej it-tfal kienu jittieħdu l-iskola mill-età ta' tliet snin, f'Malta dan ma kienx qed isir; anzi, kienet għadha kif ġiet imxandra ordni li l-età tad-dħul togħla minn 5 għal 6 snin. Hekk issa kien hemm klassi waħda fil-livell tal-iskola tal-infants u mhux tnejn bħal qabel. Laferla ra f'din il-miżura daqqa oħra 'l isfel għad-detriment tal-edukazzjoni għax flok it-tfal kienu qegħdin jinqabdu minn età żgħira ħafna u jibdew jingħataw formazzjoni minn kmieni, bil-maqlub dawn kienu qed jispiċċaw fit-toroq minn fejn jixorbu influwenzi ħżiena fl-aktar żmien delikat ta' ħajjithom. Laferla għalhekk ikkonkluda li kien qed iħossu kostrett jibdel l-ordni li kienet ħarġet u hekk jara kif seta' jiftaħ mill-ġdid l-iskejjel għal tfal ta' ħames snin skont kif kienu jippermettu l-ispazju u n-numru ta' għalliema.[1]

Kawża oħra għall-qagħda mwiegħra kienet li fl-iskola l-istudent kien qed ikun biss mgħallem il-qari u l-kitba. Laferla ħass li l-iskola kellha tiżviluppa l-bniedem sħiħ u toħroġ minnu t-talenti li kien tah Alla. Osserva li dak li kienu sostnew u ppruvaw jagħmlu Pestalozzi fl-1796 u Frobel fl-1839 kien għoddu ntnesa. Id-Direttur kien baqa' mistagħġeb kemm ħareġ talent minn esebizzjoni li hu tella' wara ftit xhur ta' skola u dan kellu jiftaħ għajnejn il-pubbliku għall-kapaċitajiet moħbija li kellhom it-tfal Maltin.[2]

Dwar l-istaff, Laferla sostna dak li kien sab il-Bord tal-Edukazzjoni fir-rapport tiegħu tat-18 ta' April 1921 fejn kien inkiteb li b'għalliema mhux imħallsa kif xieraq ma setax ikun hemm progress adegwat fl-edukazzjoni. Id-Direttur żied li din kienet materja urġentissima u li kellha tkun fuq nett tal-aġenda tal-Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni. Ħass ukoll li kellu jinfetaħ kulleġġ għat-taħriġ tal-għalliema li jieħu post l-iskola ta' taħriġ li kienet qed topera f'dak il-mument. Hu kien jemmen li għalkemm din tal-aħħar kienet rat żvilupp sostanzjali, ħafna aktar kien għad irid isir. Ammetta wkoll li kulleġġ għat-taħriġ tal-għalliema ma kienx xi ħaġa li setgħet issir ħabta u sabta f'Malta ta' dak iż-żmien.[3]

Problemi oħra li ġew identifikati kienu jinkludu l-attendenza irregolari u n-nuqqas ta' kooperazzjoni mill-ġenituri u minn bnadi oħra. It-tfal kienu jintbagħtu meta jiftlilhom il-ġenituri u d-dixxiplina fl-iskejjel kienet ineżistenti. L-għalliema ma setgħu jinfurzaw l-ebda awtorità u f'ħafna każi meta lill-ġenituri kienet tinġibdilhom l-attenzjoni dwar uliedhom, minflok ma jikkoreġuhom dawn tal-aħħar kienu jeħduha mal-kap tal-iskola. U ma' dawn kollha kien hemm il-politika. Laferla qal li kien hemm bżonn li jinqata' darba għal dejjem il-battibekk ta' x'kellu jiġi mgħallem fl-iskejjel. It-tfal Maltin, kompla, kienu qed ikunu żvantaġġati bil-kbir meta mqabblin ma' tfal Ingliżi jew Taljani. Sostna li filwaqt li t-tfal barranin kellhom ħin twil biex jiddedikawh għat-tagħlim tal-lingwa tagħhom biss, il-Maltin kienu jridu jaqsmu ħinhom fuq żewġ lingwi – it-Taljan u l-Ingliż. U fuq dan kollu, aspetti u suġġetti essenzjali oħrajn bħalma kienu l-bini tal-karattru, ix-xjenza, l-istudju tan-natura, it-tpinġija, ix-xogħol bl-idejn, l-istorja, il-ġografija, u t-taħriġ fiżiku jew ma jidhrux fis-sillabu jew inkella jiġu mgħallma ta' kafkaf.[4]

Il-perjodu li fih ħadem Laferla kien żmien interessanti ħafna fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni. Dan għaliex waqt li kien hemm ħafna x'tagħmel, l-istess sfida biex dan isir ħoloq fid-Direttur dik id-determinazzjoni meħtieġa biex dan jagħmlu u jagħmlu mill-aħjar li seta'. Waħda mir-riformi importanti li Laferla ħareġ biha kienet it-twaqqif tas-central schools. Dawn kienu skejjel b'għan preċiż – dak li jrawmu u jħarrġu għalliema għall-futur. Ried jibni ġenerazzjoni ta' għalliema msejsa fuq tagħlim sod u xogħol is-central schools kien proprju li jaqbad subien u bniet li kellhom il-vokazzjoni ta' għalliema u joħolqilhom korsijiet li fihom, barra li jingħataw tagħlim f'suġġetti fil-livell sekondarju, kienu wkoll jibdew jippreparawhom għal studju aktar avvanzat. L-ewwel skejjel infetħu f'Ħal Lija u Ħal Tarxien u ftit wara fir-Rabat ta' Għawdex.[5] Kull skola kienet tilqa' żgħażagħ taż-żewġ sessi li għal dak iż-żmien kien kunċett innovattiv u żgur mhux xi ħaġa tas-soltu.

