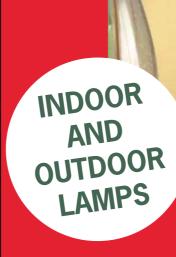


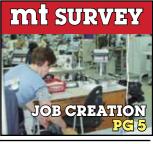


Pullicino Orlando turns up at the BA press conference to face Alfred Sant, and as pandemonium ensues, Sants walks out of the PBS studios PCS 12-13









PRICE €0.50 / LM0.21

Labour reveals **'consent form'** claiming Pullicino Orlando knew of disco permit PG 3

FALZON ON CAQNU

'Purely professional relationship'







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Contraction of the local division of the loc

On the record

James Debono digs in the archives to see what the candidates have been saying the last few years



Austin Gatt PN candidate on 1st District On public broadcasting

"In my opinion, the state does not need to own a station. It should encourage the emergence of serious private stations and farm out the public service obligation to these stations. But we have not reached this stage." 15 October 2006, MaltaToday

On the smart Dubai investors "They will have 440 villa and apartments. Obviously they will be selling or renting these properties. They are not here for charity. They are here to make money...'

On the Smart City concept "The Dubia Internet City concept consists of ICT offices, commercial areas and lodging areas. If we do not want it, we don't do it... we cannot benefit from the advantage of 5,600 jobs without including all three components of the concept... Our premise was that of importing to Malta the Dubai Internet City model which is the most successful information technology hub in the world."

On the dockyard

"We're in a changing market traditional ship repair has moved to low cost countries and specialized ship repair has become a new lucrative market - if the shipyards become financially viable then we'll have a great asset for Malta. So let's not start chopping off heads before we have proved it is not viable."

20 February 2005 MaltaToday

On quality programmes on PBS "The main argument is that the quality of broadcasting is not measurable in any other way except subjectively." 20 February 2005 MaltaToday

On reading newspapers "I rarely read newspapers; I'm not a newspapers or television fan. I normally let my wife tell me what's going on.' 20 February 2005 MaltaToday

On elections

"Basically in a country which is fully democratic, where there are no conflicts of principles... people will decide on the basis of their pockets. It all depends on how people are living and the prospects they see for their children

15 October 2006, MaltaToday

John Dalli PN candidate on 6th and 10th district

On asking forgiveness "I was wrongly accused and defamed, therefore it is I who should forgive,"

9 December 2007



On working under Gonzi

committed to serve,"

9 December 2007

On Alfred Sant

9 December 2007

9 December 2007

On the dockyard

spending."

9 December 2007

Michael Falzon

10th Districts

"I feel comfortable working with

a leader who was democratically

elected to lead by the people I am

"If it were up to Alfred Sant,

would not have been sent to the

Gulag, but I would have been sent

"I have stated publicly when

speaking in the Party General

Council, in front of everyone, that

I felt that many diehard National-

ists were feeling discarded. These

people did not necessarily support

"There is a big increase in ship-

building orders and in the prices

of ship repairing. The market is

there. But our costs are still very

high and there must be coura-

geous changes to address these

issues, especially in the areas of

work practices, productivity, flex-

ibility, labour costs, and overhead

MLP candidate on 2nd and

On dining with Charles Polidano "I am employed at Bank of Val-

letta as a lawyer and my relation-

ship with Mr Polidano is purely

professional. Mr Polidano is one

of the biggest clients at the bank

and I speak to some 50 contrac-

tors every day, because I handle all

On holding the picture of the Bless

"I am not ashamed of this, I am a

On a frame-up against a colleague

in relation to leaks on MLP's Du-

"This was noting but a frame-up

against a person who worked with

me..only to damage me and the

party, I was abroad at that time

but two contractors who were in

that famous meeting tried to con-

tact me to warn me on what was

May 6 2006 speech in Rabat club

"I received an anonymous letter

as well as threats in November ...

whenever something illegal takes

place I report it to the police...I

told the Commissioner; Mr Rizzo I

authorize you to proceed irrespec-

On his anonymous admirer

the contractors at the bank."

MaltaToday 4 March

ed Virgin in his pocket

MaltaToday 5 March

bai delegation

going to happen"

Maltese and a Christian."

to the gallows a dozen times."

On disgruntled Nationalists



I told the Police Commissioner and Inspector Cordina on what was being said in the corridors of the MLP centre. I also indicated the names. I now leave it up to the police to investigate how the information was divulged." May 6 2006 speech in Rabat club

tion.

On resurrecting trade schools

"The closure of trade schools

left a gap in the secondary level.

That is why many students are be-

ing lost in the way simply because

they do not have an inkling for

academic subjects. The mistake

was closing trade schools without

creating an alternative. MCAST is

not an alternative to trade schools,

as it starts after the age of 16."

Harry Vassallo

On electing 4 MPs

districts

10 February 2008, MaltaToday

AD candidate on 8th and 10th

"Yes. Up to four people in Par-

liament. We can elect people from anywhere...If we don't get

into parliament next time round

I would resign. Eighteen years is

enough to give to one's country."

On resigning from post as AD

Irrespective of the result of the

March 8 general elections, AD

would have to elect a new Chair-

person immediately afterwards,

and Vassallo confirmed that he

"I think it is a good thing that

nobody stays too long in the lead-

ership of political parties for too

long. I believe I can be proud of my

Prime Minister Gonzi is in fact

the only local politician in the last

41 years who sat down on a table

and negotiated a political alliance,

and that political alliance was go-

"As PM, Gonzi is responsible

for Pullicino's actions. He has to

say that a mistake might have

been made when he extended

when he was PM and he had the

ultimate responsibility. He has

not even promised that he is go-

ing to reverse this decision which

was made in violation of EU laws,

and which constituted a sheer act

of vandalism on Malta's environ-

On Gift of Life petition to entrench

"I simply told Paul Vincenti that

I am in favour of life and he can

tell the whole world about it. I did

not do any U-turn as I was always

against abortion... This is a case

of fantasy politics. It's just a lot of

parties oppose abortion and pre-

vents serious discussion on this

smoke in a country where all three

abortion ban in constitution

ment.

be extremely bare-faced to now

ing to be between PN and AD,"

17 February 2008 MaltaToday

On Gonzi's green credentials

work for the benefit of the party.

17 February 2008 MaltaToday

leader after the election

will be calling it a day.

On Lawrence Gonzi

On his intimate friends

Some intimate friends warned me to get rid of him or her even if they have done nothing. They told me that if they throw mud at you something will stick. But I have never abandoned anyone in my life. As a party we say that nobody is disposable, let alone someone who worked for the party for the past 11 years." May 6 2006 speech in Rabat club

Carmelo Abela MLP candidate on 2nd and 3rd districts

On doing away with the junior lyceum exam

"Definitely something has to be done, not only because this exam, whether we like it or not, is creating a lot trauma for students and parents, but also because at the age of 11 we are labeling and at times excluding a lot of students... There should be a combination of exams and assessments along the scholastic year which would ease the tension that lead to negative experiences in the early years of our children.

15 May 2005 MaltaToday

On raising school leaving age to 17 "In our final plan we do not refer to the school leaving age. After discussing with stakeholders we decided that we should not commit ourselves on this. We are not committed to increase the school leaving age to 17." 10 February 2008, MaltaToday

On giving children their childhood

"We want to change the whole concept of education. We want | the development zones in 2006, to give childhood back to children. They spend too much time on homework and private lessons and very little time on play. Even absenteeism is a reaction against this kind of schooling. We are killing their creativity in the name of the examination rat race." 10 February 2008, MaltaToday

On streaming

"Educational experts do not agree on this. Some favour a selective system while others favour comprehensives. Others favour the introduction of both systems giving parents a right to choose. For us this is not a major issue. The most important thing for us is to ensure that every child is given



the necessary support and educaissue..." 10 June 2007 10 February 2008, MaltaToday

Josie Muscat

AN's candidate on 2nd and 3rd districts On far right label

news

"What is far right in us? We want to elevate peoples' status higher, we are concerned with the levels of taxation being imposed upon the middle class so that their monies go to the rich, and we're concerned the gap between rich and poor is growing. Is that far right?" 17 June 2007

On marriages with foreigners "I'm not saying it's wrong. I can't tell people who to marry. My uncle was married to an English woman; my daughter-in-law is of mixed stock but born here. But it worries me: look at single-parent families, broken marriages, more cohabiting couples and more people refusing to get married. It's this whole state of affairs that worries me, and it's being compounded. There's also illegal immigrants, which as you know are now allowed to bring their families here." 17 Iune 2007

On re-negotiating the EU treaty.. on hunting

"No, and it's important that we stress this. Nobody is above the law. What we want to do is renegotiate the treaty 'a modo nostro' .. in a way that is acceptable to both the hunters and the EU." 10 February 2008

On AN's proposal stating that" ... illegal immigrants will be flown to Brussels so that the EU, that is so free with its criticism, can deal with them ... " "What's so illegal about that?"

