







159, Labour Avenue, Naxxar Tel: 2388 0088, 7939 2939

NATIONALISTS Int SURVEY SQUARELY BEAT MLP ON ENVIRONMENT Pg 3 -

MALTA'S 1st RATED PROPERTY WEBSITE

www.simonestates.com

CHECK IT OUT

SHOCKING! JOSIE'S 'ENEMIES OF THE STATE' SPEECH pg 9 -



newsnews maltateday survey



MATTHEW VELLA

once again on Labour's proten children, denouncing it as | tion." a repeater year.

"Labour are just stubborn on this issue," Gonzi said during

what Lord Adonis has claimed in a study on the reception PRIME Minister Lawrence class when Labour's proposal Gonzi yesterday laid emphasis is nothing like what is being done in the UK. And it's us, posal to introduce an extra the Nationalist Party, which reception' class for kindergar- has uncovered this decep-

Gonzi said that a gulf is separating the PN from the MLP in education, and called his public dialogue in Cos- on voters not to let political picua's Gavino Gulia square. affiliation come in the way Harking back to the 1980s in so inaugurated the St Ignatius mvella@mediatoday.com.mt

"They are trying to hang on of choosing on education. "This is not guestion

> of being Labour or Nationalist. The question is whether you want a government that will have your children repeat a year in their education. And it would be a big loss and a big mistake for our country. We would be ruining ϕ ur only resource in our country if Labour is elected."

between the Labour government and university students, Gonzi paid tribute to foreign minister Michael Frendo, a protagonist of those days as a university student. "Labour's proposals for MCAST and the university are poor," Gonzi said.

Yesterday, the government al-

a recollection of the clashes college in Qormi, with Gonzi announcing a new school to be built in Verdala, Cospicua. He also said a new PN government wanted cruise liners berthing at Senglea alongside berths currently used by the dockyard, while adding he "hoped the GWU won't order actions"

against their proposals.



while 39% think the Nationalist Party has the best environmental policy, only 23% think likewise on the Labour Party. 18% say Alternattiva Demokratika has the best environmental policy.

But among those aged between 18 and 34, AD is judged to have a better environmental policy than the more established Malta Labour Party.

This shows that although overall the PN is deemed to have the best environmental policies, a political force like AD which is still aspiring to enter parliament is deemed to have the best environmental policy by a fifth of the Maltese population.

This emerges from a survey conducted among 900 respondents held last week.

Surprisingly, after a turbulent five years which saw the Gonziled administration clashing with environmentalists on major issues like the Xaghra l-Hamra golf course, the redevelopment of

Care for your children? Care for your Country.

Sant hits back at The Times: they wrote about puddings

WAKING up to the news that Francis Zammit Dimech will be suing him for libel over the interview appearing yesterday in The Sunday Times, Alfred Sant hit back at the newspaper's editorial stand challenging him to bring forward evidence of corruption instead of shooting from the hip.

"The Opposition leader makes a damning implicit admission: that he is making statements which undoubtedly damage people's reputations without having anything but gossip and hearsay to back them up,' said The Sunday Times leader yesterday under the title 'The proof of the pudding'. "This is not acceptable in pub conversation, let alone on the political platform.'

Speaking during the Sunday programme on One TV pre- rided the Times for its stand.



morning newspaper analysis sented by Simone Cini, Sant de-

"They wrote about puddings," | broached the subject. "Truth is, | gating corruption."

he told the presenter as she they don't even bother investi-

Dive in now. www.maltatoday.com.mt daily

PN squarely beats Labour on environmental issues

18% think AD has best policy on environment

MALTATODAY'S ongoing elec-toral survey has revealed that Ulysses Lodge in Ramla l-Hamra and the extension of development zones, the PN retains a significant lead on this issue. The survey comes in the wake

of Lawrence Gonzi's promise to redress the country's "environmental deficit" by taking the Malta Environment and Planning Authority into his own hands if elected back to power. It corresponds with the importance given to sustainable development in the

PN's electoral programme. The survey indicates that the PN's strategy of backtracking from controversial development like the Xaghra l-Hamra golf course and the Ramla l-Hamra development coupled with measures to control the construction industry have helped to restore the party's green credentials.

Still, while 39% prefer the PN's green policies, 43% prefer the policies of the other three opposition parties. But only 23% deem the MLP's environmental policies as the best.

The poor result achieved by the

MLP shows the party's failure to | ronmental policies to those of the capitalise on discontentment created by the onslaught of development over the past years.

The MLP's manifesto also sends contradictory messages on the environment, with the party still supporting the development of golf courses and a yacht marina in Gozo and refraining from taking a commitment to reverse the extension of development zones. The party's ambivalent stand on hunting could also dent the party's green image.

Even MLP voters show a degree of scepticism on their party's environmental policy: a third of MLP voters refrain from expressing a preference for their own party's policy, with 10% opting for AD as the party with the best policy on the environment, 2.4% opting for the PN and 21% expressing no preference at all.

The survey result also reflects AD's historic role in raising the profile of environmental issues and its consistent opposition to spring hunting, golf courses and mega development.

This is especially the case among younger voters aged between 18 and 34. Among this category while 26% express a preference for AD's environmental policies only 14.4% express a preference for the MLP's policies.

But while 18% prefer AD's envi-

rival two parties, only 2.6% would vote for the Greens in the forthcoming election. In fact 42.8% of those who think that AD has the best environmental policies are equally split between the PN and MLP. Only 11% of these would vote for AD.

This is an indication that the environment is not such a primary concern for these voters who are swayed to vote for the other par-

Yet significantly, 44% of those who prefer AD's environmental policies are either undecided or refuse to divulge their voting intentions in the next elections.

This could be an indication that the battle for the green vote is still raging and that some potential green voters are still undecided whether to follow their instincts or to choose the lesser evil between the big parties.

	s on the	22 18 1. 3.	1ment? 3.7 2.8 3.4 5 9 4.6	(%)	Voting preference for thosewho believe AD has best greenpolicies (%)PN21.4PN21.4AD11.4AD11.40Not voting1.4AN01.4Don't know30.7No reply13.613.613.6		
By age groups (%)							
	PN	MLP	AD	AN	None	Don't kr	now No reply
18-34	39.9	14.4	26.1	1.3	3 2.6	15.7	0
35-54	32.5	24.2	19.7	1.4	4.6	17.7	0
55+	439	27.8	78	1 3	8 4	14 9	03

The survey was held between Monday 18 and Thursday 21 February. A total of 1,638 respondents were randomly selected from the telephone directory with 900 accepting to be interview. The survey was stopped as soon as the 900 quota target was reached. The survey results were weighed according to the age and sex distribution of the population in the 2006 demographic review. The survey has a margin of error of +/-3.26%.



news

MaltaToday's reporters sum up the last weeks of campaigning



The election campaign has been hijacked by non-political nobodies... which is probably just as well

IT'S trendy nowadays for every are no longer Labour's exclusive nobody to write an opinion piece | territory. It's a veritable revoluor some sort of first-hand personal account of the toils and turmoils of daily life. So when faced with the decision from above to dents shouting "Gonzi! Gonzi!" write this kind of stuff for our daily, my reaction was, yes, why not? It's a great and cheap way to fill up a daily when you're short on the | the young Caruana Galizia did hard stories, like the Pope's death, the collapse of some Manwel Dimech Bridge, or, say, Daphne's conversion to Labour.

That's true only to an extent though, because just as we were starting to grumble in the newsroom about the blandness of the election campaigns, we get some real action footage from the trenches with Net and One journalists duelling each other with microphones at the Zebbug MLP event last Friday.

Finally, something to write about. But hold on, these are not the actual candidates. Look at the people making headlines: Jo Said, Michael Woods, Daphne's son... what's happening here? Aren't we supposed to be filming and writing about politicians tearing each other to bits? Where's the fun? What are we expected to write about?