L-ewwel Ministru tal-Edukazzjoni Malti fl-ewwel Gvern Responabbli taħt il-Kostituzzjoni tal-1921, kien Mons. Francesco Ferres li milli jidher ma tantx għoġbuh dawn is-central schools u sakemm dam ministru ma ħallihomx jiffunzjonaw. Imma din il-qagħda nbidlet mal-ħatra tal-Prof. Mons. Enrico Dandria li reġa' tahom il-ħajja.[6] Dawn l-iskejjel kienu qed jimmiraw fil-għoli u sas-sena 1924-25 kienu waslu biex anki jagħmlu qabża fil-kwalità. Dan it-titjib sar għax barra li l-ogħla klassi f'dawn l-iskejjel kienet qed tipprepara l-istudenti biex jagħtu l-Junior Oxford Examination, issa kienu se jwaqqfu Practising Section għal dawk l-istudenti li kienu beħsiebhom ikomplu fil-karriera tat-tagħlim. B'dan il-mod, wara tliet snin ta' tagħlim akkademiku dawn l-istudenti kellhom jingħataw ukoll taħriġ fil-prattika tal-klassi biex hekk ikunu ppreparati aħjar biex jiffaċċjaw u jimmaniġġjaw l-istudenti li kien se jkollhom taħt ir-responsabbiltà tagħhom ftit xhur wara.[7]

L-Att XXII tal-1924 u l-Edukazzjoni f'Malta disgħin sena ilu (kont.)

Biex ikompli jissaħħaħ l-operat tal-għalliema, imbagħad, Laferla rsista biex it-Training School fejn kienu jitħarrġu b'mod speċifiku dawk li kienu għażlu li jkomplu fil-karriera tat-tagħlim, fl-1925 tgħolli l-livell u l-miri. Għalhekk, waqt li meta bdiet fl-1920 kienet tipprepara lill-istudenti-għalliema għal-livell tal-Junior Oxford Examination, issa, l-objettivi kienu li twassalhom sal-istandard tas-Senior Oxford jew il-Malta Matriculation.[8]

L-Att dwar l-attendenza fl-iskejjel u żviluppi fis-setturi edukattivi

Pass kbir fl-istorja u l-progress tal-edukazzjoni f'Malta, bla dubju ta' xejn kienet il-liġi li saret bl-Att XXII tal-1924 u li daħlet fis-seħħ nhar l-1 ta' Jannar 1925. B'din il-liġi daħal l-obbligu ta' attendenza għal dawk li jkunu fuq ir-reġistru tal-attendenza tal-iskola. Kien hemm il-biża' li kif titħabbar din il-liġi, numru sostanzjali ta' ġenituri jfittxu joħorġu lil uliedhom u oħrajn iżommu lura milli jiktbuhom. Ma kinitx biża' bla bażi għax barra l-kontroversji li kienu ħakmu 'l-pajjiż xi snin qabel rigward kemm għandu jindaħal l-istat fl-edukazzjoni tal-ulied, kien hemm ukoll il-fatt innegabbli li biex it-tfal jintrabtu li jmorru l-iskola l-istat kien qed iċaħħad lill-familji tagħhom – ħafna drabi fqar – milli jibagħtuhom jaħdmu mal-ewwel ċans li jiġihom. Din il-biża' madankollu ma seħħitx u hekk il-Compulsory Attendance Act bdiet b'ċertu suċċess tant li l-medja tal-attendenza fl-iskejjel żdiedet. Peress li issa t-tfal kienu obbligati li jibqgħu l-iskola ladarba jinkitbu, l-iskejjel bdew jaraw tkabbir fin-numru ta' klassijiet speċjalment dawk aktar għoljin, mir-IV Standard 'il fuq. Hekk mal-ġid miksub inħolqot ukoll il-problema ta' skejjel żgħar wisq biex jakkomodaw lil dawk kollha li riedu jinkitbu u li issa kienu marbuta bil-liġi li jibqgħu sakemm itemmu l-kors primarju kollu.[9] L-età għal dan kienet 12-il sena li żdiedet għal 14-il sena fl-1928. L-attendenza ma kienx permess taqa' taħt il-75 fil-mija u jekk dan kien jiġri, il-ġenituri jew min kien responsabbli għat-tifel/tifla kien jirċievi notifika tal-assenza. Ġara li l-Gvern kien poġġa d-dover li jagħtu din in-notifika fuq il-gradi kollha tal-għalliema.[10] Mill-ewwel l-union tal-għalliema oġġezzjonat għax ħasset li dan il-piż kien qed inaqqas l-istima tal-għalliem u jġibu daqs dak ta' messaġġier jew purtinar. Talbet lid-Direttur biex dan ix-xogħol jagħmluh il-purtinari kif digà kienu jwettqu tqassim ta' messaġġi importanti oħra.[11] Fil-battibekk li nqala', Laferla staqsa kinux joġġezzjonaw xorta li kieku l-għalliema kienu jitħallsu għalih dan ix-xogħol.[12] L-għalliema rrispondew li kien ikun tajjeb li jgħollu ftit is-salarju miżeru li kellhom, imma żgur mhux bil-mod li kien qed jissuġġerixxi d-Direttur.[13] L-għalliema kienu, tista' tgħid, irrabjati għax is-salarji tagħhom ftit li xejn kienu ċċaqalqu 'l fuq u meta ħassew li kienu qegħdin jiġu ttrattati daqs purtinar ma felħux ma jiddefendux l-istima tagħhom. Laferla madankollu ddefenda ruħu billi rrisponda li meta kiteb il-kelma 'staff' din ma kinitx tirreferi għall-istaff tal-għalliema għax it-terminu kellu tifsira ħafna usa'.[14] U l-kwistjoni tmewtet hemm.