10 February 2008 MaltaToday On breaching the Dublin Conven-

"The Dublin Convention was not

drawn up with illegal immigration in mind," he replies. "It was intended for people in distress at sea. In the case of boat people, this distress is self-inflicted. After all they knew the risks before trying to come here Now Lam not saving that we should not rescue people in distress at sea. As in the case of St Paul, we should take them in... but only with a predetermined agreement with our partners in the EU, so that they do not stay here longer than necessary." 10 February 2008 MaltaToday

On MLPN billboards

"Look at their billboards. One accuses the other of being corrupt, and the other of now having any ideas. What kind of a choice is that? Hardly surprising that people are fed up.. 10 February 2008 MaltaTodav

news

SABRINA AGIUS

THE Malta Environment and Planning Authority's auditor has reportedly completed his investigation into the award of a permit for a discotheque on land in Mistra owned by Nationalist MP Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando, and has handed Andrew Calleja his findings

Calleja. The report was passed on to the chairman yesterday, according to One News last night, but attempts to contact both Calleja and auditor Joe Falzon yesterday proved fu-

tile.

Mistra permit

MATTHEW VELLA

LABOUR'S spokespersons loe Brincat and Roderick Galdes yesterday said a new Labour government will instantly revoke the outline permit issued abusively by MEPA to protect Mistra under the EU's Natura 2000 programmes. The spokespersons said this would be part of Labour's reforms in the MEPA operations that will ensure the "messing about" with the management of MEPA by the Nationalist government would only be a "nightmare from the past". Labour are riding on the wave





MEPA auditor Mistra report concluded



to MEPA chairman Andrew

jar (FAA) yesterday called for the findings of the auditor to be made public, while noting that Pullicino Orlando had reguested that MEPA revoke the permit on his land. The Mistra area was ear-

Flimkien ghal Ambjent Ah-

marked for an open air, 8,000-Environmental organisation | capacity disco in an area that

candidate Jeffrey Pullicino Or-

lando, whose green credentials

had earned him Nature Trust's

"Green Politician of the Year"

award, was aware of an appli-

cation for an open-air 8,000

capacity disco on his land at

"The last days of the PN in

government will go down in

history for the revelations of

the unlimited scandal within

MEPA... and the Prime Min-

ister wants to keep everything

hidden by sending Pullicino Or-

lando to challenge Alfred Sant,

when documents prove that an

outline permit was issued, and

that Pullicino Orlando was in-

formed of an application and

took no steps to stop it."



Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando

has now been reported to the Commissioner of Police by both the Prime Minister and the Opposition leader for an investigation into whether any monies exchanged hands over the award of the permit.

MEPA's recommendation to put a stop to the threat of con-



Joe Falzon

is a Natura 2000 site. The case | refuse a Malta Tourism Authority proposal for the touristic development of Mistra Bay, on which the open air night club permit depended.

"FAA is now strongly recommends that whichever government is elected next week, the FAA yesterday welcomed new administration should

Labour will revoke

Mistra.

environment

of revelations that Nationalist

FAA calls for Polidano permit withdrawal

ENVIRONMENTAL NGO | dano. The approval of the Safi Flimkien Ghal Ambjent Ahjar has lent its voice to calls for the withdrawal of a permit for a supermarket outside the develpment zone in Safi.

The Chamber of Planners of Wednesday demanded that the ODZ permit, deemed irregular by MEPA's own auditor, should be repealed by virtue of the Development Planning Act 1992, Article 13 (5).

Last year, MEPA's DCC (A) board had approved an application for a supermarket of the German Lidl chain: one of by entrepreneur Charles Poli-

supermarket was challenged by Alternattiva Demokratika, which last week revealed the contents of a report by MEPA auditor Joe Falzon's, which had found "gross irregularities" in the way the permit had been issued.

After the report, the DCC (A) board which approved the permit resigned en masse.

If the permit is withdrawn, all works are expected to be stopped on the Safi supermarket site. FAA also expect that the land would be reverted into seven applications submitted an agricultural area as soon as possible.

tinuous applications Outside the Development Zone by regulating that only essential infrastructure is to be assessed by MEPA, while applications that are blatantly unsuitable will not even be considered," spokesperson Astrid Vella sāid.

FAA added that its is expecting that all necessary measures are taken to rehabilitate the ecologically and scientifically important saline marsh of places like the Mistra Bay area, which has been allowed to degrade and fallen subject to the development threats.

sagius@mediatoday.com.mt

'Farcical' request to revoke Mistra development

ZMINIJIETNA – Voice of the Left expressed its objection to the proposed development in Mistra of an entertainment venue

The NGO said that it was "farcical" that since the proposed development had become an electoral issue, the owner of the land in question Jeffrey Pullicino Órlando, was now requesting MEPA to block further applications for development on his land.

"We ask what would have happened had this issue not become public knowledge. The area in question is clas-sified by MEPA as a green area of ecological and scientific Importance and falls outside the development zone. The area also falls under the Natura 2000 Conservation area. Rather than issuing an outline development permit, MEPA should not have processed this application in the first place."



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Health & Credibility WARNING Vote Gonzi, get more lies and pay for health care.

Another damning document! Shortly after Gonzi's cabinet discussed fees for health care services, his government informed the EU that:

"The Maltese government has proposed the establishment of a national health fund to finance the public health sector. This fund could be (...) financed in part from social security health contributions. Other potential sources of income for the national health fund include hypothecated taxes, government grants and miscellaneous fees."

Preliminary National Report on Health Care and Long Term Care, Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care, April 2005

Ouizzed after the revelation that his cabinet had agreed in principle to fees for health care, a fumbling, faltering Gonzi replied as follows:

One News: Can you confirm that you had other similar reports? Gonzi: What about, Miriam? One News: On financing health! Gonzi: Not only on financing of health, but on everything. One News: Did you have other reports concerning health? Gonzi: Yes yes yes. One News: Later after this one? After this one? Gonzi: No no I don't think so. One News: You did not? Gonzi: No, not after this one. Not after the December one.

on Xarabank, 29 February 2008

Labour. The only way.



maltatoday survey

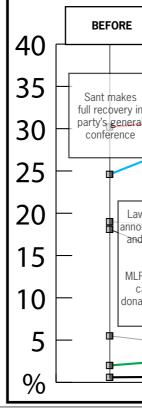




JAMES DEBONO

THE last MaltaToday electoral survey before next Saturday's general elections shows the PN at 36% - barely 2% ahead of the MLP. The PN's advantage falls within the survey's +/-2.8% margin of error.

Still, the same survey shows the PN making a net loss of 6.1%, when present voting intentions of respondents are compared to how they claim to have voted in the 2003 general elections. This is a clear indication that despite the wafer thin PN advantage, the election remains too close to call. The survey in which a to-



PN losing ground to Labour

INT SU	RVEY
PN	36.0%
MLP	34.3%
AD	
AN	0.7%
Not Voting	
Undecided	10.9%
No Reply	

36.0 %

ticipated was held between Thursday and Tuesday.

Compared to last week's survey, a rise of 1.4% in the number of non committed voters has resulted in a 2.5% loss for the PN and a 1.2% gain for Labour. AD's vote has remained sta-

ble at 2.4%.

Although the number of undecided voters has decreased by 2.4% the number of those refusing to divulge their voting intentions has increased bv 4%.

The PN's losses come in a week during which the PN lost the initiative to Labour. The last few days have been dominated by Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando's antics fol-

tal 1,200 respondents par- | lowing the MLP's revelation that he owns a tract of land earmarked by MEPA for the development of a countryside discotheque on a Natura 2000 site in Mistra.

No reply

Don't know

The survey also comes in the wake of the publication of a Ministry of Health report suggesting fees on health services, as well as a damning Audit Office report on Charles Polidano's ODZ supermarket in Safi.

The PN reacted by revealing that Charles Mangion and Karmenu Vella had failed to declare income from a property owned by MIRCA properties and rented to the | Freeport.

losing more votes to AD than 2003 vote share to the third

Why PN is leading despite shift to Labour and growth of AD:

THE survey shows the PN voted for the MLP in the 2003 leading by 1.7% despite a net election, 47% replied that they loss of 6.1% from its 2003 pool of votes to the other three parties in the race. On the other hand the MLP makes a net gain of 5.8% from former PN and AD voters.

This discrepancy between the shift in favour of the MLP and the survey's overall partly arises from the an over-representation of PN voters in the survey.

While 31% claimed to have

How PN voters in 2003 would vote now: 67.3 . 5.7 1.9 .0.3 Not Voting .1.9

.11.5

. 11.3

How MI P voters in 2003

Don't Know

No Reply

		101013	 2000
woul	d vot	e now	

would vote now:	
MLP	
PN	
AD	0.5
AN	0.3
Not Voting	0.5
Don't Know	
No Reply	
No heply	
How respondents	
How respondents	had voted
How respondents in 2003:	had voted
How respondents in 2003: PN	had voted
How respondents in 2003: PN MLP	had voted 46.9 30.8 1.2

1.9% of its 2003 vote to AD,

This is an indication that former MLP voters were either more reluctant to state how they had voted in 2003, or have refrained from participating in

had voted for the PN.

the survey. Still, the shift towards the MLP is partly offset by the PN gaining a majority of new voters. When all these factors are weighed the election remains too close to call.