It gets even worse: *hamallati* and not some hue of magenta.



mixed messages coming out of Malta's newest political party's campaign

AZZJONI Nazzjonali has used ciety, AN's proposes a "total rethis electoral campaign to project | vision" of offences and punishitself as the party which exposes | ments. The right-wing party is and discusses national issues | also promising life sentences for which the other political parties premeditated homicide, human - especially the ${
m PN}$ and ${
m ar{M}LP}$ – prefer to ignore.

Overlooking the fact that his own party list includes at least one candidate with criminal convictions for theft and drug possession, Dr Josie Muscat has used this election campaign to hammer home a tough message: "Law and order" is the key to move forward in this country.

"Society has become the victim of criminals, but this must change. The criminal must be scared of society and not vice versa," Muscat insisted at the launch of his party's manifesto.

To have a more disciplined so-

tion, as PN's secretary general so aptly put it about the "antiestablishment" university stubefore either the Prime Minister or Alfred Sant had opened their mouths. More than a revolution, a paradigm shift in showing the world that even a Nationalist can do a Nathalie Attard when faced with a camera.

Thanks to Daphne's son we're all entitled to use that nice little 'F' word now, no need to be Labour tesserati. Just don't use 'dude' if you don't want to be bullied to death. This is Malta, not South Park

Thing is, Labour is becoming very disappointing, what with ballet dancers on its billboards everywhere. And what are the others doing looking at her? Waiting for reception class? Hell, Labour have even been robbed of Becky, that bastion of socialist bullying now employed by GonziPN for her inquisitive questioning of the PN leader. I remember her forcing children to give her apples to appear on screen in the heyday of Xandir Malta, when red was red



Here's my theory: when politicians get too tame, there's a whole army of political journalists, pundits and apologists ready to pounce on each other and steal the show. I can't blame them. What do you expect these people with a strong sense of vocation and missionary zeal to do? Smoke themselves to death as they move on the campaign trail with party leaders in search of some great scoop? Binge drink? Eat qassatat? Investigate stories?

So now we have pundits and photographers, columnists and correspondents on the front line grabbing headlines and clamouring for solidarity.

We journalists are always accused of being negative and never seeing anything positive. And af-

ter a decade or so trying to convince everyone it's not the case, well, what can I say, I just love being negative. I love it. And I love the label.

Just look at the negative campaigns. They're a good laugh, good TV, they're even better than Edward Spiteri's faith healing sessions on Smash, which, from what I can see, have totally run out of ideas and miracles. Don't the faithful walk on water any longer

So I'm here meant to write my personalised account of the campaign trail on what has been my historical off day, in line with the Catholic teachings about the day of the Lord. Hell I don't even get paid overtime, neither 'bis-sieghasiegha' nor in any other way, so La-

bour's proposal to remove tax will affect me as much as Gonzi's new way of doing politics. But just in case the ILO starts getting funny ideas about suing my employer: we do get free takeaway food and occasionally I can also bring my dog to work with me. Now that's what I call family friendly policies.

And I can also call mobile phones from my desk, print my private shit, send faxes to whoever want, and call overseas too!

Who needs change? A few bucks from the Good Causes Fund will do the trick. Get it, Tonio? And I'll spend them better than the speaker's son on dubious Caravaggio exhibitions and on the most corrupt team in Italian football. Promise to Gonzi.

Sabrina Agius on the

and drug trafficking, with no

possibility of an amnesty, as well

as the confiscation of personal

assets from illicit gains in case of

One thing for sure: Muscat did

not leave out crimes committed

by foreigners, which according to

him are on the rise in Malta. AN

has promised to strip citizenship

away from foreigners if they have

a criminal record in their home

AN said it would fight crime by

'investing in the education of our

children", highlighting that "dis-

cipline is the basis of everything"

and that the party intends "giving

countries.

embezzlement of public funds.

teachers their job back. Parents have been intruding in their job. This can't be accepted. It is completely unacceptable that teachers are threatened or scared of being beaten up simply because they are doing their job." As expected from a self-pro-

claimed Christian party, AN's emphasis on the family cannot pass unnoticed. Reference to the family was made in practically every press conference... even the ones about illegal immigrants or the MIDI project.

"Cancer in the core of the family is increasing, even if we still believe that the majority of our families are strong," Muscat announced during one of his press conferences. To decrease the "cancer effect", AN proposes reforms to adjust problems within Maltese families, most of which are caused by financial burdens and constraints.

But again, there appears to be a bit of a mix-up regarding the definition of "the family". Even if earlier in the campaign, AN's leader had outlined that its stand on families being exclusively composed of "a man and a woman, who unite in marriage, deciding to have children whereby these benefit from their character and have the right to make the best posal be.



educational traits," it seems that AN has now declared itself in favour of gay civil unions.

But as Bill Clinton once said: "It's the economy, stupid"; and AN has it own ideas when it comes to managing the country's finances. "We should have smaller government," Dr Josie Muscat declared. "There are too many ministries and this means having more bureaucracy and waste of public funds.'

Having AN represented in Parliament would mean making every individual in the country "a small rich person": with Muscat stressing that "everyone should out of life."

In fact, AN would introduce a flat tax. "Our party agrees with easing taxes in this country. We agree with having a flat tax." At the same time, AN also claims that it would not hesitate to throw down the drain the millions invested in the Sant'Antnin waste plant since it was built against its inhabitants will. Instead, it is proposing a gasification plant.

And all along, AN keeps insisting on a stronger and affective Whistleblowers Act and Accountability Act. One wonders what shall AN's next radical pro-



Julia Farrugia has experienced the good, the bad and the ugly in this election and previous ones.

OVER the past 11 years I have been fortunate enough to be chosen to anchor Eddie Fenech Adami, Lawrence Gonzi and Alfred Sant. In general it is an enjoyable experience... you tend to get to "know" a party leader from a different perspective. You also get to recognise the personality traits, those fine sensors that immediately tell you when it's time for the man to get angry, when he is annoyed or when he is relaxed and about to crack a joke There's also that good vibe during television debates, which I believe provide a challenge both

to the journalist and the leader himself. In this election I have been assigned to Lawrence Gonzi. Unlike his predecessor he is comfortable to work with. He loves the camera and has the right flair for an elec-

toral campaign. He is also a natural when mingling with people, spontaneously eating beans with farmers on Thursday, or disclosing that he was tempted to skate at the opening of the first skating ring in Msida two weeks ago. But I have to admit that I saw the PN leader change from the Gonzi I knew in the previous campaign. There's just a fine line. More than two years ago he was an avid smoker. I would at that

time reserve the hardest ques-



Will AD break the Charlot Zahra this time round? Charlot Zahra looks behind the scenes of the Green campaign

DESPITE the bitter experience of the 2003 general elections, when Alternattiva Demokratika (AD) was unceremoniously dumped by Nationalist Party (PN) leader Eddie Fenech Adami during the very last mass meeting at Luxol, the party is still insisting on an alliance with either the PN or the MLP.

AD chairperson Harry Vassallo claims to be willing to work together again with the PN (or the Labour Party) in a coalition after the March 8 general elections. In an interview with Malta-Today on 17 February, Vassallo said: "With this party we are also ready to work. We know that AD will be in the next Parliament and the attitude of the other parties will be totally different."

tions for the last round. By that time Lawrence would be craving a cigarette and close to losing his temper. Often, towards the end of an hour-long press conference, he would flip.

During this campaign Gonzi is off the cigarettes. It's a different attitude altogether. It's a Gonzi who unsuccessfully "polished" his answering skills. At times he simply ignores a question and rattles off another answer. But it's still the Gonzi who sporadically loses his temper, and these are the times when you go back to work with a story in hand.

Work, education and Gozo were three main themes tackled this week. He gets a thumbs up for saying he is different from the MLP. "MLP promised to create 6,000 jobs! We will get 6,000 new jobs every year. We will create 20,000 work places in the next legislature," Gonzi insisted in Safi last Tuesday.