Fis-snin għoxrin l-iskola primarja f'Malta kienet qed tintuża biex tagħti edukazzjoni ġenerali lill-istudenti li permezz tagħha jiġu żviluppati l-intelliġenza u l-ħiliet bażiċi li bihom kull student u studenta jkunu jistgħu jaqdu dmirhom bħala ċittadini u ħaddiema. Żviluppi lil hinn minn hekk, fis-snin għoxrin tas-seklu li għadda kienu għadhom qed jifformaw fil-ħsieb tal-mexxejja fid-Dipartiment tal-Edukazzjoni. Madankollu l-liġi li biha kull min jinkiteb ikun obbligat ikompli l-kors primarju tiegħu żgur kienet pass fid-direzzjoni t-tajba. Għaddew disgħin sena li matulhom l-iżvilupp fl-edukazzjoni f'Malta tista' tgħid kompla jinbena u jissaħħaħ.

1.ANR, GMR 758-780, Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the Financial Year 1920-21 (Government Printing Office: Malta, 1922), GMR 773, P, 1.
2. Ibid., P, 1-2.
3. Ibid., P, 2.
4. Ibid.
5. Zammit Mangion , J., L-Istorja ta' l-Edukazzjoni f'Malta (Malta, 2000), 77.
6. Ibid., 77–8.
7. ANR, GMR 948-972, Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the Financial Year 1924-25 (Government Printing Office: Malta, [dokument sfuż]), GMR 960, M, 4.
8. Ibid., M, 3.
9. Ibid., M, 1.
10. Cassar, G., Inside the Malta Union of Teachers 1919-2009 (Malta, 2009), 17.
11. Malta Union of Teachers, Correspondence from June 1925 to Dec. 1937 (Malta, bla data), korrispondenza mill-MUT lid-Direttur tal-Iskejjel Elementari (3.iii.1925).
12. Ibid., korrispondenza mid-Direttur tal-Iskejjel Elementari lill-MUT (5.iii.1925).
13. Ibid., korrispondenza mill-MUT lid-Direttur tal-Iskejjel Elementari (11.iv.1925).
14. Ibid., korrispondenza mid-Direttur tal-Iskejjel Elementari lill-MUT (24.iv.1925).

Comm. Dr George Cassar huwa Senior Lecturer fl-Istitut għat-Turiżmu, l-Ivvjaġġar u l-Kultura tal-Università ta' Malta. Huwa soċjologu storiku u pedagoġista b'interessi ta' riċerka fl-Istorja u s-Soċjoloġija tal-Edukazzjoni; il-Pedagoġija tal-Patrimonju Kulturali, l-Istorja u l-Istudji Soċjali; l-Istorja tat-Tagħlim tal-Istorja; l-Istudju tal-Ordni ta' San Ġwann (SMOM); l-Istorja u l-Kultura ta' Malta; il-Patrimonju u l-Kultura; it-Turiżmu Kulturali; u s-Soċjoloġija tal-Ikel. Huwa l-awtur jew l-editur ta' kotba u rivisti akkademiċi, u ppubblika għadd ta' studji fil-ġurnali u kapitli f'kotba relatati mal-oqsma ta' interess tiegħu.

Act XXII of 1924 and Education in Malta ninety years ago

In Malta, in present times, everyone takes education for granted as a natural and guaranteed service to which every citizen is entitled. National laws oblige all parents and custodians of minors to send them to school until the age of 16. However this has not always been the case, since up to 1924 parents had the choice whether to send their children to school, and there was no actual duty to continue encouraging them to attend after having registered these children for the first time. All elementary school directors used to complain about this shortcoming and strived to convince Maltese parents to consider education as a means how their children could advance in life and have a better future.

When Dr Albert V. Laferla was appointed Director of Elementary Schools on the 14 of August 1920, he felt that in his first report he should give a snapshot of the state of the department he had inherited from the colonial authorities in Malta. This would also serve as preparation for the setting up of the Ministry of Education, which was to be established by the 1921 Constitution. Laferla indicated that the state of primary education was so backward that it was indeed worrying. The Director identified a number of causes for this situation. The first factor, in his opinion, was the age when children started school. He observed that in other European countries children attended school from the age of three, which was not the case in Malta. To the contrary, an order had just been announced raising the age of entry from 5 to 6 years. Consequently, now there was one class for infants and not two, as was the case before. Laferla perceived this measure as another step backwards to the detriment of education, because instead of being nurtured from a very young age, children were ending up on the street from where they would pick up negative influences at the most sensitive stage of their lives. Laferla therefore concluded that he felt compelled to change the order which had been issued and, depending on the availability of space and teachers, find a way to re-open schools for five-year olds.[1]

Another cause of the precarious situation was that at school students were only being taught reading and writing. Laferla felt that schooling should develop the person in a holistic manner so as to develop his or her God-given talents. He observed that the reflections and work of Pestalozzi in 1796 and Frobel in 1839 had practically been forgotten. The Director was astounded by the talent which emerged during an exhibition he organised after a few months of schooling and felt that this should raise public awareness about the hidden talents of Maltese children.[2]

Concerning staff, Laferla reiterated what the Education Board had stated in its report dated 18 April 1921, namely that if teachers were not adequately paid there could be no proper advancement in education. The Director further stated that this was a very urgent matter which should take top priority on the Education Minister's agenda. He also felt that a training college for teachers should be opened instead of the training school operating at the time. He also further believed that although the latter had registered significant development, much remained to be done. He nonetheless also admitted that a training college for teachers was not something which could be achieved overnight in Malta in those times.[3]