How new voters would vote on March Sth

un march out.	
PN	45.2
MLP	
AD	
AN	
NoT voting	
Don't know	
No Reply	4.8

Methodology

This survey was held between Friday 29 February and Tuesday 4 March. A total of 2,115 persons were contacted, 1,200 of whom accepted to participate in the survey. Respondents were randomly chosen from the telephone directory which covers all Maltese localities including Gozo. The survey results were weighed according to age/sex distribution of the population according to the 2006 Demographic Review issued by the National Office of Statistics. But the shifts between the parties' electoral support in 2003 vote and present voting intentions are based on the raw figures. The survey's margin of error is +/-2.82%.

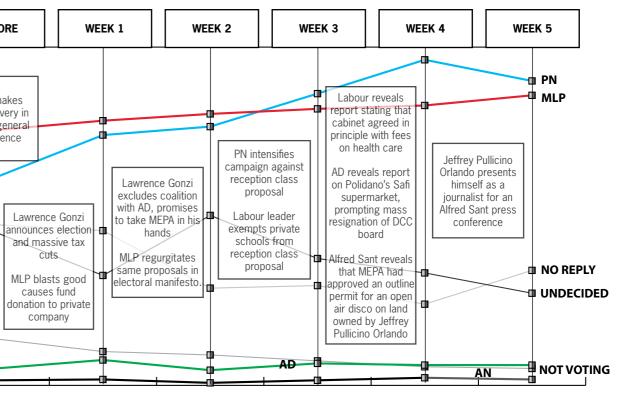
the MLP. While the PN loses | party. But while the PN gains nothing from AD's small The survey shows the PN | the MLP is losing 0.5% of it's | 2003 pool, Labour gets a small fraction of these votes. For the fifth consecutive time the survey shows the Nationalist party losing more votes from its 2003 tally than the MLP.

This week's survey shows the PN registering a 3.8% net loss to the MLP and a 2.3% net loss to the AD and AN.

The MLP which is losing 2.8% of its 2003 vote to the PN makes a net gain of 5.5% from the PN and a further 0.3% from the smaller parties.

For the second consecutive week the PN leads the MLP among those who would be voting for the first time on 8 March. Among this category the PN gets 45.2% against the MLP's 26%. This could be an indication of the PN's more intelligent use of the internet and the media to target these voters.

Gains among new voters, who number 17,000 in all, could partially compensate for the shift to Labour.



The battle of the issues: PN trounced on corruption but wins on most issues



MALTATODAY surveys carried | are swayed to vote for the other out over the past three weeks parties. show the PN winning on all maior issues except the cost of living and the fight against corruption. Although the MLP trounces the PN by a wide 17% margin on corruption, the PN soundly beats the MLP on taxation, job creation, education, healthcare, immigration and the environment.

Defying ideological stereotypes, the PN is at its strongest on job creation where it is preferred choice of the absolute majority of respondents while the MLP is strongest on fighting corruption where it is the preferred choice of 42% of respondents.

Both parties score their worst results on immigration. The MLP also scores a lowly 23% environment

Apart from immigration, the PN scores its worst score on the cost of living issue where it is the preferred choice of 38% of respondents.

On most issues the PN enjoys the advantage of being the incumbent party using the tools of government to promote its agenda.

On the other hand as the party in government the PN is more exposed to accusations of corruption than the MLP. The small parties only leave an

impact on their pet issues; in AD's case the environment and in AN's case illegal immigration.

When it comes to bread and butter issues like job creation voters tend to prefer the bigger parties.

The environment

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

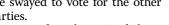
This is especially the case among younger voters aged between 18 and 34. Among this category | for one of the other three parwhile 26% express a preference | ties. More of these would vote for for AD's environmental policies | the PN (26.3%) than for the MLP only 14.4% express a preference for the MLP's policies.

But widespread support for AD's environmental policies does not translate itself in to a landslide for the third party when it comes to tions. voting intentions.

While 18% prefer AD's environmental policies to those of the 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 contentment.

environment is not such a primary concern for these voters who | tax cuts and an electoral pledge



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

Immigration

The absolute majority of voters do not identify with the immigration policies of the mainstream parties and 11% think that the far right Azzjoni Nazzjonali have the best policy on this subject.

Like other extreme right parties in Europe AN has exploited popular apprehensions on this issue turning a veritable human tragedy in to political football.

With the other parties largely silent on this issue during the electoral campaign AN has emerged as the vocal party on this issue.

AN has called for the closure of open centres and has threatened to pull out of Malta's legal international obligations in the absence of help from the European Union. Yet the party favours the importation of foreign labour in sectors where Maltese labour is scarce.

AN's immigration policy is highest among males (15%) and those aged under 34 (14%) and lowest among females and those over 55.

Significantly, AN attracts its greatest support among younger males. Among the males aged 18 to 34 years of age AN's stance on immigration is more popular than that of the three other parties. Among this category 25% opt for AN's immigration policy. The widespread support for AN's immigration policies is not the very right party which registers only 0.6% in the latest Malta-Today poll.

50% of those opting for AN's immigration policies would vote (21.3%).

Yet significantly 49% of those who opt for the far right's policies on immigration are still non committed on their voting inten-

This means that 4.3% of all respondents opt for AN's immigration's policy and would not state for which party they would vote in the forthcoming election.

Taxation

The MLP has spent the last five years attacking the PN for increasing the tax burden, but has failed to capitalise on fiscal dis-

After two consecutive budget

incumbent party has re-invented itself as the tax slashing party.

The electorate does not seem receptive to the bold fiscal proposals made by the smaller parties.

Significantly the Labour Party only manages to beat the PN among those aged between 35-54. This age group composed of persons who are in the middle of their working lives are the most inclined to Labour's policies.

Education

The survey held - amidst a storm of controversy on Labour's reception class proposal – shows that the PN's scaremongering campaign which dubbed the reception class proposal as a "repeater class" has left an impact on the electorate.

The "repeater class" mantra now features in every speech by PN exponents to the extent that the Prime Minister himself warned that a Labour victory would amount to five years in a repeater class for the whole country.

The MaltaToday survey was held days before Alfred Sant counter-attacked with his own dose of scaremongering, accusing the government of planning to close down junior lyceums and to abolish the junior lyceum exams. Effectively, the two parties have

now turned education in to a game of political football leaving little space for intelligent debate on this matter. Jobs

Ironically the PN beats the MLP on job creation, an issue which traditionally dominates the agenda of social democratic parties.

Riding high on promises of 5,600 new jobs created by Smart City and boasting the lowest unemployment rates in the past decade, the PN is considered as the party with the best policy on job creation by an absolute majority of respondents.

While 51% prefer the PN's job creation policies, only 36% prefer Labour's. The small parties

25.9

Corruption

to cut income tax further, the | to the big parties when it comes to bread and butter issues. The PN's high rate of approval

on job creation is boosted by 6% of present MLP voters who consider the PN's job creation policies as better than their own party's. Only 0.6% of present PN voters opt for Labour's employ-

ment policies. Healthcare

The PN is judged to have the best policy on health care despite the MLP's revelation of a report issued in 2004 which proposed fees for public health services.

The report claims that the cabinet agreed in principle with the report but would not implement it because of its "political underpinnings."

The survey on health was conducted after the publication of this report

The Prime Minister denied that the cabinet had ever considered charges on health and declared that he would resign if a future PN government were to impose such fees.

Although the report confirms that Gonzi had resisted pressure to introduce charges on health services during his term in office, it made a mockery Gonzi's earlier claim that the cabinet had never discussed the imposition of any such fees.

The PN has countered the MLP's campaign by reminding voters that a Sant led government had imposed a fee on people collecting free medicines.

While 39% favour Labour's health policies, 47% favour the PN's policies. The survey reflects public sat-

isfaction with the new Mater Dei hospital which has been hyped as one of Lawrence Gonzi major accomplishments. The survey shows that PN vot-

ers are more enthusiastic on the their party's health policy than MLP voters.

Cost of living

42.4

The MLP enjoys a slight advanare only chosen by 1.5% of voters | tage over the PN on the cost of | confirming that people still turn | living issue-the primary concern | against corruption.

How the parties fare on the issues:						
	PN	MLP	AD	AN	None	No Answer
Taxation	39.8	33.5	1.5	0.1	6.1	19
Environment	38.7	22.8	18.4	1.5	3.9	14.7
Immigration	23.5	17.8	2.7	11.1	10.2	34.7
Education	48.9	32.2	1.2	0	3.1	14.7
Job creation	51.1	35.9	0.8	0.7	3	8.5
Health Care	46.8	39.3	0.7	0.8	2.3	10.4
Cost of Living	38	39	1.1	0.9	7.2	13.8

3.3

3.1

10.8

of the Maltese population according to MaltaToday's surveys carried out during the past year.

The Labour Party has been harping on the cost of living issue for the past years.

news

It's promise to reduce the surcharge by 50% is aimed at leaving more money in people's pockets. Yet during this campaign the MLP has shied away from anachronistic solutions to control pric-

Corruption

Only one fourth think that the PN has the best policy to fight corruption. On the other hand 42% think that Labour has the best policies on this issue.