But definitely a thumbs down a few hours later facing MaltaToday's questions during the TVM debate organised by the Broadcasting Authority. Asking the Prime Minister to convince me on the "flimkien kollox possibli" (together everything's possible) slogan if I had to tell him I was one of more than 14,000 gay people in Malta, Lawrence Gonzi re-

econd Coming - Lawrence Gonzi with arms outstretched in his familiar acknowledgment to his listeners. Scores of young Nationalist supporters sat behind Gonzi are deployed

peatedly ignored my question. Then, in a tangled mix-up, Lawrence Gonzi stated that the reference to cohabitation is still present in the PN's manifesto.

to give his party the 'younger' look

But oops! The 1998 promise isn't there any longer. And how was he going to eliminate conflicts of interest when he reforms MEPA as promised? More concrete examples, please.

Again this remained unanswered. No concrete measures so far. But I did get silly questions right after that PBS debate, such as: "So you're gay? Are you separated?

None of the above. And what if? Does this make a difference in a supposed European country that boasts of inclusivity and solidar-

But back to the campaign trail. Certain things do not change. I'm not surprised at seeing NET TV or One TV footage showing hostile attitudes towards their

respective journalists. I've been there. I experienced this repeatedly in the past campaigns, be they for a general election, a local council one, a referendum or the European Parliament Election.

There were times when the PN secretary general called me names during a press conference simply because I was doing my job and asking a question to Lawrence Gonzi; on other occasions I was literally knocked down to the floor with a blow to the back while interviewing Eddie Fenech Adami at the Gzira PN club.

And indeed it was always "normal practice" for PN and MLP cameramen to film each other while the journalist is taking comments

But this time around things are reaching new levels. Even independent media journalists like myself have been filmed by the NET crew after press conferences in which we would have to monitor your campaign?

taken their leaders to task with some tough questions. And even following me to my car after having checked to see whether a One TV cameraman was ok after beng hurt during an incident at the PN's Oormi activity. The camera was only switched off when I was chatting with close friends of mine, including a PN candidate and a former bodyguard of Eddie Fenech Adami.

And bingo! The next day NET News used the Qormi footage in a piece on the MLP crew behaving improperly. There I was in the footage - with all the implications it carried for me, that is the wrongful portrayal that I had been somehow involved in the incident.

But that doesn't change the fact that it's an unacceptable practice by parties. I thought the PN was slightly wiser on such a matter why irritate someone who is there

Asked how can he expect to form a coalition with PN this time around now that there is no binding factor between the two parties as strong as the EU last time, Vassallo said: "We are not speaking about a coalition with the PN; we are speaking about a coalition after the general elections have taken place. The presence of AD in parliament would mean that the other two parties would not have an absolute majority. If the PN wins 33 seats in the next Parliament, it would be in government on its own, therefore the option of a coalition would not arise.

"However if AD elects a deputy or deputies in such a manner that the other parties cannot form a government on their own, I would expect that as it is done in all other countries, they would ask for our support," Vassallo said.

Regarding its priorities in a coalition, Vassallo said that AD was ready to make a coalition with that party which subscribes to its six priorities for the forthcoming general elections.

"We have our identity and therefore whoever wants to enter into a coalition with us has to respect our identity. You can ask the other parties whether they have any fundamental disagreement with our proposals," Vassallo insisted.

The six priority areas listed by AD are the environment, housing, transport, the family, the economy, and democracy and human rights.

However, the Nationalist Party has not been very keen to form a coalition with AD, with Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi excluding completely such a coalition with the Green Party. 'From the statements made by AD, I understand that there is an alliance between AD and the Labour Party."

This position is now being echoed by media pundits like Daphne Ćaruana Ĝalizia, who dedicated a whole article in her regular columns on The Malta Independent to bashing AD.

The Nationalist Party's tenu-



ous claim is that a vote for AD | ment elections, AD had polled eventually lead to a Labour victory.

Asked whether he believed that the party would reach the target of three to four MPs in Parliament, Vassallo said: "There is no reason why we should not have a number of MPs in Parliament. When one considers the history of AD, the work of people like Arnold Cassola, Mario Mallia, and, I am not ashamed of saying, myself.

"Now there are also people with a track record and political profile like Carmel Cacopardo. I think it would a shame if they did not obtain a very respectable result."

In the last European Parlia-

is a wasted vote which would | 23,000 votes and Cassola was not elected by a whisker. AD is keen to capitalise on that political coup.

"If only half of them voted for AD, then there would be more than 10,000 people who would have voted for AD. Our calculations show that that would be equivalent to four MPs. We do not even have the right to expect so many (votes). However, that nationwide result would change because in some districts we have much more support than in others."

Will AD this time around manage to break the glass ceiling for the election of the third party in Parliament that has been there for the past 41 years?

news

news





list of results attained by his Government during the past five years, and entreated the people to judge him on these achievements.

Then came a punchy list of Gonzi's feats: "We have reached a historical record in tourism; in 2007 we had a 4% economic growth which stands much higher than that of other EU countries; we have 169,000 gainfully occupied workers, by far the largest number; and in the past years we created more than 20,000 new jobs...'

Lawrence Gonzi highlighted other achievements, including the accomplished target to reduce the deficit to the lowest rate ever. The PN leader also re-

• Gonzi's delivery was impeccable as always: able to rouse the audience's enthusiasm, by creating the right tempo, building to a well-managed climax without getting hysterical.

Gonzi's list of attained targets: convincing, inspiring and a complete show of trust in the Maltese people. Gonzi addressing the younger generation: "I invite you, be the ambassadors of the Maltese and Gozitans." Thumbs up on a campaign level considering that in this election there are around 17,000 new voters aged between 18 and 23.

• The young girl who is the poster child for the PN's electoral programme and environment billboard presented a yellow daisy (lelluxa) to Gonzi and his wife – an inane stage-managed gesture, which also raises questions about the gratuitous use of children in political campaigns. Gonzi's reference to the MLP overtime "soap opera" was accompanied by a TV close up of a ONE News cameraman. This was dangerously provocative. Gonzi happily announced that in a few days' time, he will open a retirement home in Mellieha. Ok, one of those election stunts a few days before D-day.

Anything but impressive...

Lawrence Gonzi said that he | iterated his pledge that by 2010, came to Sliema armed with a he will reach his ambitious goal to end the year with a surplus instead of a deficit.

And the list went on: "During the past legislature we improved social benefits and we gave children's allowance to all," Gonzi stressed. "We've strengthened education, we upgraded schools and we built a new hospital."

And he relentlessly attacked the credibility of the Labour Party throughout. "How can the MLP and its leader say that the country is at a standstill when we have introduced the euro, the strongest currency?

"The euro is the certificate showing that the government and its policies have claimed a success for our country," Gonzi claimed.

But Lawrence Gonzi, aware of the areas where his popularity has been dented, also had a few confessions to make.

"We were not perfect, there are more things that need to be done. We believe in our country. We're here holding our results so that you can judge us on these accomplishments."

On the environment, he said: "I admit that we did not succeed in attaining what people expected. Yes we could have done better. In five years' time I want to come again in Sliema and tell you that the environment did improve," said a firm Gonzi.

Then came another apology, this time on Mater Dei. Lawrence Gonzi said that he personally understands that until things settle down there will be certain problems in the hospital. He referred to one of his party manifesto's 353 proposals: to eradicate waiting lists. At the same time he beseeched healthcare professionals and patients to cooperate.

And then, Gonzi addressed the medical doctors' brain drain. Gonzi said that people need to thank their General Practitioner. "It would be a huge mistake if we took the family doctor for granted," Gonzi said.

Repeatedly during his address, PN leader promised a way of doing politics that is different to the Labour Party's.

"Whom do you want to trust? That party which wants to create 25,000 new jobs, or the party which wants to create 6,000?'

In the same breath he also slammed the labour leader for his orchestrated mud-slinging campaign, accusing various Nationalist ministers of corruption.

"Every time we had a report (on corruption), we sent it directly to the Commissioner of Police to be investigated," he said, inviting the crowd to "judge both parties on what they do, even when it comes to corruption." Gonzi was forced to make numerous, lengthy pauses as his Stay calm. **Don't react to** provocation. **Mobilise your** friends and your family so that on 8th March you give an answer

speech was 'interrupted' by huge bursts of applause, for the most part by young people... whose presence was also evidenced by a striking, enormous banner with the words "Studenti ma' Gonzi" ("the students are with Gonzi").