Other problems which were identified included irregular attendance and lack of cooperation from teachers and other quarters. Children were sent to school at their parents' whims and discipline was non-existent. Teachers could not enforce any authority, and very often when parents' attention was drawn to their children's misbehaviour, instead of correcting them these would confront the headmaster. Laferla stated that the debate on what should be taught in schools had to end once and for all. He continued that Maltese children were grossly disadvantaged when compared to their English and Italian peers. He observed that while foreign children could dedicate ample time to learning their own language, Maltese students had to divide their time between two languages – Italian and English. Furthermore, other essential subjects or elements such as character development, science, nature study, drawing, handcrafts, history, geography, and physical training were either absent from the syllabus or else were taught without much attention to the subject matter.[4]

The period during which Laferla worked was a very interesting one in the educational field. This was so because, while there were great challenges, those same challenges created a strong sense of determination in the Director to do what was necessary to the best of his abilities. One of Laferla's important reforms was the setting up of Central Schools. These were schools with a specific aim – to nurture and train future teachers. He wanted to build a generation of teachers based on solid training. The Central Schools' role was in fact to create courses for boys and girls inclined towards the teaching profession which would not only provide them with teaching at secondary level, but also prepare them for more advanced studies. The first schools were opened in Lija and Tarxien, and shortly after in Victoria (Gozo).[5] Each school catered for mixed gender youths, which at the time was an innovative and unusual concept.

Mons. Francesco Ferres, the first Maltese Minister of Education in the first Government under the 1921 Constitution, seems not to have been too fond of these Central Schools and prevented them from operating during his tenure. The situation however changed on the appointment of Prof. Mgr. Enrico Dandria who revived them.[6] These schools had ambitious aims and by 1924-25 they managed to achieve a leap in quality; besides

preparing advanced class students for the Junior Oxford Examination, a Practising Section was set up for these students who wanted to pursue a career in teaching. Consequently, after three years of academic learning these students would also receive practical training in class so as to be better prepared to face and manage the students they would have under their responsibility in the coming months.[7] In order to further strengthen the teaching profession, in 1925 Laferla insisted on raising the standards and objectives of the Training School which provided specific training to those who chose to pursue a teaching career. As a result, while at its inception in 1920 it used to prepare student-teachers for the Junior Oxford Examination, the objective now was to prepare them for the Senior Oxford or Malta Matriculation examinations.[8]

The Compulsory Attendance Act and developments in the educational sectors

A major step forward in the history and progress of education in Malta was undoubtedly the law enacted by Act XXII of 1924 which entered into force on the 1st of January 1925. This law introduced the duty of attendance for those enrolled on the school's attendance register. There was the concern that on promulgation of this law, a substantial number of parents would try to strike their children off the register while others would refrain from registering them. This fear was not unfounded because besides the controversies which had engulfed the country a few years before concerning the extent of the state's interference in children's education, there was also the undeniable fact that compulsory school attendance denied families – often quite poor – the opportunity to send children to work at the first available opportunity. This fear however did not materialise and therefore the Compulsory Attendance Act started with a certain amount of success, such that the average school attendance increased. Since children were now obliged to remain at school once registered, there was an increase in the number of classes, especially the more advanced ones, from Standard IV upwards. Consequent to the benefit achieved a problem arose in that there was insufficient space in the schools for all those who wanted to be registered, and who would now be bound by law to complete the entire primary course.[9] The school leaving age was initially 12 years, and was then raised to 14 in 1928. Attendance was not allowed to drop below 75 per cent and when this occurred, the parents or persons responsible for the child would receive a notice of absence. The Government had charged teachers at all levels with the duty of delivering this notice.[10] The Teachers' Union immediately objected since it felt that it undermined teachers' status and placed them on the same grade of a messenger or janitor. It requested the Director to assign that job to janitors since they were already responsible for the delivery of other important messages.[11] In the subsequent debate, Laferla asked whether the teachers would still object if they were paid for that task.[12] The teachers replied that it would be good if they were to get a slight increase in their meagre salary, but certainly not in the way the Director was suggesting.[13] One may say that teachers were angry because their salaries hardly ever increased and now that they felt that they were being treated like janitors, they could not keep back from upholding their status. Laferla however defended himself by responding that when he wrote the word 'staff' this did not refer to teaching staff since this word had a much wider meaning.[14] And thus the matter was closed. In the 1920s primary school in Malta was used to give a general education to students which would allow them to develop their intelligence and basic skills in order to be able to fulfil their duties as citizens and workers. Any further developments were still at an embryonic stage in the minds of the leaders of the Department of Education at that time. However the law which made primary school attendance compulsory for all registered students was certainly a step in the right direction. Ninety years have since elapsed during which time one may say that education in Malta continued to develop and consolidate itself.

1. GMR 758-780, Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the Financial Year 1920-21 (Government Printing Office: Malta, 1922), GMR 773, P, 1.
2. Ibid., P, 1-2.
3. Ibid., P, 2.
4. Ibid.
5. Zammit Mangion, J., L-Istorja ta' l-Edukazzjoni f'Malta (Malta, 2000), 77.
6. Ibid., 77–8.
7. ANR, GMR 948-972, Reports on the Working of Government Departments during the Financial Year 1924-25 (Government Printing Office: Malta, [unbound document]), GMR 960, M, 4.
8. Ibid., M, 3.
9. Ibid., M, 1.
10. Cassar, G., Inside the Malta Union of Teachers 1919-2009 (Malta, 2009), 17.
11. Malta Union of Teachers, Correspondence from June 1925 to Dec. 1937 (Malta, no date), correspondence from the MUT to the Director of Elementary Schools (3.iii.1925).
12. Ibid., correspondence from the Director of Elementary Schools to the MUT (5.iii.1925).
13. Ibid., correspondence from the MUT to the Director of Elementary Schools (11.iv.1925).
14. Ibid., correspondence from the Director of Elementary Schools to the MUT (24.iv.1925).