The survey shows that the MLP's focused campaign to delegitimise Lawrence Gonzi's cabinet has left a deep marks amongst voters.

Through the campaign Labour has reiterated it's pledge to practice zero tolerance on corruption and has continued to highlight corruption allegations against prominent cabinet members.

The PN has pre-empted the campaign by focusing exclusively on Lawrence Gonzi whose integrity remains intact. Labour has reacted to this stratagem quoting Eddie Fenech Adami's maxim that whoever does not fight corruption is part of it.

Yet the prevailing perception that the ruling party failed to address this issue does not necessarily result in a Labour landslide.

While this shows that the PN has hit rock bottom on this issue, it also shows that some people would still vote for the PN even if they are dissatisfied with the government's record. In fact 5% of Nationalist voters prefer Labour on this issue but would still vote PN. Only 63% of Nationalist voters think that their party has the best policies to tackle corruption compared to 89% of MLP voters who trust their party on this is-

The survey also shows that a significant 6.4% opt for the two small parties as the bulwark

14.6

DAVID DARMANIN

MLP'S early celebration of Women's Day was marked by the absence of social affairs spokesperson Maire-Louise Coleiro Preca yesterday, at a gathering of around 100 female Labour exponents addressing gender issues, social injustices, equality at the place of work and sexual harassment, among others.

Labour Leader Alfred Sant, who reiterated his party's position on the need of gender equality. "At university we have a majority of female students, but then numbers go down drastically as soon as you start looking at the number of women in employment," he said. "When we appoint women on government boards, efficiency issues are always scrutinised before deciding. This is not the case with deciding on board appointments for men. We are in a situation that allows women to be appointed in key positions only because they are efficient, whereas men don't have to be efficient. This is why there should be a quota system." Moderating the talk was One TV presenter Simone Cini, who

started by handing over the microphone to Labour candidate Helena Dalli. "The Labour Party is focusing

on continuation of work that we have been carrying out for the past 20 years," she said, before being interrupted by Cini in order to explain that the talk shall not only ask for the contribution of Labour candidates, but also of all present.

"OK," Dalli said. "Take two. I was talking about continuation, so this is the continuation of a continuation." But as Dalli was about to start her address again, Labour leader Alfred Sant upstaged her with his late entrée, inspiring the crowd to surpass Dalli's speech with a hearty, welcoming applause.

When she started again, Dalli cut her speech short by saying that after all, "there is no need to mention all the work Labour did in the past years with regard to gender issues."

"A lot of work that could have continued after 1998 has not been continued," she said. This was later confirmed by Alfred Sant when he said: "When Labour was last in government, we did not have enough time to implement all that we had in mind with regards to gender issues, but a lot of measures were on the runway," failing to continue the allegory by linking the Labour

song slogan "the only way is up". On her part, Labour candidate Lorna Vassallo spoke about a problem faced by numerous parents. "The daytime gap between 14:30 and 17:00 is not being addressed," she said. "A lot of childcare centres are being closed at 13:00, serving a useless

news



MLP discusses gender equality issues

Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca fails to show up

The event was wrapped up by



purpose

She then explained that by the time children finish school, parents are still at work and that there is not enough availability of services to cater for the time between end of school and end of work.

In another intervention, Vassallo also mentioned that politics in Malta are male dominated, due to the vast majority of politicians being men, "starting with our very able leader," she specified.

Then came Labour candidate Marlene Pullicino's turn, the estranged wife of the same PN candidate involved in the Mistra Bay controversy, Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando. Pullicino spoke about

domestic violence, garnering the crowd's full attention when she said "we should work together as Christians."

"Up until yesterday, a pregnant woman was beaten by her husband, and was in turn sent to Appogg with her children, while her husband was allowed to stay home," Pullicino said. "This is unfair. It was the perpetrator who should have been chucked

Addressing Sant directly, Pulli-cino concluded her intervention by saying: "As of Monday, God willing, when you are elected to power, I appeal to you to look into these matters.'

portance of work-life balance, stating : "We should be living in a society that pays enough wages that enable parents to spend more time with their children."

On quality of life, Pullicino remarked that the most popular illness among women is depression, "whereas we only speak of breast screening."

Also present was university professor Mary Darmanin, who clarified why she chose the Labour activity over a university speech over the same issues running at the same time. "I was asked to contribute at a university event this morning. From all the speakers invited it seemed that Pullicino also spoke of the im- | they are all of the same political | a very young age."

belief, so I decided not to go."

At that point, Helena Dalli complained that she was not invited either. Later, Dalli refused to answer a question on gender equality policy on the grounds that this was within the remit of Labour spokesperson for social solidarity Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, who was not present for the meeting. After making a sign to show that she would rather not answer, Simone Cini broke the seconds of silence that followed to ask if it would be better for Coleiro Preca to answer. "I would much rather wait for her." By the end of the meeting, Coleiro Preca had not yet arrived.

On her part, former Sea Malta chairperson Marlene Mizzi, seated right next to Sant, confidently said: "Although I recognise that many women may encounter problems at work, we must make sure that there is no self-pity. I'm not saying that there are no problems, but once we encounter difficulties we must find the strength within ourselves to resolve them. We must look for solutions, without expecting other people to do this for us."

Mizzi proceeded to insist on the need to "change the culture of men, especially at the work place," suggesting that this is done by proper parenting and early education - an idea to which Sant later concurred.

"I agree with Marlene about the need of culture change," Sant stated. "Equality needs to be practised, not just discussed. We need to focus on education, as of



news



JULIA FARRUGIA

PRIME Minister Lawrence Gonzi vesterdav asked MEPA auditor Joe Falzon to investigate the issue of an outline development



eorge Bonello Dupuis



JULIA FARRUGIA

LAWRENCE Gonzi admitted to hundreds of supporters in Swiegest historical unjustice that qi last night that he is "worried could ever happen." "There were people who votseeing a number of uncollected ed AD... that vote was wasted voting documents," referring to the approximately 9,000 votes because the Labour Party got not collected by vesterday. three candidates and the PN got "I know that political parties only two!" are in a situation where we can't Gonzi warned people that there could be a situation whereprecisely tell what the situation is because of the margin of erby if no party got the "50% plus ror. Every vote is precious. Yes, one", the party with the most I'm worried even hearing cerseats in parliament would govtain talk," continued Gonzi. ern. The PN leader stressed that The PN leader insisted that if there could be exactly this same people wanted a party to govscenario, if people abstained or ern, then the PN needs to win voted AD.

news

FONZ ESIS

TOMOLAGE

Mistra case

o investigate

permit for an open-air nightclub on ODZ agricultural land owned by PN candidate Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando in Mistra.

Gonzi confirmed this yesterday morning while addressing media in a press conference at the Valletta Waterfront.

On Saturday, Labour leader Alfred Sant revealed that a piece of land in a Special Area of Conservation in Mistra belonging to De Rohan Antiques Ltd - a company 100% owned by Dr Pullicino Orlando, will be turned into a discotheque.

Answering a ONE journalist's question Gonzi stated: "this morning I wrote to the MEPA's auditor and I asked him to investigate. That's what I did. That means, I asked the auditor, who is responsible for seeing to it that things in MEPA are done correctly. This is the same person who at times carried investiga-

initiative. That's what I did this morning, for your information!" the Prime Minister replied with force.

Lawrence Gonzi however avoided all subsequent questions on this issue.

The PN's press conference, themed "More work and better work", was geared towards the importance of Saturday's elections

"A vote for PN will mean more work," said Gonzi. "When we wake up next Monday we will be asking 'is my job still secured'? Our kids at university – will they be able to find work?"

Lawrence Gonzi repeated his track record mantra saying that 20,000 new jobs were created under his premiership.

Gonzi constantly warned NET TV viewers stating that: "If I were you I would get the shivers (kieku jaqbadni l-bard)," refertions out of his own accord. This | ring to the possibility of having | time he will be doing this on my Alfred Sant as Prime Minister. | party who already declared how | a full time employment."

Sant's low points throughout: "He froze the EU application, still insists that partnership won, and this clearly shows that Alfred Sant is a Eurosceptic," Gonzi said.

Lawrence Gonzi described Sant as the man who, even in Opposition, damaged the country. "Sant was against the introduction of low cost airlines. Now that we attained record figures in tourism, the tourism subject simply vanished from Sant's radar," claimed Gonzi.

Warning pensioners, Lawrence Gonzi said that he really hopes that on 8 March pensioners won't forget that Sant's suggestion to devaluate the lira would have meant Lm90 in their pockets instead of Lm100. Same warning went to the factory workers.

Lawrence Gonzi insisted that

The PN leader emphasised | if in government will spend €855 million.

> "For me it's a mystery how the MLP will use these funds if in power."

PN leader pledged that if reelected he will see that the Malta Shipyards attain good results and that the quay in Senglea will be developed into a berthing place for cruise liners.

In reply to a question by MaltaToday, Gonzi acknowledged that thousands of families are shouldering a lot of problems since their only income comes from a part time job since they could not find a full time work.