And not without good reason: for the Prime Minister reiterated the pledge made on campus last Monday that he would not only retain the University stipends, but also augment them.

Gonzi also advised young people not to trust the MLP, implying that Sant's intention was to take back the 10% grant which young people will benefit on their first property. He asked the younger generation whether they wanted to trust a Sant government on the overtime issue.

Describing the MLP's overtime proposal as a "soap opera", Gonzi warned against a fiasco if Labour is returned to power after March 8: "Alfred Sant already did this with his own workers (at One Productions), let alone with all the Maltese," Gonzi insisted.

Then Maltese Premier also had some sobering advice for the younger audience members.

"Stay calm. Don't react to provocation. Mobilise your friends and your family so that on the 8th of March you give an answer. And then shout more than when we were at the University," Gonzi bellowed.

The Nationalist leader insisted on more than one occasion that Nationalists should not take anything for granted. People need to chase every single vote on every single day. "I invite you all - be the ambassadors for the Maltese and Gozitans!"

At one point, Lawrence Gonzi stated that his party is not afraid to face hurdles and he even claimed that he always answers questions.

"We address challenges and do not postpone them. And what about the questions? We answer them and do not run away. And if someone criticises us, we listen; and we do not call him hamallu (lout)."

More applause was reserved for the Prime Minister's promise to pay special attention to the environment. Gonzi declared that environmental issues would in fact be his top priority: to the extent that out of the €855 million allocated to Malta, more than one third – €300 million - would be invested in the environment

The Prime Minister also outlined his party's promise of a reform of the tax bands, offering a package which he claimed would provide incentives for more workers to enter the labour market and above all, earn more money.

"Our policies will also serve so that more and better employment is created in our country," Prime Minister Gonzi declared.

newsnews

newsnews



Harry Vassallo's 'silent revolution'

CHARLOT ZAHRA

ALTENATTIVA Demokratika (AD) chairperson Harry Vassallo said that if AD was elected to Parliament, it would in Maltese politics.

St Julian's yesterday morning, Vassallo said AD had been set up to bring forward a change in Malta's political culture. "This challenge is more diffi- | cult than, say, winning a local | nobody would have obtained council election."

think with their mind, rather | cades that generally follow the with their own hearts as the announcement of a general other two main parties are election result. leading voters to do with their scaremongering tactics.

Vassallo said AD was an invisible party as there was no opportunity for its supporters to meet in a mass meeting like the big parties do. "To this day, AD for the past 18 years."

Vassallo called on the electheir vote. "The decisions that are taken now will affect us Vassallo insisted. for the rest of our lives," he insisted.

Although for the other par-ties, the 8 March was the beall and end-all of everything, for Vassallo the election date was merely the beginning of a long future.

"Why should we take a debring about a silent revolution cision on the destiny of our kids on the basis of fear? Why of our kids on Addressing party activists should we evaluate the past on the basis of taboos?" the AD **the basis of** leader insisted.

Vassallo said that if AD were fear?" elected to Parliament, there would surely be a quiet atmosphere in the country as an absolute majority in Parlia-He called on the people to | ment; a change from the car-

Vassallo said that during the past 40 years of one-party government, the two main parties have been found very much wanting in terms of planning.

During this election, only AD mentioned the fact that there I still meet new people who tell | are 53,000 vacant properties me that they have been voting on the island, 60% of which are in a good condition. "This is the extremity to which the torate to reflect deeply on political system of this country has led the country to,"

If one had to put all the vacant properties in Malta in a

"Why should we take a decision on the destiny

single file starting from Pembroke, one would end up at Zebbug. "If they did not do this, then we would not have ended up with the huge problems we are facing today," he said.

To fill them all up, Malta's population would have to increase by around 200,000 people. But Malta does not have enough resources such as water and electricity to cope with all that added demand

"We have wasted these resources in a criminal way property glut will burst, lead- czahra@mediatoday.com.mt



because now we do not have enough resources to cope with current demands to be competitive with other countries," Vassallo lamented.

Vassallo reiterated AD's call for a comprehensive reform of the present rent laws. "We have had controlled rent in Malta for the past 69 years. In 1947 there was a shortage of property for rent, but now the situation is the opposite.

He warned that the current

ing to a national crisis. "Economic reality will soon catch up with us, and everybody will be affected.

"The fruit of the work of our grandfathers and fathers, who invested all their savings to build their properties, will be wiped off completely," Vassallo warned.

He said the other parties would never agree to pass in Parliament a law regulating the financing of political parties as long as the strings of their purses were controlled by the donations of building contractors.

Vassallo explained the one of the reasons why AD was set up in 1989 was in reaction to the corruption that was rife in the 1970s and 1980s. He said that on the basis of the testimony supplied by AD, a former Minister had been found guilty of corruption.

Since its inception, AD has always insisted on a law regulating the financing of political parties.

Among the people who attended the AD meeting there was self-styled PN dissident Jo Said, who arrived just before the meeting started at 10am.

of the state."

Nationalism in black - Jos Muscat makes his poi on so called 'liberals' ar llegal immigrants, whom I

Josie quotes Gandhi, then calls irregular immigrants "enemies of the state"

DAVID DARMANIN

AT a Zebbug public meeting organised by Azzjoni Nazzjonali (AN) yesterday, far-right political leader Josie Muscat chose to start his speech with a line first uttered by Indian pacifist Mahatma Gandhi. Ironically, the quote served as a platform for Muscat to aggressively lash out at liberals, the printed media, the anti-hunting lobby and irregular immigrants, referring to the latter as "enemies

"First they laugh at you, then they ignore you, then they fight with you, then you win," he said. "These words were uttered by none other than Gandhi, the

Josie Muscat - Firebrand

man who fought against the British Empire, not against the handful of coarse (erbat iqlafat) journalists who are trying to destroy what we are fighting for," he shouted to an audience of around 50, most of whom were evidently hunters.

"We have been dubbed 'heartless' and 'cruel' because we speak about illegal immigration," he stated. "We hold nothing against human beings, and this must be said. However, our country is far too populated to be able to sustain this invasion." Conscious of the warlike imagery being used, Muscat qualified hs earlier statement: "And I use this word 'invasion' because our situation constitutes one, as stated by international law. The invader is an enemy of the state."

compassionate people," he sarinto Maltese, like us. Why don't they say how much money they're getting from the EU?"

"Look at what happened in Italy, France, England and Germany," he thundered. "In the beginning, people of these countries were told that they (immigrants) would soon leave Instead, they kept on hatching, causing huge problems. Now they want to get rid of them and do not know where to start from because these people have become Italian, French, English and German, like them. What will happen in Malta in 50 years' time?"

Muscat went on to define the coming election as a "referendum... for you to choose whether vou want this abuse to carry on. In Malta they're already hatchng, you know?

Echoing FKNK secretary Lino Farrugia almost word for word, Muscat launched a tirade against BirdLife Malta's executive director Tolga Temuga: "We don't need | AN is calling on the government, | "And then a handful of wise, any Turk telling us what to do," the newspapers, the opposition he said. "We are capable enough | and the EU on this. We will stop castically carried on, "will tell | to decide between us Maltese us to let them (immigrants) turn We believe that everyone has a right to this pastime, so long as it is done within the parameters of law. We are against any type of abuse, and we cannot possibly defend any abuser," he continued.

"Newspaper pundits are such hypocrites (faccoli)," he added. "We have recognised the right to hunt and they have written against us. Such jealous and spiteful people! This is simply because they never managed to do anything worthy in their lives. Let me tell you what hypocrites amounts of money on weapon- women. These people (journal ry and they say nothing, and then | ists) are stupid and pea-brained | ddarmanin@mediatoday.com.m



when they see a bird dying they cry and lose sleep... for a bird! We are not scared of them, I say. hunting when they disarm. And not even then, because hunting is a Maltese pastime."