Comm. Dr George Cassar is Senior Lecturer in the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture of the University of Malta. He is a historical sociologist and pedagogist with research interests in the History and Sociology of Education; the Pedagogy of Heritage, History and Social Studies; the History of History Teaching; the Study of the Order of St John (SMOM); the History and Culture of Malta; Heritage and Culture; Cultural Tourism; and, the Sociology of Food. He is the author or editor of books and academic journals, and has published numerous papers in journals and chapters in books related to his areas of interest.

Attivitajiet tal-Parlament

PARLAMENT TAŻ-ŻGĦAŻAGĦ

Fit-18 ta' Settembru, il-Parlament Malti laqa' l-edizzjoni tal-2014 tal-Parlament taż-Żgħażagħ, li sar avveniment annwali fil-kalendarju parlamentari. Dan l-avveniment huwa organizzat mill-Kunsill Nazzjonali taż-Żgħażagħ (KNŻ) u l-għan tiegħu huwa li jlaqqa' żgħażagħ biex jifformulaw politika dwar temi partikolari. Dawn il-politiki huma mbagħad diskussi u jittieħed vot fuqhom f'simulazzjoni ta' seduta parlamentari.

Bħal fis-snin preċedenti l-avveniment kien maqsum f'żewġ partijiet: l-ewwel parti li tinvolvi żgħażagħ ta' bejn l-etajiet ta' 14 u 17-il sena u t-tieni parti li tinvolvi żgħażagħ bejn l-etajiet ta' 19 u 35.

Il-parteċipanti fl-ewwel sessjoni ddiskutew mozzjonijiet dwar l-eżamijiet u l-i*streaming*, miżuri maħsuba li jżidu n-numru ta' turisti f'Malta u t-tibdil fil-klima. Il-parteċipanti fit-tieni sessjoni ddiskutew metodi innovattivi għal sistema ta' trasport aktar effiċjenti u d-dekriminalizzazzjoni tad-droga.

Is-sessjoni ta' din is-sena kienet ippreseduta mid-Deputy Speaker, l-Onor. Ċensu Galea, u għaliha attendew numru ta' Membri Parlamentari miż-żewġ naħat tal-Kamra.

L-edizzjoni tal-2014 tal-Parlament taż-Żgħażagħ li nżammet fis-Sala tal-Parlament

SCIENCE IN THE HOUSE

Science in the House wkoll sar avveniment annwali organizzat mill-konsorzju Science in the City u bħal fi snin preċedenti dan kien organizzat fil-Parlament Malti. Science in the House huwa l-avveniment li jiftaħ il-festival tax-xjenza prestiġjuż "Science in the City, Researchers' Night, 2014". L-avveniment jiċċelebra u jirrikonoxxi l-kisbiet ta' Maltin riċerkaturi fix-xjenza, akkademiċi u inġiniera. Science in the House jservi bħala forum għal skambju ta' ideat bejn riċerkaturi Maltin, il-Kamra tad-Deputati u l-Membri Parlamentari.

Il-format tal-edizzjoni tal-2014 ta' Science in the House kien wirja ta' *posters* dwar riċerka mwettqa fl-Università ta' Malta, u bnadi oħra f'Malta, li servew ta' bażi għal diskussjoni informali mal-Membri tal-Parlament. Iċ-ċerimonja tal-ftuħ, li saret f'waħda mill-kmamar tal-kumitati, saret fil-25 ta' Settembru u għaliha kien hemm preżenti d-Deputy Speaker, l-Onor. Ċensu Galea, il-Whip tal-Gvern l-Onor. Carmelo Abela, ir-Rettur tal-Università il-Prof. Juanito Camilleri u l-Lead Coordinator ta' Science in the City il-Prof. Alex Felice.

Il-wirja se tibqa' armata sal-avveniment tan-Notte Bianca, li din is-sena se jsir fl-4 Ottubru.

YOUTH PARLIAMENT

On 18 September the Maltese Parliament hosted the 2014 edition of the Youth Parliament, which has become an annual event in the parliamentary calendar. This event is organised by the Kunsill Nazzjonali taż-Żgħażagħ (KNŻ) and brings together youths to form a policy on particular topics. These policies are then discussed and voted on in a simulated parliamentary sitting.

As in previous years the event was divided into two parts: the first part involving young people aged between 14 and 17 and the second part involving young people between the ages of 19 and 35.

The participants in the first session discussed motions on examinations and streaming, measures intended to increase tourist arrivals in Malta and climate change. The participants in the second session discussed innovative methods for a more efficient transport system and drug decriminalisation.

This year's session was chaired by the Deputy Speaker, Hon. Ċensu Galea, and was attended by a number of MPs from both sides of the House.

SCIENCE IN THE HOUSE

Science in the House has also become an annual event organised by the Science in the City Consortium and hosted by the Maltese Parliament in its precincts. Science in the House is the opening event of the prestigious science festival 'Science in the City, European Researchers' Night, 2014'. The event celebrates and acknowledges the achievements of Maltese research scientists, academics and engineers. Science in the House serves as a forum for networking between Maltese research scientists, the House of Representatives and Members of Parliament.