"Yes, there are such cases. I believe you're right. There are people who only have a part time job because they weren't able to find a full time. There are many reasons which I won't delve into now. We have to see how someone who wanted a full time and the electorate needs to vote that | only found a part time, will find

Gonzi warns against abstention, cross-party voting

by a large majority.

Lawrence Gonzi described the the "biggest irony and the big-

Last night's discussion also | income," Gonzi reiterated. took a unexpected twist. Asked MEP election four years ago as | by presenter Pierre Portelli why the electorate should choose Gonzi over Sant, the Prime Minister answered: "because I've got George Bonello Dupuis next to me."

> A few minutes later, the former finance minister took the floor and highlighted that when he introduced tax cuts, government's revenue shot up.

Lawrence Gonzi pledged that under a new administration he will follow in the footsteps | the environment, schools emof John Dalli and Dupuis. "We will reduce tax bands and in a maximum period of two years, we will be able to recoup back spend!" Gonzi added.

The PN leader insisted that under his administration, health | could have done better, and services will always remain free | could have been more sensiof charge. "I will say this again. And I will use the same jargon normally used by lawyers: 'I've got proof'. In four years I did not introduce any tax!" Gonzi said to great applause.

The Prime Minister said that Malta has already benefited from €150 million in grants from the EU, stating that these funds have been invested in bellishments and training for workers.

"We still have €855 million to

Gonzi also admitted that his party could have done more tive."

Fully knowing that he was holding a discussion in a sensitive area for Nationalists, Lawrence Gonzi said that "we appreciate complaints filed by Swieqi people," referring to widespread discontent in the locality because of overdevelopment.

Nationalist leader reminded the crowd that his government introduced new building regulations, in order to cater for building irregularities which most of the time create distress to residents.

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Jeffrey's antics prompt Sant's walk-out

From dentist to part-time farmer to part-time journalist, Pullicino Orlando turns up to disrupt Alfred Sant's press conference. KURT SANSONE recounts first-hand



Pullicino Orlando challenges, and Saliba looks on with a smiling Sant in the background. Then the MP produces his temporary press card issued by the DOI



IT was supposed to be one of those mundane press conferquiz, within strict time limits, Labour leader Alfred Sant.

But all hell broke loose minutes before the recording started at 12.30pm yesterday.

The press conference was aborted before it even started after Nationalist MP Jeffrev Pullicino Orlando turned up instead of media.link journalist Amanda Ciappara with a press card in hand to take his place among the six journalists.

It was a surreal scene as dentist Pullicino Orlando, who also claims to be a part-time farmer, was now posing as a part-time journalist by virtue of a hurriedly issued press card that expires next Thursday.

At 12.30pm the six journalists, including Pullicino Orlando and myself were seated ences organised by the Broad- | waiting for Sant to make an | casting Authority in which appearance. The BA was only journalists were expected to informed 10 minutes before the scheduled start time of Ciappara's absence and that media. link were to send somebody else in her stead.

After 20 minutes sitting silently at our tables, Sant, accompanied by his entourage, PN secretary-general Joe Saliba and BA Chairman Scicluna entered the studio. Sant was greeted by the press conference chairperson Anna Bonanno. He then turned to us journal-

ists for the customary shaking of hands but stopped short after getting a glimpse of Pullicino Orlando. Sant immediately turned towards the BA Chairman and asked him what was Pullicino Orlando doing with

the journalists. It was here that Pullicino Orlando flipped.

Without allowing the BA chairman space to explain the Authority's ruling on the matter, Pullicino Orlando went into you!" overdrive hurling one question after another towards Sant.

"Why are you afraid of me Dr Sant? "I have nothing to hide Dr

Sant. Answer me," Pullicino Orlando shouted. With a forceful "stay there", Saliba cautioned Pullicino Orlando not to move from his place while at the same time defending his presence there.

Sant ignored Pullicino Orlando's tirade, standing silently next to what should have been his desk for the next hour or

Pullicino Orlando continued his lament, protesting his in- ed.

given the chance to confront Sant face to face.

"Why did you escape me Dr Sant? Why don't you want to give me this limited opportunity to ask you two simple 30 second questions? Shame on

Saliba who was constantly watching Pullicino Orlando's moves again ordered him to "sit down.'

"These are theatrics," Sant was heard saying.

With the BA Chairman still trying to explain the Authority's ruling, Pullicino Orlando continued shouting.

"Look at me Dr Sant. Are you scared of me? Look at me in the eve.'

Again Sant let slip a comment, this time directed towards the visibly agitated MP.

"You don't have eyes to look at," the Labour leader respond-

managed to get two minutes of attention. Talking to Pullicino Orlando he said: "I already explained to you that the BA was only informed verbally 10 minutes before the press conference that the media.link journalist was not coming. I told you also that it is not BA practice for journalists to be candidates so as not to give any undue advantage to any one candidate," Scicluna insisted with the dentist. cum part-time farmer and parttime journalist.

But Pullicino Orlando would not be silenced. "You even want to take away my right to defend myself? You are scared of this man now that he is in Opposition what will he do when in government? This is what will happen if he is Prime Minis-

The Labour officials were getting edgy and demanded the BA Chairman take action nocence and demanding he be | Finally, the BA Chairman | to enforce his ruling. "Bring

the police to remove him from there," Sant suggested. It was the word Pullicino Orthe police. I am not scared. I was attacked by the police at the age of 16 when you made me become a Nationalist. I won't leave. The police will have to make me leave. What will happen to the Maltese people if you become prime minister, Dr Sant? Shame on you Dr Sant. Look at me Dr Sant. Why don't you want to look at me?"

The atmosphere was tense with journalists and camerapersons from the two political stations relishing every moment of the comedy that would make it to the newsreels for the next four days. Pullicino Orlando refused to

lando was waiting for. "Bring press card for everybody to expected you to be different Ja- sisted. see.

> Saliba butted in again. With clenched teeth and a stern voice he admonished Pullicino Orlando: "Enough. Enough Jeff. Shut up."

The BA officials asked the party officials and outside iournalists who were not part of the press conference to leave the studio. In the background Pullicino Orlando kept heckling a silent Sant.

MLP secretary-general Jason Micallef asked the Nationalist MP to stop his theatrics. "Now start crying. Stop ridiculing yourself Jeffrey," Micallef in-

answer a simple question about | Earlier on, he had told journal-

son. Shame on you." Saliba again jumped to the rescue. "Jeff, don't let him provoke you. Don't say another word," he insisted with the agitated MP.

The BA chairman then asked Pullicino Orlando to leave the studio according to the ruling given.

"I will not leave my place. Bring the police if you want but I will not leave my place not even if my party officials order me to do so," Pullicino Orlando answered back.

The Labour entourage walked out of the studio. But the Zebsisted with a snigger on his face. | bug dentist's verbal theatrics

did not stop

"This is the new beginning. when his press card was issued | ists that this was a "fascist way" | It sounds more like back to the by the Department of Informa- | of stopping a press conference. | future. Coward. Dr Sant is a | tion. He just brandished the Pullicino Orlando replied: "I coward," Pullicino Orlando in- full blessing of the party.

The studio had now been cleared. A dumbstruck Kevin Aquilina (the BA Chief Executive) then came back to the studio and announced that the press conference had been cancelled because Alfred Sant had left the building.

The journalist from azzjoninazzjonali.org.mt thought it was a clever ploy to get Pullicino Orlando out of the studio so that Sant could be whisked back into the building.

But it wasn't. The press conference was called off.

Outside of the building Saliba gave an impromptu press conference while Pullicino Or-

lando was still inside. Saliba derided Sant's tactic to avoid Pullicino Orlando at all costs insisting that the MP attended the press conference with the

Asked by myself why he kept on insisting with Pullicino Orlando to "shut up", Saliba said that the Zebbug candidate had said what he had to say and that sufficed.

On walking out of the PBS building to a waiting car, Pullicino Orlando refused to answer iournalist's questions as to whether he was a journalist and when was the press card issued. He kept mum, brandishing the press card from behind the car's closed window.

And that was it. A boring election turned into a potentially explosive tinder keg.

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Sant promises good governance, satisfied with Labour MPs' tax issue

MATTHEW VELLA

OPPOSITION leader Alfred frey Pullicino Orlando, Sant Sant yesterday reiterated his expressed scepticism of Gonzi's party's pledge to boost economic growth to higher levels and assure good governance and he usually does with a person transparency.

Responding to public allegations made by Nationalist MP | tionalist ministers. Until some for several years, Dr Sant said resulted that the company men- of power would not be vitiated enue Department.

Both Labour MPs have filed a libel suit over the allegations. Speaking of the Mistra case

involving Nationalist MP Jeftreatment of the matter. "Gonzi is doing the same thing

being projected as part of the new generation of potential Na-Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando last time ago, Gonzi used to say week, accusing the two MPs | that he would send cases of corof making false declarations of ruption to the Commissioner income from rented property of Police. I don't why he didn't send this case for investigation. he had seen all the documents If I was prime minister I would presented about this case and it ensure that any traces of abuse tioned paid all its dues to the | throughout the investigation. I satisfaction of the Inland Rev- am sure that enough manoeuvres have already taken place to Polidano, allegedly just 12 hours

hide any evidence in this case." rents never submitted in the accounts of Labour MPs' Karmenu Vella and Charles Mangion's company Mirca Properties to the financial authorities, Sant said he had already read all the documents related to the matter.