Switching to family issues another topic on which AN has been harshly criticised -Muscat said: "We are here because of our fathers and mothers, who have disciplined us together as a couple and modelled us into being worthy citizens. Can you believe that last year there were 900 births to fathers unknown? How can we have disciplined families without fathers? Then, newspapers will report that we these journalists are. France are against single mothers. On and England spend massive the contrary, we're defending

(cwiec u bla mohh).

"I spoke to a teacher," he sumed, "who assigned her pu to write an essay about their thers. Astonishingly, one of children asked her which of three fathers he should w about. Another teacher told that most of the secondary sch girls she teaches are expectir child, and those who aren't, left out."

Muscat reserved his scathing attack for Maltese lil als: "These liberals want Malt end up looking like a zoo, wh we all end up jumping on another. This is the situation liberals want – the same libe who write against us on news pers, those who have descri AN as a party that aims to t us back to the days of our gra parents."

"The more you attack us, more we speak. If you, the erals, are attacking us it me we're right. So let them look all of our candidates' hist since birth. As if I'm scared that handful of coarse news per journalists..."

On vesterday's edition, Ma Today revealed that one of A candidates has a criminal rec featuring numerous convicti on charges of theft and drug p session; another is facing chai of money-laundering, while other is in court over incitem to racial hatred, while anot again stands accused of illeg occupying public land.

Sant keeps thousands pumped up as he reaches out to sceptics working in a wide range of | the Maltese people as opposed the results published in Sun-**KARL SCHEMBRI** sectors to stay on their guard to foreigners – a cue taken later day's MaltaToday showing the We'll be the PN winning slight support over against the "multitude of lies" although somehow more subtly AN energetic Alfred Sant kept coming from the PN. by Sant when he said more Mal-Labour for the first time in the enemy of the tempo high as he faced Without referring to the retese youths will be trained to campaign.

news

thousands of Labour supporters who gathered at the Floriana Granaries for the party's third mass meeting in this election campaign vesterday.

With the crowd roused earlier by his deputy Michael Falzon who stirred up "the mass of lions" forming "Labour united". Sant gave a 45-minute speech entreating people to "choose Labour" – a phrase repeated throughout his speech in which he also claimed to defend the Choose Labour, because we right of those who disagreed with his party.

"We'll be the enemy of bureaucracy, the enemy of every form of corruption, the enemy of every form of nepotism," Sant said. "Our invitation is finding resonance among those who were sceptical about us. Whoever disagrees with us has a right to disagree with us and we won't be the ones to boo them."

Sant said his initial estimate that the Nationalists would spin "one lie a day" was a modest estimate now that they were "hatching around 100 lies dai-

He went on to warn people | by talking about giving jobs to

Quite atypical of Sant, who has a habit

Keeping a constant high, Sant also

after the first five minutes

of antagonising dissenters, he defended

the right of those who disagreed with his

managed to avoid the gloomy, monotone

type of speeches he tends to lapse into

Repeating 'Choose Labour' ad nauseam,

grammatically, in the imperative but try

make it sound as if it is a free choice

Charles Mangion mistakenly refers to

the Granaries as ix-Xaghra, instead of

the Fossos. "Ix-Xaghra isn't big enough

for us," he said to the multitudes. Sorry

Charles, that's the ground opposite

at times Sant screamed it as if it was

an order. It's true 'aghzel Labour' is,

HIGH POINTS

party

LOW POINTS

please. Dr Sant

ception class proposal by name, Sant said his party's measure would be implemented gradually after discussions with parents and teachers, "not in the bat of an eyelid", and only after there is agreement about it.

"It's an invitation we're making to all the Maltese and all Gozitans, with the determination to safeguard Malta's interests, the national interests; an invitation we make with conviction: care for the future of all of you," Sant told the massive crowd in front of him.

Choosing Labour meant choosing the party that put the families and work at the centre of its policies, Sant said.

He reiterated his pledge to cut hospital waiting lists by 15 per cent every year.

"We have to implement this for that elderly woman who has been waiting years for a knee replacement, for that woman who is waiting for her breast screening appointment, for those children waiting for an eye check-up. And we'll do it." Falzon set the scene earlier

work in financial services where many foreigners are employed - a sector which under Labour will purportedly see "double or triple" the amount of existing

jobs in four years' time. "We had the lowest rate of job creation in 50 years," Sant said about Gonzi's government. "A total of 1,500 full-time jobs were lost in the last four years. We'll create 6,000 in manufac-

turing and industry." Giving a whole list of abandoned sites, projects and dilapidated historical buildings - from St Elmo to Dock no.1 to Fort Chambray - Sant said his government would improve what is already good and upgrade and utilise the country's most beautiful resources.

"Since Independence our country made great strides in tourism, except under GonziPN," Sant said, moving on to sister paper's Illum front page story of yesterday about the tourism minister's private use of Russian ballet dancers whose trip was sponsored by the tourism authority.

"Last year's tourism boom happened without any credit to Francis Zammit Dimech, who instead of being interested in tourism is more interested in watching Russian dancers for his personal shows," Sant lashed out.

He claimed that under Labour, tourism would generate €1.5 billion a year.

Promising a generous budget for Gozo "so they could promote it themselves", the reintroduction of the subsidised helicopter service, a golf course and yacht marinas in the Gozitan island, Sant also pledged to upgrade the Bugibba zone and to "give back the south the respect it deserves".

Lambasting the government for doing nothing when faced with the closure of Ierma Palace Hotel, he promised "a big five-star hotel in the south and also "to give full attention from central government" to the region. The dilapidated Dock no.1 seemed like "broken dentures", he said.

Also reiterating his pledge of zero tolerance on corruption, Sant said any accusation of corruption that is levelled at anyone under his government would be seriously investigat-

Ignore the surveys

Michael Falzon told the crowd to "ignore the surveys" that were coming out in what seemed a clear reference to bureaucracy, the enemy of every form of corruption, the enemy of every form of nepotism

"The best surveys are not those the others are coming up with," Falzon told Labour supporters. "You are the best survey; you will give the best survey on 8 March."

Falzon made his customary fiery entry referring to the "lions of change" and chanting in typical football victory celebration fashion. "We're here among the Floriana lions, next to the Valletta lions, together with the lions who will be voting on 8 March for change," he said. "You're the magic of this country.'

Falzon then narrowed down his speech on employing more Maltese, as opposed to foreigners.

"Employ the Maltese, and we'll take care of you," he said to foreign investors. "We agree with Smart City, but we want the Maltese and the Gozitans to work there. They boast of having opened a Lm300 million hospital... yet it lacks Maltese workers."

Falzon also promised a Labour government would "not forget" shipyard workers and that their jobs would be safeguarded - despite this being the last year of subsidies for the 'yards according to EU commitments.

He referred to former Solidarnosc leader Lech Walesa who made his case with the EU to save the Gdansk shipyards, and the same will happen under a Labour government with the collaboration of the European Socialists.

"We will discuss with our colleagues of the Party of European Socialists, who have already given us a certificate that the MLP is a Maltese party and a European party," Falzon said. Downplaying the PN's envi-

ronmental credentials, Falzon said it was only lately that Lawrence Gonzi "discovered wind energy"

"I'll tell him he'll face more than wind, he'll face the gale of change," he said.

The other deputy leader, Charles Mangion, challenged Gonzi to deny that he was about to raise the cost of gas cylinders and to start charging for government healthcare.

He claimed a Labour government would strengthen Air Malta while the PN would "continue dismantling it".

Like Falzon, Mangion also promised the shipyards would be viable again.

"You are not a burden on the country," he told 'yard workers. "We have great ambitions for vou.





jan ghal bid

If this is not irresponsible then what is?

water, no one talks of energy conservation.

There is of course

But like economic

growth, it is very

mists that usually

much pie in the sky.

stand to be counted

and speak their mind

seem to have a word

about this. There is

no one who has the

gall to raise a middle

None of the econo-

an abundance of talk

about wind farms out

at sea in the deep blue.

T believe we are truly missing one very important twist in this deluge of electoral promises.

The first is the political conviction that we are going to live forever in a Nanny State that provides for everything and everyone.