The format of the 2014 edition of Science in the House was a poster exhibition by researchers showcasing research conducted at the University of Malta, and elsewhere in Malta, for informal discussion with Members of Parliament. The opening ceremony, which was held in one of the parliamentary committee rooms, was held on 25 September and was addressed by Deputy Speaker Hon. Ċensu Galea, Government Whip Hon. Carmelo Abela, University Rector Prof. Juanito Camilleri and Science in the City Lead Coordinator Prof. Alex Felice.

The exhibition will remain set up in the parliamentary committee room until the Notte Bianca event, which this year will take place on 4 October.

Deputy Speaker Hon. Ċensu Galea, Government Whip Hon. Carmelo Abela, University Rector Prof. Juanito Camilleri and Science in the City Lead Coordinator Prof. Alex Felice

Attivitajiet internazzjonali

IL-11-IL LAQGĦA ĠENERALI TAL-KOALIZZJONI INTERNAZZJONALI TA' PARLAMENTARI GĦAR-REFUĠJATI MILL-KOREA TA' FUQ U DRITTIJIET TAL-BNIEDEM (IPCNKR)

L-Ispeaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati, l-Onor. Anġlu Farrugia, mexxa delegazzjoni Parlamentari magħmula mill-Whip tal-Gvern, l-Onor. Carmelo Abela, u l-Whip tal-Oppożizzjoni, l-Onor. David Agius, li pparteċipat fil-11-il Laqgħa Ġenerali tal-IPCNKR, li saret f'Bukarest, ir-Rumanija. It-tema tal-laqgħa din is-sena kienet l-Irwol ta' Organizzazzjonijiet Internazzjonali fis-soluzzjoni tal-kwistjoni tad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem fil-Korea ta' Fuq.

Din kienet it-tieni darba li l-Parlament Malti kien rappreżentat f'din il-laqgħa, li għat-tieni darba konsekuttiva ġiet organizzata fi Stat Membru Ewropew. L-Ispeaker Farrugia għamel diskors fil-ftuħ tal-laqgħa fejn huwa fakkar li fl-10 Dikjarazzjoni Konġunta adottata matul il-laqgħa tal-2013 ġie inkluż artiklu ġdid fuq proposta tad-delegazzjoni Maltija. Huwa esprima s-sodisfazzjon tiegħu li l-aħħar paragrafu ta' din id-dikjarazzzjoni, li titlob li din tkun imwassla "lis-Segretarju Ġenerali tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti, bħala parti mill-isforz tagħha biex tikkoopera ma' organizzazzjonijiet internazzjonali u reġjonali, bħall-Unjoni Ewropea u l-Kunsill tal-Ewropa, sabiex jintemmu t-traġedji ġewwa l-Korea ta' Fuq", kienet ukoll parti mid-Dikjarazzjoni tal-11-il IPCNKR.

L-Ispeaker Anġlu Farrugia jiffirma l-11-il Dikjarazzjoni Konġunta tal-IPCNKR f'isem id-delegazzjoni Maltija

Fl-indirizz tiegħu, l-Ispeaker Farrugia rrefera għar-rapport ta' 372 paġna mill-Kummissjoni ta' Inkjesta tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti dwar id-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem fir-Repubblika Demokratika Popolari tal-Korea (RDPK), li fih għadd ta' rakkomandazzjonijiet maħsuba biex jindirizzaw il-vjolazzjonijiet serji tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem imwettqa mir-RDPK. Huwa rrefera wkoll għar-Rapport tar-Rapporteur Speċjali dwar is-sitwazzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem fir-RDPK, kif ukoll għar-Reviżjoni Perjodika Universali tal-Kunsill tad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem imfassal bi preparazzjoni għas-27 Sessjoni tal-Kunsill tad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem ta' Settembru 2014.

L-Ispeaker tkellem ukoll dwar id-diversi kontribuzzjonijiet mill-Unjoni Ewropea *vis-à-vis* is-sitwazzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem fir-RDPK, partikolarment l-eżitu tal-Kunsill tal-Affarijiet Barranin tal-10 ta' Frar 2014 fejn l-UE ddikjarat l-appoġġ tagħha għall-"ħidma tal-Kummissjoni ta' Inkjesta li tinvestiga s-sitwazzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem fir-RDPK" u wkoll żgurat "segwitu għar-rapport u r-rakkomandazzjonijiet tagħha".

L-Ispeaker Farrugia appella lill-poplu tal-Korea sabiex ma jaqtax qalbu għax il-pajjiżi rappreżentati fil-laqgħa huma kollha fuq in-naħa tagħhom.

Fl-aħħar tal-laqgħa, id-delegati approvaw l-Istqarrija Konġunta tal-11-il ICPNKR. Matul is-sessjoni tal-għeluq tal-laqgħa ġie miftiehem li l-laqgħa tal-2015 tkun ospitata mill-Awstrija.

11TH GENERAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS' COALITION FOR NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES AND HUMAN RIGHTS (IPCNKR)

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon. Anġlu Farrugia, together with Government Whip, Hon. Carmelo Abela, and Opposition Whip, Hon. David Agius, formed part of a Parliamentary delegation which participated in the 11th General Meeting of the IPCNKR, held in Bucharest, Romania. The theme of this year's meeting was the Role of International Organisations in Resolving the Issue of North Korean Human Rights.

This was the second time that the Maltese Parliament was represented in this gathering, which for the second consecutive time took place in a European Member State. Speaker Farrugia made congratulatory remarks at the opening of the meeting where he recalled his contribution to the 10th Joint Statement adopted during the 2013 meeting and expressed his satisfaction that the last paragraph of this Statement, which asked for it to be conveyed "to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as part of its effort to co-operate with international and regional organisations, such as the European Union and the Council of Europe, toward the termination of the tragedies of North Koreans", was also part of the Statement of the 11th IPCNKR.