"I saw that everything was in that the Commissioner for Inland Revenue needs and he is satisfied with everything he seen," Sant said, with respect to the tax agreement reached by the two MPs in 2003 and 2004.

Sant was also asked if he found anything wrong about his deputy Michael Falzon lunching with construction magnate Charles

after Labour criticised a permit Asked about the undeclared issued by MEPA to Polidano. "Nothing wrong. I hope it was a good meal", Sant replied.

He defended his MPs from accusations of not having respected the Labour 'whistleblower' who was dubbed a "snake" by Sant for leaking information of a meeting between Labour MPs and building contractors close conformity with everything to the party, who together had travelled to Dubai.

"I don't know what the case would be in this matter," Sant said, saying there was no case of whistleblowing involved. "There is nothing here concerning a

whistleblower, or corruption or zero-tolerance to corruption." Sant again reminded that Lawrence Gonzi had not enacted a

Whistleblowers' Act.

that is going on, as an employee they have no protection whatsoever. And the way informants are prosecuted because there is no Whistleblower Act is proof of this. "Gonzi promised a new style

"We are in a position today that

whoever wants to give informa-

tion about something wrong

news

of leadership four years ago. The Whistleblower Act has now been left in abeyance for four years. We promise to introduce it straight away and to remove the fear of any whistleblower from being sacked if they give information."

He said that Labour would half the surcharge on utility bills from the first week in government and effectively control inflation.

Pullicino rebuts Sant's criticism of Kennedy Grove plans

ALFRED Sant was yesterday at Kennedy Grove, where he decried the state of the recreational park, saying the environment of entire parts of the area were neglected and deteriorating.

Sant said the PN had promised one thing after another on Kennedy Grove for the past 14 years. He said that in 1994 minister Francis Zammit Dimech had announced informal proposals for tourism and recreational facilities at Kennedy Grove, which included a water park. A year after, the Nationalist government announced a new pumping station at Kennedy Grove to resolve the drainage problems in the Qawra and Salina coast.

He said that in 2004 environment minister George Pullicino announced an afforestation project for Kennedy Grove which earmarked the expansion of the recreation area to a site four times larger.

He poured cold water over Lawrence Gonzi's inauguration yesterday of the Salina park, saying the area was a third of the Kennedy Grove area. "The other parts are full of mud and dirt and in other parts it is evident that the weeds have not been removed gurate half-finished projects in a long time. They are a detriment to families and children who come here to relax."

filled with rats in the night- said Sant's press conference time, and said dangerous poles yesterday was a poor attempt and torn wires from missing at belittling the results of the lighting made the place inade- administration in creating quate for children. Sant said it new recreational spaces for was a tactic of the PN to inau- the Maltese.



"just to win a few votes on the eve of a general election." Environment Minister

Sant said the place was also George Pullicino yesterday

"Although Sant showed his | said. appreciation towards the cre- The Salina park is in fact ration of the salt pans. ation of a new park, his press | a project which is split into conference was held in the three phases, with 11,000 part of Kennedy Grove where trees having already been ral marshland, where the govthe second phase of works for planted through the Tree4U the Salina park are being carried out, where 45,000 square The second phase involves private partners and NGOs to metres of afforestation were the restoration of Kennedy preserve the natural habitat, inaugurated by the Prime Grove, the creation of a new cultivate surrounding flora, Minister yesterday," Pullicino | play area for children and | and create a bird observatory.

campaign.

more afforestation and resto-

He said Sant had visited a low part of the surrounding, natuernment will be applying for a €700,000 EU project with

news





So you think it's safe to vote Labour.

Malta is doing extremely well, nearing full employment, with thousands of jobs being generated every year and billions of euros in foreign direct investment pouring in.

You're sitting comfortably, so you think it's safe to take a risk, take a gamble and vote Labour.

After all, how much damage can Sant really do once we're in the European Union?

A lot, actually. He still thinks Malta shouldn't have joined the European Union. He still plans to pick a fight with Europe at the first opportunity. He still plans to prove to the rest of us that he was right all along.

And then there's the economy. You're comfortable now because that's doing well. And the reason it's doing well is that there's a safe and stable government in place, with sound policies and a strong understanding of how business and investment really work.

Malta's economy is not on auto-pilot, which means that you can't change the person behind the wheel and expect things to keep going well in the same direction. Not when the only person you can put there instead has a long

track record of incompetence and worse. If the Labour Party had had the sense to choose a decent leader, things might have been different.

A couple of shocks to the system are all it takes to send the country spinning into recession. We know that through long experience under Labour, but we know it especially through direct experience of Alfred Sant as prime minister. That was the last time Malta went into recession. Expect it to happen again.

So fine, you want a change. But is recession, rising unemployment, quarrels with the European Union and large dents in your income the change that you need, the change that you have in mind?

For those of us who like to gamble and take risks, there are much safer ways to do it than to stake all on our livelihood, our children and the peace, prosperity and stability of this country.

Choosing the government is not a game of dice. And teaching the government a lesson is an exercise in futility if the first people to suffer when things go badly wrong are you and your family.

Think about it. Better safe than sorry.



news

MATTHEW VELLA

LABOUR deputy leader Michael Falzon yesterday emphasised that his relationship with construction magnate Charles Polidano 'ic-Caqnu' was "a purely professional relationship" connected to his lawyer's role with Bank of Valletta. He was asked by MaltaToday to comment over a question put to Labour leader Alfred Sant earlier yesterday morning, when a member of the press put it to

RAPHAEL VASSALLO

gion and Karmenu Vella yesterday divulged more details of their joint agreement with the Inland Revenue Department, currently the subject of libel proceedings after the Nationalist party accused the MLP candidates of failure to declare their income for eight years. Asked to explain the precise "circumstances" of their company Mirca Properties Limited, referred to in the joint statement released on Sunday, Karmenu Vella told MaltaToday that the company Mirca Properties Ltd was formed in order to demolish and rebuild two properties,





'Purely professional', Falzon's claims of relationship with Caqnu

Sant that Falzon was dining with Polidano at his Meridien Hotel, after news broke of the DCC board's resignation on a permit it awarded for Polidano's Lidl supermarket in Safi, late last week. Sant replied: "If they were eating together, I hope it was a good meal, but it doesn't have any relation to zero-tolerance on corruption. Can't anyone have an informal meal with someone?" Contacted by MaltaToday, Fal-

zon described the episode as "an activity that was not political"

people" at the time in question. "There were other political activities going on, namely hosted by Francis Zammit Dimech and John Dalli," Falzon said.

Asked whether these 180 people were diners at the restaurant, Falzon reiterated that the activity in question was "not politi-

Warning that he would institute libel proceedings if he was not reported factually, Falzon also denied claims that Polidano had financed his political and that "there were 180 other | campaign. "That is absolutely

untrue," Falzon said "I am employed at Bank of Val-

letta as a lawyer, and my relationship with Mr Polidano is purely professionally. Mr Polidano is one of the biggest clients at the bank, and I speak to some 50 contractors every day, because I handle all the contractors at the bank," Falzon said.

"I was certainly not meeting some criminal beneath the St Julian's tunnel over an amnesty," Falzon said, with reference to past allegations of former prime minister Eddie Fenech meeting

with Joseph Fenech 'il-Hafi', a suspect turned state's evidence in the attempted murder of Fenech Adami's assistant Richard Cachia Caruana.

Falzon then said it was shameful to make political capital out of his professional role. "I am bound by professional secrecy and it is shameful that political capital is made out of what is a purely professional relationship. This was a non-political activity."

mvella@mediatoday.com.mt

'We were in discussions with Inland Revenue since 1995' Vella and Mangion

LABOUR MPs Charles Man-



and went into dissolution immediately afterwards.



Karmenu Vella

"There were three things that were going on back then. The

company was in dissolution, so its assets were being divided between the shareholders. There was a bank loan which we were in the process of transferring from the company to our own names. And the rents were also being transferred to our names," Vella said. On his part, Mangion supplied

a similar but more detailed reply via email.

"In 1995/96 myself and Karmenu Vella assumed all the bank debts that the company had. At the same time we also informally partitioned the property, this meaning that matters with regard to the revenue generated and eventual income tax implications had to be clarified

"As a result of this, our accountant suggested that we should seek clarification with the Inland Revenue and the Inland Revenue was knowledgeable of all the circumstances. In 2002 the issue was resolved and consequently all the income accrued was incorporated in the audited accounts for the years 2003 and 2004 as advised. In 2006 the Inland Revenue issued the relative tax statement accepting our submissions."

Both Mangion and Vella insist that they were never under investigation by the Tax Compliance Unit during this time and rightly so as the Inland Revenue was being kept informed and therefore aware of all the circumstances.