Instead of moving onto a more just system where welfare supports those in real need, we still have politicians promising more and more freebies.

Both Sant and Gonzi accuse each other of wanting to put a charge on the health service and put a price tag on services. Both deny with vengeance they intend to cut free services.

But... why shouldn't there be a price tag? Why should health be free for everyone and everything? Why shouldn't we be talking of providing essential services free only to those who have a certain income bracket, instead of providing everything for free?

If Gonzi and Sant cannot bear to live with it, then here it is. You are irresponsible to offer everything for free. Were it not for European membership obligations and directives, they would be more irresponsible still.

The electricity bill, which is still heavily subsidised when compared to other EU countries, is to be halved for all households and offered next to free to needy families.

It is of course very nice, but what goes up must always come down. Someone will have to finance all this crazy and outdated Marxist way of doing things. Who said that we have no left wing in Malta? We have two socialist parties living on the moon. To get themselves elected they are willing to wreck their own good work. It is awfully sad.

Both Gonzi and Sant have rushed to wear this mantle of traditional stuffy left-wing politics which promises everything for nothing.

Every sector of Maltese society is being offered a free figolla. And the answer to the money question is to be found in the absurd allegation or pipe dream that our economic growth will be greater than any of the other economies' growth in Western Europe. So when we talk of electricity or



Saviour Balzan

sbalzan@mediatoday.com.mt

finger to the two gentlemen and tell them

their fiscal policies are mad. The exceptions being Karm Farrugia and Lino Spiteri, who have had no problem spelling out the message that you cannot bend over backwards and expect to walk at the same time. Ironically, both these two economists find their roots in old Labour.

The other economists have obviously forgotten all about their lectures which carry the theme issue: there is no such thing as a free lunch.

Which of course brings us to the taxation issue and the taxes we should be paying as a basic requirement.

This is not Lichtenstein, but Malta. Here again, both parties are promising cuts and more cuts. It is economic madness to derail fiscal common sense for the sole purpose of getting voters to vote for you. To attract niche voters, both parties have offered their voters unbelievably juicy super-sized carrots. Labour wants to give back the public holidays that fall on weekends and the Nationalists wish for more cuts in tax for high-income earners. In a country which still has a serious problem with work ethic and which needs to focus

on productivity, and in a nation which is intrinsically adverse to paying the State, such proposals are reckless and foolish. Like the ridiculous French socialist suggestion that was implemented years back, that introduced the 35-hour week,

measures that cut back on essential revenue for government will have to be reverted. When the politicians return to their Cabinet meetings and daily decisions

they will have to face stark realities. Those realities include making ends meet. Then they will climb down from

Who said that we have no left wing in Malta? We have two socialist parties living on the moon.

their electoral platforms, gobble up some humble pie and face the bleak reality of administering a budget.

With a pension bomb round the corner, with a health bill that continues to grow exponentially, with education costs spiralling and with the infrastructure of the country calling out for more investment, and more significantly, with the plethora of national projects in around the Grand Harbour, either both parties think this country has infinite gold reserves, or else they have made a pact with Osama Bin Laden to implode our economy

Neither of the parties have the gall to say things as they are. Ask the PN about subsidies to the dockyards, and they waffle. Ask the MLP about the precise implications of the 50% surcharge cut for individuals who already paying no surcharge, and you get strange looks.

Falzon and surveys

You have to hand it to him: Michael Falzon, hunter, banker and fireworks enthusiast, is a fine rabble-rouser. I could of course mention some historical rabble rousers in mass meetings such as the one on the Fossos.

Once again, I have to compliment Falzon for questioning one important exercise undertaken by the independent media: surveys. He told the crowd to ignore the surveys. Do so, and be warned. Surveys, dear Michael, are not

the Gospel but they serve as an indicator of public sentiment and trends. Once again, Falzon in his rhetoric and hysteria has eaten away at a basic tenet in the reporting of the democratic process. I shudder to think how he would treat criticism from the free press if ever elected to be part of the government Cabinet. Imagine Hillary Clinton standing in front of a crowd and rubbishing a media survey. It is an unthinkable scenario.

opinion

But then how can I compare Hillary to Michael F?

By the way, I never knew he was such a bad singer. Don't give up the day job, Michael.

Libels

The plethora of libels flying from one side to another confirm to what extent the two parties are willing to abuse the press laws that they themselves have used to control the frequency of verbal abuse. It proves beyond doubt the need to revisit the libel laws which put unnecessary pressure on the courts when the courts should be using their time for more urgent issues.

Josie and Gandhi

There is something chronically wrong with Josie's examples. He quotes Gandhi to hit out at pea-brained journalists. I am sure Gandhi, in whatever reincarnation he manifests himself in today, would love to hear what Josie stands for.

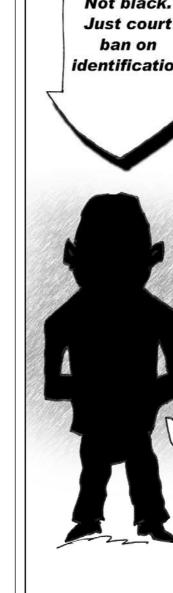
I am not quite too sure Josie remembers what Gandhi stood for. The Mahatma's early years in apartheid South Africa, his frugal lifestyle, his pacifist and non-violent politics, and his aversion to profit makes him an unlikely role model to Josie et al.

If no one can turn to Josie and tell him that everyone is laughing at his example, then I will do him a favour and ask him to read through some history books. No, not the life history of his candidates and their brushes with the law.

More about the real life of Mahatma Gandhi. Perhaps then he could think of another role model when he talks to a carnivorous grouping of big game hunters. I could suggest a few role models: he could start with Lord Haw Haw and then, when he runs out of ideas, I will come up with some other names - one to match the black attire he chose last Sunday when he addressed a motley crowd of deprived hunters and trappers!



editorial



campaign.

As in previous campaigns, accusations are being hurled around with reputations tarnished as a result. But the issue of corruption needs to be tackled calmly. Corruption needs to be defined and certainly not confused with bad judgement, unethical behaviour or conflict of dia, attempting to pigeonhole our news- ruption by beefing up its investigative and on cost overruns. In all political apinterest.

regard.



maltatoday Editorial

MALTATODAY, MEDIATODAY LTD, VJAL IR-RIHAN, SAN GWANN SGN 9016 • MANAGING DIRECTOR: ROGER de GIORGIO • MANAGING EDITOR: SAVIOUR BALZAN • ACTING EDITOR: MATTHEW VELLA Fel: (356) 21 382741-3, 21 382745-6 • Fax: (356) 21 385075 • Website: www.maltatoday.com.mt • E-mail: maltatoday@mediatoday.com.mt

Tackling corruption

ruption the major plank of its election

While totally committed to fighting and exposing corruption, this newspaper feels that politicians should be wary from. of loosely alleging corruption unless evidenced in the Labour party billboard does nothing but tarnish a whole political class and only serves to disengage

unnoticed. While accepting that there have been cases of unethical behaviour, brother. bad judgment, political carelessness against such blanket accusations.

unused to probing by non-affiliated me-

they have concrete evidence to back up tion that the private company Where's an open court. their claims. Equally, we feel that the Everybody? was given the MTV con-ease with which politicians resort to tract by Francis Zammit Dimech as a should no longer be limited to members Regrettably none of this filing libel suits needs to be revisited. kickback for the TV production com-Essentially, this should be an action of pany to finance his election campaign. tion that all the Cabinet is corrupt as rebutting this serious accusation immediately. Alfred Sant's allegation is just a cruel attempt to tarnish reputations.

citizens further from politics. The same is vital to the healthy development of dewould go for a recent allegation by a mocracy but the way the Labour leader A Freedom of Information Act should be enacted allowing all government