In his address, Speaker Farrugia referred to the 372-page report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPKR), which contained a number of recommendations intended to address the serious human rights violations found to be committed by the DPKR. He likewise referred to the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK as well as to the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council drawn up in preparation for the 27th Session of the Human Rights Council due in September 2014.

The Speaker also spoke about the various contributions by the European Union *vis-à-vis* the human rights situation in the DPRK, particularly the outcome of the Foreign Affairs Council of 10 February 2014 where the EU declared its support to the "work of the Commission of Inquiry investigating the human rights situation in the DPRK" and also ensured "follow-up to its report and recommendations".

In conclusion, Speaker Farrugia appealed to the North Korean people not to despair as the countries represented gathered for the meeting are on their side.

At the end of the meeting, the delegates approved the 11th Joint Statement of the ICPNKR. During the closing session of the meeting it was agreed that the meeting in 2015 will be hosted by Austria.

Family photo of the participants of the 11th General Meeting of the International Parliamentarians' Coalition for North Korean Refugees and Human Rights (IPCNKR)

Attivitajiet internazzjonali (Kont.)

FORUM PARLAMENTARI DWAR L-INTELLIĠENZA U S-SIGURTÀ

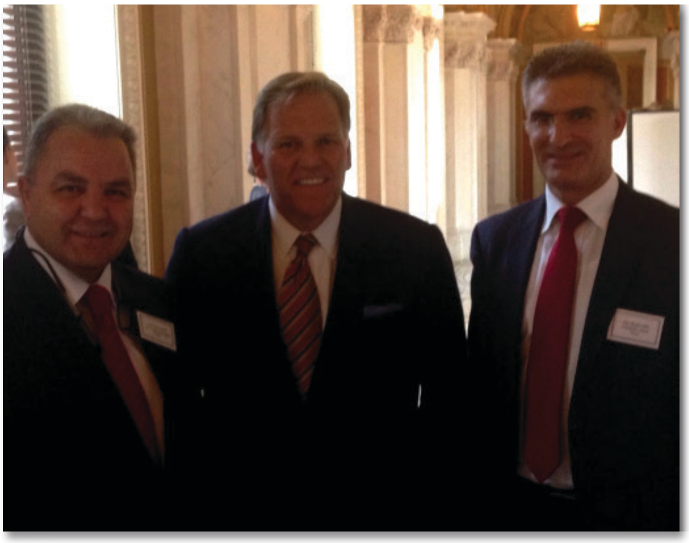
Fuq stedina tal-Membru tal-Kungress Amerikan Robert Pittenger, l-Ispeaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati, l-Onor. Anġlu Farrugia, ipparteċipa fil-Forum Parlamentari dwar l-Intelliġenza u s-Sigurtà li saret fil-Capitol, Washington DC, fit-18 u d-19 ta' Settembru.

Matul il-Forum il-parteċipanti kellhom laqgħat ma' membri tal-Kungress Amerikan mill-Kumitat Magħżul Permanenti tal-Kamra dwar l-Intelliġenza u mal-President tal-Kumitat tal-Kamra dwar il-Ġudikatura Goodlatte. Huma pparteċipaw fid-diskussjonijiet dwar il-valutazzjoni sħiħa tat-theddida tal-ISIS kontra l-Punent, politika transatlantika u dwar spjunaġġ u waqfien mill-iffinanzjar tat-theddida tat-terroriżmu.

Fil-marġini tal-Forum, l-Ispeaker Anġlu Farrugia ddiskuta mal-President tal-Kumitat tal-Kungress dwar l-Intelliġenza, l-Onor. Mike Rogers, ir-rwol ta' Malta fil-kriżi Libjana attwali. L-Ispeaker Farrugia enfasizza li Malta, bħala pajjiż newtrali u kredibbli, jista' jkollha rwol strateġiku ħafna fit-trattazzjonijiet mal-fazzjonijiet kollha li bħalissa huma f'kunflitt biex jiddominaw il-Libja.

Il-President Rogers irringrazzja lil Malta li aċċettat li l-Ambaxxatur Amerikan għal-Libja jaħdem temporanjament minn Malta fid-dawl tas-sitwazzjoni volatili f'dak il-pajjiż.

L-Ispeaker kien akkumpanjat mill-Onor. Carmelo Abela, Kelliem u Whip tal-Gvern. Id-delegazzjoni Maltija ssieħbet ma' għadd ta' parlamentari minn numru ta' pajjiżi Ewropej u oħrajn, inklużi l-Awstrija, il-Kroazja, l-Estonja, il-Finlandja, il-Ġeorġja, il-Ġermanja, l-Ungerija, l-Italja, il-Montenegro, il-Portugall, ir-Rumanija u r-Renju Unit.



L-Ispeaker Anġlu Farrugia u l-Kelliem u Whip tal-Gvern, l-Onor. Carmelo Abela flimkien mal-President tal-Kumitat tal-Kungress Amerikan dwar l-Intelliġenza, l-Onor. Mike Rogers

ID-IX KONFERENZA TAL-PRESIDENTI TAL-PAJJIŻI Ż-ŻGĦAR TAL-EWROPA

L-Ispeaker Anġlu Farrugia pparteċipa fid-IX Konferenza tal-Presidenti tal-Pajjiżi ż-Żgħar tal-Ewropa li din is-sena kienet organizzata mill-Kunsill Ġenerali ta' Andorra bejn l-24 u s-26 Settembru.