Electoral snapshots by Gilbert Calleja



An animated Lawrence Gonzi at a press conference in Valletta yesterday



Alfred Sant - Mistra



news



THE tempo reached in this election try can well do without, as such tactics whether he was lying on the matter. campaign - arising from scaremongeronly ignite passions, leaving us none the ing campaigns, mudslinging, accusawiser regarding the political substance tions of corruption, the filing of libel of the debate. suits and much unnecessary eyeball-to-Likewise, such political attacks are eyeball confrontation – is unacceptable found in the libel cases filed by the Caband risks turning violent unless the two inet and the retaliatory poster "Sant is party leaders take stock of the situation trouble [inkwiet]" - also a debasing of bid him to participate in the debate as parties, informing people of their priand take corrective action immediately. the persona of the Opposition leader. This newspaper, as well as the party Sant's attack on Jeffrey Pullicino Orleaders themselves, had expressed the lando's action in renting out a plot of the Opposition leader, his reaction has a mudslinging game aimed exclusively hope for a sober and an informative land to third parties who applied for been over the top and while to him it at tarnishing reputations that can nevcampaign, creating a calm environment a MEPA permit has been vicious – al- means increasing his personal stand- er be cleared a few days away from an for people to freely exercise their demo- though one is resigned to accept this ing among core constituency support- election, with persons accused of corcratic right to elect a government. And as the new reality of political election- ers, risks damaging his party. We do not ruption having to defend themselves in yet, in the past days the negative cam- eering, something not absent on either paign has reached new lows, and now side. risks spilling over into unruly behav- Pullicino Orlando has certainly ruined a politician not a journalist. iour, endangering law and order. The his own green credentials, and he cerparty leaders must act now. tainly committed an error of judgment in not having immediately objected to There have been a number of billboards which in our opinion have the application made. helped to raise tension with their offensive language. The Labour Party advert ruption comes without any substantitarnishing all members of the Cabinet ated evidence of the very act of cor-- barring an excluded Michael Frendo ruption, Pullicino Orlando's belated impede their leaders from being asked - as "corrupt", casting a wide net over decision to recommend that the appli- a question by creating security fencing. Cabinet members where the heart of the cation be withdrawn raises questions After all the quizzing of politicians is sations of corruption on an individual matter is bad administration, political too, given the publication of a consent the norm in a democracy. The party me- must not be accepted as fair game even incompetence, and improper conduct – form bearing the signature of his archi- dia must lower the tempo of their media is questionable. This is the Americani- tect and his name for the MEPA permit which have simply become 24/7 propazation of local politics, which our coun- on his land. It now raises the question of ganda machines with political commen- escalates further.



backstage after delivering a heartfelt speech to hunters in Rahat



mass meetings

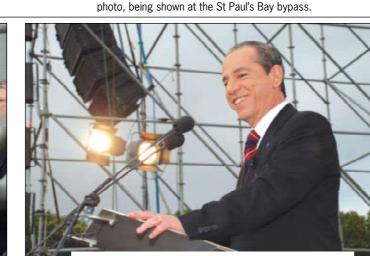


Fiery - AN's leader Josie Muscat scowls as he makes his



last Sunday in Rabat

Not exactly a 'mass meeting' - Azzjoni Nazzjonali in Valletta



Alternattiva Demokratika has highlighted various irregularities

in the planning process in its press conferences, in this

At ease - Gonzi is always at his best during mass meetings, like this one at the Granaries in Floriana



Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando makes his appearance in Mistra after a press conference held by Alfred Sant on the subject of a planning application for a disco on his land



AN party president Charles Attard at the hunters' meeting

editorial

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 Tel: (356) 21 382741-3, 21 382745-6 • Fax: (356) 21 385075 • Website: www.maltatoday.com.mt • E-mail: maltatoday@mediatoday.com.mt

Lower the tempo

And his decision to disrupt yesterday's press conference with the blessing of his party, is not politically correct, offensive to the other journalists and an abusive presence, since as a candidate the Broadcasting Authority's rules fora journalist. While recognising his umbrage at being accused of corruption by for the future of our society, rather than question his liberty to chase and con- the court of public opinion rather than front, but he must remember that he is a court of law.

fore this campaign. Party journalists centre-stage, rather than the accusa-While the generic accusation of cor- monitor media workers from either side of the divide or the independent press, while the party's security should not

tary replacing the news, blatant biased reporting and slanted journalism with little regard to the journalistic tenet of exposing the truth.

We augur yet again, even at the eleventh hour, that the debate focuses on the electoral programmes of the respective orities, targets, programmes and vision

This level of decency in this election The party leaders should have set campaign risks being debased further guidelines on corrective behaviour be- unless the political programmes take should focus on their roles, and not tions of corruption which, in the absence of proof can be nothing but an attempt to simply tarnish reputations for political advantage. Behaviour which is not politically correct should be made known and public, but the vague accuin the ruthless political world.

Lower the tempo before the situation

Charles Attard

A brave new economy

e do not want taxa-tion to work against our economy. This is what has happened in Malta for the past five years, if not more. The government has failed to generate revenue from tourism; has renounced its rights of servitude over the gas pipe-line currently passing through our geographical domain, referred to as "the continental shelf"; has renounced millions of Euros over inter vivos revenue on the Tigné & Manoel Island project; and has failed to make the most of what Europe is giving in terms of financial incentives. The government has chosen to raise its income from taxes.

Most taxes were given an objective but all monies were put into one kitty and nobody knows what purpose is our taxation serving. The eco-tax, well favoured by Architect Carmel Cacopardo, MEPA official then, and endorsed by the Greens' Dr Harry Vassallo in a book written by Carmel Cacopardo, is generating revenue: but where is this money being spent?

There is no direct indication in Malta's financial statements, which we call "il-budget". The increase in VAT from 15% to 18% was intended to balance the extra costs being incurred on health services: there is no such direct indication as to where is 3% extra VAT went! The water and electricity surcharge, together with VAT imposed on it: where is this money being allocated? In accounting terms we call these exercises as "cost centres" and our experts in the ministry of finance simply choose to refrain from giving out such statistical information; I know they do have the means to do

it, but they simply don't report! The government continued to bank on taxation revenue and when the estimated revenue from taxation seemed to fail, the government squeezed the businessmen and the self employed persons over ex officio investigations dating between four to eight years backwards. This also didn't work out, so our "socialist" government forced our businessmen and self employed, once again, to forecast their three year profits (dictated by the tax Compliance Unit) on an irrevocable contract: what a way of budgeting! And this was not enough to make Malta's financial position look good in the eyes of EU and accept us as their brothers. So the government needed to

come up with another financial asset to balance Malta's liabilities, and this is where a brilliant idea came: a VAT assessment of circa €8 million was imposed on a government parastatal public company so that a debtor will be raised on the balance sheet. Soon after Malta's accession to EU, this public company had appealed and won the case; but they forgot one thing: our fellow businessmen and self-employed wait for about three years to have their appeal heard while



Azzjoni Nazzjonali believes that the failure of PN and also MLP is due to the heavy financial squeeze on entrepreneurs this public company got silver service!

This is definitely not the way Azzjoni Nazzonali proposes to create an effective economy. Our intention is to reduce gradually taxation to 18%, personal and corporate. The only difference between personal tax and corporate tax will be the personal rebates currently amounting to €10,000, which we will augment to €15,000. Such a method of taxation rules out any need to cut taxation on overtime and all other frills offered by political parties, all in a choir of political auctioneers. Parents who sacrifice their career and stay at home raising their children will be allowed a tax rebate amounting to the minimum wage, which tax rebate can be waived onto their husband or wife (as the case may be) in order to allow a wider rebate to the family.

Azzjoni Nazzjonali always offers incentives to the hard worker, employed and employer. No one will continue to be enticed to under-declare wages and the government will reap more. With this brave move, foreign investors will definitely come to Malta, bringing prosperity with them, and prosperity does not only means wealth but it induces jobs, investments, better wages, a good standard of living and a better platform for the Maltese government. This proposal definitely goes against what Alternattiva Demokratika said when they wanted to make heavier taxes on banks and corporations; which taxes reflect themselves in the cost of service provided such as loan interests and related fees.

We did not forget the property owners who refrain to rent out their property because they do not wish to pay 35% on their revenue. Azzjoni Nazzjonali proposes rent revenue to be taxed at 18% (after the maintenance allowance of 20%); and rental revenue from properties built before 1959 shall be taxed at 5%, also after the maintenance allowance of 20%.

Azzjoni Nazzjonali believes that the failure of PN and also MLP (in its 22 months in power) is due to the heavy financial squeeze on entrepreneurs. Our entrepreneurs are the economy motors because they invest and they offer employment. All machines need adequate environment, fuel and air to perform. Let us give this environment, fuel and air to our entrepreneurs and our countrymen will flourish with them.

Dr Charles Attard is president of Azzjoni Nazzjonali ancharles@waldonet.net.mt



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Prosperity and peace of mind. Or chaos and uncertainty?

It's a tough choice when you're listening to the siren call of change.

So we'll lay out some of the facts and let you decide.

This is what Prime Minister Sant did.