THE Labour party, as evidenced by its scope of such allegations is the inten- reasons for taking on government may secrecy. The transparency involved will into alleged corruption concerning his

exposed even in our newspaper – we are strengthen the tools and the mechanisms in place. The Permanent Com-And we are equally uncomfortable mission Against Corruption needs to be with the political class which is clearly strengthened, allowing it on its own inience and remain determined to uncover commanding a two-thirds parliamen- strict rules need to be adhered delineat abuse from whatever quarter it derives tary approval with security of tenure, ing the relationship between the secreexecutive powers and a proper budget. tariat and the civil service, blood rela-A case in point is Alfred Sant's accusa- The proceedings should also be held in

of parliament but should be extended to members of the judiciary, chairmen and very last resort. The blanket accusa- The minister filed legal proceedings directors of government boards and entities. Prior to appointment all persons appointed should appear before a parliamentary committee and grilled per-We agree the fight against corruption sons, allowing potential conflicts to be exposed.

of his intentions. He cannot fight cor- files and papers to be open to public Such claims debase the political cur- ruption by first anchoring to a policy of scrutiny. This will allow journalists to capacity to fight corruption and not just rency and reflect badly on the person zero-tolerance while giving a platform probe documents, which all too often alleging its existence without supplying accusing without evidence. The only to a former Nationalist activist whose are unnecessarily kept under a cloud of proof.

billboards, is making allegations of cor- tion to tar reputations. This cannot go or may not be related to investigations serve as a deterrent for abuses. Government has published a white paper on a Freedom of Information Act which the The way to fight corruption is to next government should legalise with immediate effect.

There should be even more transparency in the granting of government contracts with stringent rules to control tiative to investigate allegations of cor- frivolous appeals, on sub-contracting paper. We are proud of our independ- powers. It should be chaired by a person pointments in ministerial secretariats, tionships, made known, to ensure the absence of nepotism and a declaration

Regrettably none of this upgrading of standards is mentioned in the recently published electoral manifestos. If corruption is to be exposed and censured, its elimination must be dealt with in a serious manner meaning that politicians must propose the strengthening of the structures which already exist and not imply alleging corruption without producing a shed of evidence with the sole intention of tarnishing reputations.

Our democracy depends also on our

news **Pullicino denies allegations** by Jo Said on kickbacks

MATTHEW VELLA

ENVIRONMENT Minister George Pullicino yesterday denied allegations by former PN activist Jo Said that Nationalist MP David Agius had discussed two corruption cases with him, implicating Pullicino and parliamentary secretary Tony Abela.

Said's police affidavit, published yesterday in It-Torca, claims that David Agius met him in an Attard café and told him that Pullicino had asked for money in return for Cabinet's approval of a permit; while Abela had also facilitated some form of Cabinet approval, the affidavit reads.

Police are now investigating Said after David Agius made a formal complaint that he was being blackmailed. It is being alleged that Said tried to force Agius to stand up in Parliament, declare the Nationalist Government as corrupt and cross the floor.

threatening him if he didn't | am taken by Agius for taking a cross the floor, or he would ruler with an economic graph disclose an incident as a uni- | with him inside the examinaversity student, when the uni-

Aguis claimed Said had been versity board annulled an extion room.

The irregularity meant that Agius had to graduate a year later than his colleagues.

Environment Minister George Pullicino (left) has denied kickback claims from former PN activist Jo Said

which he said were intended lice affidavit word for word. said he would open legal pro-Minister George Pullicino denied Said's allegations, Torca, which carried the po- Smash TV.

to tarnish his reputation. He | Pullicino has already opened legal procedures against Said over comments he gave to

PN hits out at Sant's 'rumours' on plans to close Junior College

THE Nationalist Party yesterday said that Alfred Sant had fabricated claims that government intended to close down the Junior College Sixth Form and remove the Junior College examinations.

In a statement, the PN said

Alfred Sant and the Labour Party were spreading rumours, "one after the other, every day" to cover up "his fiasco", with reference to Labour's pledge to

proposal is tantamount to a repeater class. "First Sant invents that the gov-

education. The PN claims the al. These have been denied but Sant just repeats these claims in the hope that they are believed. Today he invented that government would close down the Jun-

surprise if in the coming days Sant would invent that government "was about to close down MCAST or University".

"It looks like there's no limit to what Sant and Labour are ready to invent," the statement con-

ernment is going to close down introduce a reception class for the Junior Lyceums; then he inior College and remove the Junkindergarten students before vents that the MATSEC resits ior College examinations." are to take place later than usuthey are admitted to primary The PN said it would be no cluded. Reporter. Now also on Youtube

www.youtube.com/ReporterMediaToday

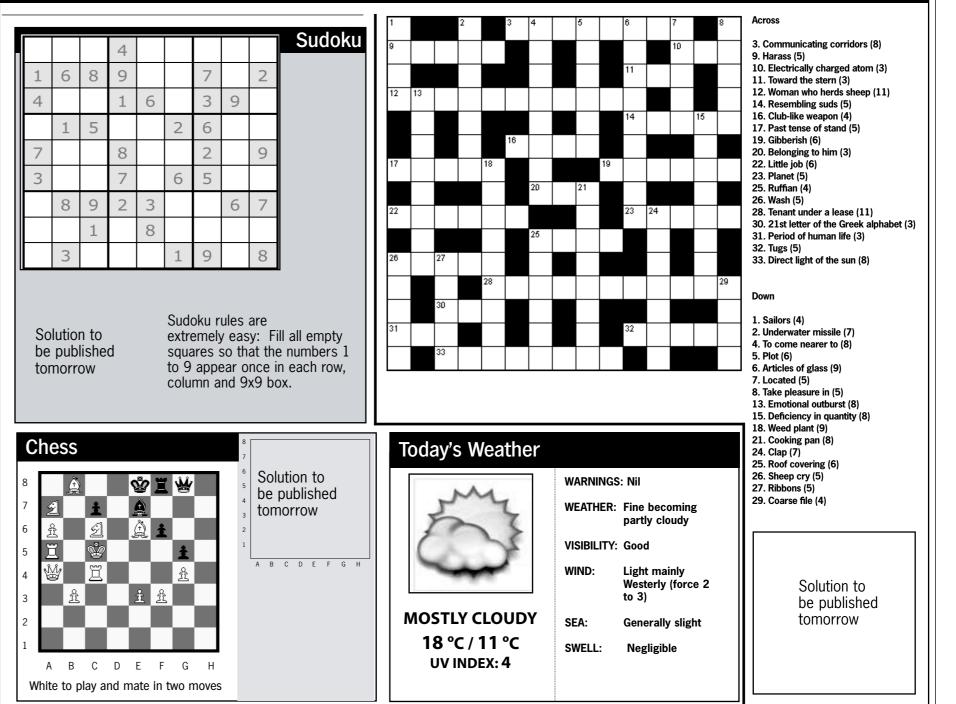
Dive in now. www.maltatoday.com.mt daily

free-kick into the Chelsea box. Woodgate glanced the ball onto

into the net. Robinson then pulled off good

Pursuits

Solution to tomorrow





spor**ts**ews

Football

JONATHAN Woodgate's headed goal in extra-time gave Spurs a 2-1 victory over holders Chelsea

in the Carling Cup final. Spurs made the brighter start to the showpiece but wasted a host of changes before Didier Drogba, who sent a 25-yard free-kick narrowly wide on 33 minutes, made no mistake six minutes later, steering an effort around the wall to leave Paul Robinson flatfooted.