It-temi ewlenin tal-Konferenza ta' din is-sena kienu: 'Kwistjonijiet kurrenti u perspettiva fuq l-ordni fil-parlamenti tal-istati Ewropej żgħar', 'Il-kriterji, il-politiki u r-riżultati fl-irkupru mill-kriżi fl-istati żgħar' u 'L-kontribut tal-istati żgħar għall-governanza demokratika'. Fl-indirizz tiegħu l-Ispeaker Farrugia emfasizza l-kredibilità ta' Malta fuq livell internazzjonali u l-kapaċità li tassisti lil-Libja sabiex terġa' takkwista l-governabilità tagħha permezz tal-koperazzjoni bejn il-Parlament u n-Nazzjonijiet Uniti, speċjalment issa li l-missjoni speċjali tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti ġiet awtorizzata taħt is-Sur Bernardino Leon, rappreżentant tas-segretarju ġenerali tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti. L-Ispeaker Farrugia tkellem ukoll dwar kif in-newtralità ta' Malta tista' tkun essenzjali sabiex il-fazzjonijiet kollha Libjani jibdew diskussjonijiet għall-benefiċċju tal-partijiet kollha.

Fl-intervent tiegħu dwar il-kontribut tal-istati żgħar għall-governanza demokratika l-Ispeaker Farrugia emfasizza l-importanza ta' Parlament tassew awtonomu, miftuħ u qrib iċ-ċittadini. Tkellem ukoll dwar il-Kummissarju għall-Istandards fil-Ħajja Pubblika li xogħlu ser jinkludi li jara l-imġiba etika tal-membri parlamentari. Huwa tkellem ukoll dwar it-tnedija tax-xandir dirett tad-dibattiti kollha parlamentari kif ukoll ta' stazzjon tat-televiżjoni tal-Parlament.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE-SECURITY FORUM

On the invitation of US Congressman Robert Pittenger, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Anġlu Farrugia, participated in the Parliamentary Intelligence-Security Forum which was held in the Capitol, Washington DC, on 18 and 19 September.

During the Forum, the participants had meetings with members of the US Congress from the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and with Chairman Goodlatte of the House Committee on Judiciary. They participated in discussions on "Full Assessment of the ISIS Threat against the West", "Espionage and Transatlantic Politics" and "Defunding the Threat of Terrorism".

On the margins of the Forum, Speaker Anġlu Farrugia discussed the role of Malta in the current Libyan crisis with the US Congress House Intelligence Committee Chairman Mike Rogers. Speaker Farrugia emphasised that Malta, as a neutral and credible country, can have a very strategic role in dealing with all factions that are presently in conflict to dominate Libya.

Chairman Rogers thanked Malta for accepting that the US Ambassador to Libya works temporarily from Malta in view of the volatile situation in that country.

The Speaker was accompanied by Hon. Carmelo Abela, Government Spokesman and Whip. The Maltese delegation joined several parliamentarians from a number of European and other countries, including Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Montenegro, Portugal, Romania and the United Kingdom.

IX CONFERENCE OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE SMALL STATES OF EUROPE

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia participated in the IX Conference of the Presidents of the Small States of Europe which this year was hosted by the General Council of Andorra between 24 and 26 September.

The main themes of this year's Conference were: 'Current issues and a perspective on order in the parliaments of the small European states', 'Criteria, policies and results in the recovery from the crisis in the small states' and 'The small states' contribution to democratic governance'. When addressing the Conference Speaker Farrugia emphasised Malta's international credibility and capacity to assist Libya to regain its governability through co-operation between Parliament and the United Nations, especially now that a special UN Mission has been authorised under Bernardino Leon, representative of the United Nations Secretary General. Speaker Farrugia also highlighted Malta's neutrality which would be essential in assisting both sides in getting all Libyan factions to commence discussions for mutual benefit.

In his intervention on the topic dealing with small States' contribution to democratic governance, Speaker Farrugia emphasised the importance of a truly autonomous Parliament and a Parliament which is open and close to the people. On this matter he spoke about the new Commissioner for Standards in Public Life who will deal with the ethical behaviour of MPs and also about the plans for Parliament to commence live streaming of all parliamentary debates and a parliamentary TV channel.

Speaker Farrugia addressing the Presidents of the Parliaments of Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro and San Marino taking part in the Conference of Small European States in Andorra.

Ħidma Parlamentari		Parliamentary Work
April 2013 – Settembru 2014		April 2013 – September 2014
Seduti fil-Plenarja	184	Plenary Sittings
Laqgħat tal-Kumitati Permanenti	190	Meetings of Standing Committees
Stqarrijiet Ministerjali	28	Ministerial Statements
Mozzjonijiet	162	Motions
Mozzjonijiet Privati	17	Private Members' Motions
Mozzjonijiet għall-Ewwel Qari ta' Abbozzi ta' Liġi	71	Motions for First Reading of Bills
Liġijiet mgħoddija mill-Parlament	54	Acts enacted by Parliament
Liġijiet approvati b'votazzjoni	7	Acts approved upon division
Mistoqsijiet Parlamentari	11,315	Parliamentary Questions
Dokumenti mqiegħda fuq il-Mejda tal-Kamra	3,205	Documents laid on the Table of the House
Diskorsi tal-Aġġornament	136	Adjournment Speeches
Deċiżjonijiet tas-Sedja	27	Rulings by the Chair
Membri Parlamentari li siefru fuq xogħol parlamentari	192	Members of Parliament on parliamentary duties abroad
Delegazzjonijiet parlamentari barra minn Malta	99	Parliamentary delegations abroad
Delegazzjonijiet immexxija mill-Ispeaker/Deputy Speaker	30	Delegations led by the Speaker/ Deputy Speaker