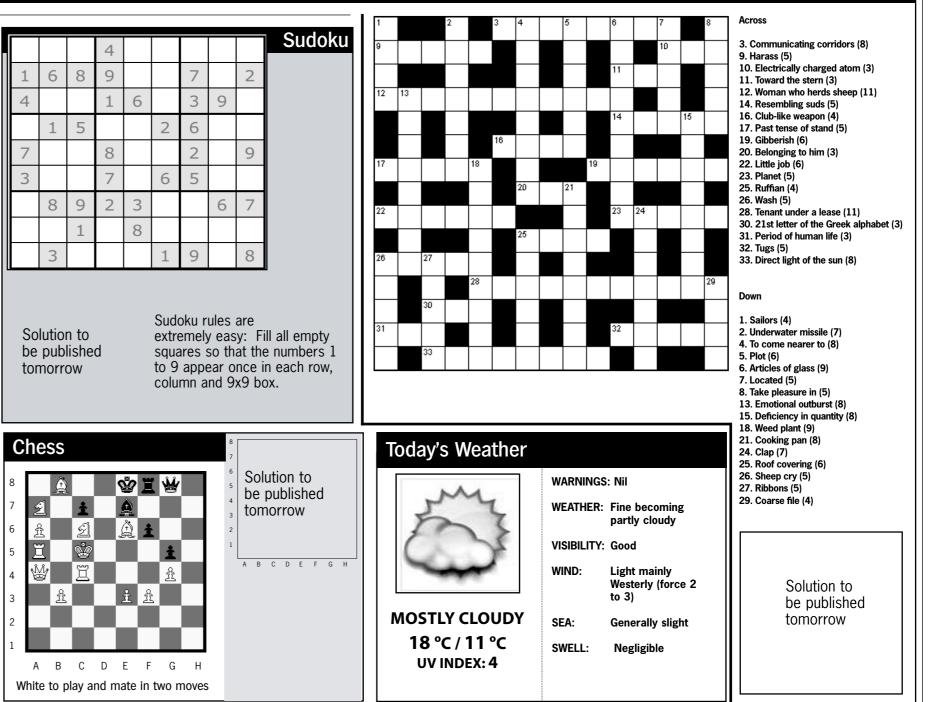
Drogba's goal saw him become the first player to score in three League Cup finals - but Spurs drew level on 70 minutes when the linesman spotted a handball by Wayne Bridge in the 18-yard box.

Referee Mark Halsey pointed to the spot, and Dimitar Berbatov kept his cool to slide the spot-kick home.

The goal sparked a concerted push for a winner by Juande Ramos' troops - but the Blues held firm to force an extra 30 minutes.

Spurs kept their momentum going in the extra period and took the lead on 94 minutes, when Jermaine Jenas floated a Cech's gloves and it rebounded off the Spurs defender's face and

saves to deny Salomon Kalou and



Woodgate wins cup for Spurs

Joe Cole in the dying stages and secure glory for Ramos' heroes. Tottenham striker Robbie Keane described the outcome as a "dream come true".

He said "Hopefully this is start of something special, hopefully we can kick on now. It's special for the fans.

"This was a massive test for us and it's unbelievable and a dream come true to come out as winners. I dreamt of this moment as kid and I'm speechless."

Matchwinner Woodgate said: "I don't really go up for corners but I took a chance and was able to get my head on it and luckily it went it.

"I think we were the best team and hopefully we can push on from this next year. Chelsea are a top side and they showed that today but we did it."

Ramos was "happy because the people (fans) are very happy" while captain Ledley King hailed the "spirit" of his side.

Chelsea boss Avram Grant felt his side were unlucky to lose the match but called on his players to regain focus for the challenges ahead He said: "I think even in the

second half Tottenham were not in the game and that we were the better side

"The penalty put them back in the game and that turned the match. The second goal was from a set-piece so we are disappointed.

Juve's open letter to FA: 'Enough!'

Referees' Association demanding action to stop the club being "made to pay" for Calciopoli.

The Bianconeri were furious after last night's 2-1 defeat at Reggina, in which there were two clear penalties not awarded before a stoppagetime spot-kick gave the Amaranto the win.

Now they have taken further action by writing an open letter to the Federation and the AIA - Referees' Association signed by President Giovanni Cobolli Gigli and general manager Jean-Claude Blanc.

"The repetition of such serious errors forces us to ask for the intervention of the Federation to guarantee the regularity of this campaign, protecting the work and professionalism of the players, Coach and directors of Juventus."

One \oint f the theories put forward openly in this letter is that referees are giving decisions against Juve to continue 'punishing' them for the Calciopoli scandal.

This was the first time this

JUVENTUS have written an season that referee Paolo open letter to the FIGC and Dondarini had been assigned to officiate a Juventus match, as he was one of the figures accused - and cleared - in the trial last year.

"Some decisions by the referees are confirming the doubts raised by more than a few people – that there is not a relaxed and adequate approach towards Juventus considering the serious and professional way the club and team are behaving.

"What is certain is that Juventus cannot keep paying for something they have already paid an extremely severe price.

"The club is lifting itself back up from that thanks to the passion of its fans, who legitimately ask for respect."

The Bianconeri were demoted to Serie B and stripped of two Scudetto titles in the Calciopoli scandal.

Meanwhile, it has been confirmed that Cristiano Zanetti is handed a two-match ban for his dismissal against Reggina.

The midfielder saw red in stoppages for kicking out at Nicola Amoruso.





Alfred Sant isn't talking about unemployment. That's because he doesn't need to. He has no grounds for doing so. Unemployment has dropped to an all-time low. Malta is nearing full employment. This government has generated 20,000 jobs in the last four years. It has created the right climate for billions of euros in foreign direct investment. New sectors have opened up and flourished. Malta is doing well.

In this campaign, Sant's Labour Party are bereft of any real problems to talk about. That's why they're floundering, talking about the different DNA of those who don't share their political sympathies, and making frenzied attacks on university students.

To find unemployment and economic problems to talk about, Alfred Sant is going to have to create them himself. He has proved himself to be very good at that already. Immediately he first walked up the steps of Castille as prime minister, he set in train a series of actions with catastrophic knock-on effects for the economy and society. Unemployment soared, the number of self-employed persons fell drastically, and foreign direct investment plummeted. Malta slid into recession. Sant defends those 22 months of power by saying he didn't have enough time to work on his plans.

We say thank heavens for that. If he wreaked so much havoc in two years, he would have brought Malta to its knees in five.

When people talk about change, that's not the kind of change they want. But it's the kind of change they'll get from Labour.

Think about it. Better safe than sorry.



Mintoff summons Emmy Bezzina and John Zammit



general elections, was summoned to il-Perit's house on Saturday, along with John Zammit, who is also contesting the elections

JAMES DEBONO

THE man who once provoked the ire of the superpowers by delaying the end of the Helsinki Conference on security and cooperation in Europe by over 50 days, is now busy assembling the lunatic fringe of Maltese politics in his Tarxien villa.

Alpha Party leader Emmy Bezzina, who is contesting the general election as an inde-pendent candidate, and Liberal Democratic Alliance leader John Zammit were summoned on Saturday by the 94-year-old Duminku Mintoff at his house in Tarxien for an important meeting.

The frail former Premier was seen opening his door to the two self-appointed party lead-

"We were called for this meeting by Mintoff... God only knows what he has in mind...I hope he does not gives me a lot of work to do. He already asked me to mediate between North and South Korea," Zammit told MaltaToday.

Zammit explained that this was not the first meeting with Mintoff.

"He had asked me not to contest the second district on behalf of the Liberal Democratic Alliance as he was contesting guests. himself."

Zammit is still baffled by Mintoff's failure to present his nomination.



"We already had already prepared a very big flag of our party and we had already informed the European Liberals that we were contesting."

Zammit, a former comrade-inarms of Emmy Bezzina, had split from the Alpha Party which he co-founded to set up his own Liberal Democratic Party.

Bezzina claimed that he had no idea why Mintoff was calling the meeting.

"I received a message and I want to verify it...," Bezzina replied as the gate opened and Mintoff welcomed the two

Bezzina will be addressing a meeting along extreme right candidates Norman Lowell next Friday.

Motorcyclist crashes into four cars

A 39-year-old motorcyclist from around 11:45am. Santa Lucija yesterday crashed The police said the motorhis motorbike into a VW Polo cyclist lost control of his bike, at Kennedy Grove in an inci- crashed into a VW Polo coming dent which involved three other from the opposite direction and cars.

The motorcylist suffered frac- and a Skoda. tures in the incident in which he The man has been treated for lost control of motorbike, which broken bones and been kept at crashed into four cars. The incident happened at tion.

then hit a BMW, a Toyota Celica

Mater Dei Hospital for observa-

www.lawrencegonzi.info This is a paid advert by the Nationalist Party.