- » He froze our application to join Europe
- » He pushed the deficit to 10% of GDP
- » He sent unemployment soaring up
- » He introduced 33 new taxes while bringing about chaos trying to replace VAT
- » His finance minister resigned in protest
- » He sent out the highest water and electricity bills that this country has ever known, even though oil then cost just 12% of what it does today
- » He removed students' stipends

As leader of the opposition, he fought against Malta entering Europe, claimed that he won the referendum while at the same time saying that the result didn't count, protested against the introduction of the euro, and quarrelled with the liberalisation of telecommunications. He didn't even want low-cost airlines.

This is what Prime Minister Gonzi did.

- » He made a success of Malta's EU membership
- » He took Malta into the Eurozone
- » He ensured that Malta received
- €1 Billion for the years 2004–2013
- Malta's economic growth is at 4%
 The deficit is down to 1.6%
- Billions of euros in foreign direct investment have helped generate
- 20,000 jobs over the past 4 years
- » 170,000 people are working the highest number ever

Sound policies have given Malta peace of mind and serenity, prosperity and good prospects. But these good prospects depend on a decent and stable administration that puts no nasty shocks into the system. Let's keep the momentum going.

You can't put a price on peace of mind.



opinion

Edward Fenech

More savings, the green way

T am not surprised that when people are asked what their most urgent concern is, almost one third answer "the cost of living". The middle classes, in par-



OP

The role of government is to ensure that we have a well functioning, highly competitive market in every sector ticular, feel that they are on a perpetual "catching up game", trying to make ends meet. The cost of housing, healthcare and transport have spiralled upwards in the last 10 years, and recently even the increasing cost of food has started to impact the purchasing power of families. Apart from increasing prices, people are also feeling impoverished because of the need to ensure that their children are equipped with the latest and best goods and services to further their education and therefore better their career prospects. The cost of private lessons is perhaps the best (or worst) case in point. It is the job of the political class to make proposals on how do deal with the "cost of living". This requires a strong dose of realism. We live in a liberalised market - the imposition of "across-the-board" price controls is not an option Even if it were, this would only stifle competition and lead to further increase in prices. Both the Nationalist Party and Labour sometimes try and give the impression that they are in a position to control

prices. They are not. The role of government is to ensure that we have a well functioning, highly competitive market in every sector – this is the most efficient and effective way of keeping prices down. What is Alternattiva

Demokratika suggesting? In our electoral manifesto for a coalition we have pledged to work within the next government to establish a consumer association. This body will work not only to keep a careful eye on price abuse, but also to report and take appropriate action on any form of consumer abuse, whether it is product defects, bad customer services or faulty guarantees. Germany operates a world class consumer association that protects the rights of consumers. We are further proposing that this consumer association is to be funded by government, but operated independently of government. We are proposing this because we feel that this consumer association must in no way be influenced by government; nor should it be seen to be influenced by government. The Greens also believe that in order to improve people's purchasing power more structural reforms need to be implemented. The current situation in the banking market for example, is in effect a duopoly. This does not guarantee that consumers have adequate choice. Although the situation seems to be improving with the addition of new banks, it will be a long while before there is real competition in this sector.

The most neglected political issue by all our political adversaries in this election is that of transport and mobility. The cost of getting around in a country the size of ours is hideously expensive. This is because in Malta we are highly dependent upon private transport. Every private vehicle costs you €14 (Lm6) per day. That's a heck of a lot of money. We must have a radical reform in transport, starting with the liberalisation of public buses and taxis, so that the service reaches European standards within a few years. We must encourage public transport use by expanding routes and improving service. Then families would have a choice

Every private vehicle costs you €14 (Lm6) per day. That's a heck of a lot of money

whether to own two cars or not. It is a choice the Greens which to provide in the coalition government. Families able to manage with one car can save as much €5,000 per year. Our political adversaries can continue selling you pipedream savings of a few euro cent per day.

Edward Fenech is finance and economy spokesperson for Alternattiva Demokratika

Roderick Galdes

Land use in our plan for a new beginning

he State of the Envi-ronment Report 2005 stipulates that in the 14 years between 1990 and 2004, the developed portion of Malta's 1km coastal buffer area grew by approximately 5%. The same report refers to MEPA statistics which then indicated that "21% of the



We are aware that a very significant portion of the public has lost faith in MEPA's integrity

coastline no longer retains its natural form".

April 2007 saw the publication of an important follow-up to this report, the State of the Environment Indicators 2006. The latter report states that "between 2004 and 2005, the developed portion of Malta's 1km coastal zone grew by 1%", implying that Malta's ecologically sensitive coastal areas are being subjected to further unwarranted pressure. I shall not mince my words – government's efforts, if any, to implement better coastal zone management policies, or perhaps | Sant' Antnin may represent | the credibility it deserves not to curb on illegal developments across these areas, are but the outright transforproving totally ineffective.

Labour is concerned about the country's prevailing land use trends. We are aware that a | as worrying. As if the PN stalvery significant portion of the public has lost faith in MEPA's integrity when it comes to land management and related issues. My experience during home-visits is that John Citizen is unwilling to put up edness, irresponsibility and with the usual inexplicable environmental laissez-faire. permit-granting en masse a

candidates go through simi- | of the authority's handling of lar experiences, irrespective | land matters with the utmost of which party they represent. The situation is quite simple; it's a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

The PN comfortably accuses previous Labour governments of land maladministration George-of-this-conwhen crete-jungle goes on record as the minister with the longest list of controversial development issues in Maltese history: Fort Cambridge, Xaghra | Malta's EIA Regulations are l-Hamra, Qui-si-sana, Ramla | applied in accordance with EU | l-Hamra, and the notorious | law thus giving the process the most obvious examples, least in full respect of well-demation of localities such as Sliema and Marsascala into massive building sites is just warts ever bothered about the pleas of so many residents in these areas! I need more space and time to delve into the land rationalisation mess, a clearcut example of PN hard-head-

Labour has its plans. As a first most (if not all!) of the other the public, not just in terms next Labour Government!

transparency and accountability, but also by projecting MEPA as an institution that can be trusted. We have placed land conservation as one of our top priorities, taking into consideration both sustainability issues and the need for healthier and safer urban environments. A new Labour Government shall consolidate the EIA process, ensuring that fined public consultation legal provisions.

Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) shall serve its purpose as a vital tool for the implementation of sustainable land management plans and programmes once Labour is in office. We also intend to prioritize this, given the current status of agricultural land across the entire span of our islands. Forget Gonzipn – there won't be any week or two before some elec- crucial step we want MEPA senseless tampering with the toral contest. I am sure that | to regain its standing with | ODZ boundaries under the



But above all a Labour government will be a good listener and a faithful public servant, working hard to bring forward all the talents into our fold, and embracing the goodwill of all the environmental NGOs to guarantee a better Malta for us all. It's what the "Pjan Ghal Bidu Gdid" is all about!

Roderick Galdes is Labour spokesperson for the environment

One News:

Health & Credibility WARNING Vote Gonzi, get more lies and pay for health care.

Another damning document! Shortly after Gonzi's cabinet discussed fees for health care services, his government informed the EU that:

"The Maltese government has proposed the establishment of a national health fund to finance the public health sector. This fund could be [...] financed in part from social security health contributions. Other potential sources of income for the national health fund include hypothecated taxes, government grants and miscellaneous fees."

Preliminary National Report on Health Care and Long Term Care, Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care, April 2005

Can you exclude that you have or ever had plans to introduce fees for health care?

Lawrence Gonzi: Yes, I exclude it completely.

One News, 11 February 2008

Labour. The only way.

37

13

Stompers assert authority in well-matched encounter

MIKE TURNER

CISK LAGER LEAGUE

Stompers TGIFriday **Globalair Overseas**

STOMPERS started with a bang and were straight into a series of hard running and driving attacks. However, Overseas defence held out well and when a fine kick by Duffy cleared the line to launch their own attacking series, which ended with Sparling grabbing the lead for Overseas with a penalty. The match swung back and forth, Overseas full back Bocanicci leaving the field with injury, and a good position for Stompers being wasted by a bad kick by Morten.

Suddenly big Cerketa, who is learning to play to his weight, burst away and offloaded to the equally strong Ellul to crash through for a try to give Stompers the lead. Morten then made up for his previous error to make a superb dummy, break and 75 metre run for a sweet try. Over-

seas hit back with a West try and Cornthwaite scored another to put Stompers ahead at 15-8 at half time.

Stompers pushed on with a Debattista try after finely timed passing which inspired Overseas into territorial advantage from which the ball was spun out to Azzopardi for a try to keep them in the game, but from here on Stompers began to turn the screw and dominate. Cassar, Overseas, and Diamantino (Stompers) were both yellow carded after a silly tussle. Further tries were scored for Stompers by Fountain, Morten and Zammit, one was converted by Reljic, who was then also yellow carded.

Stompers veteran Diamantino was Man of the Match for his constant hard work and guidance.

Kavallieri York Cisk Excel 63 Alligators Cisk Lager 27

The improvement of Alligators continues and this match was no pushover until the last quarter. Kavallieri burst into action and Attard scored a good try almost immediately, but the new "Gators

Casa Antonia - Balzan

CITIZEN RESPITE CARE

hit straight back with a fine try by Acheson who converted it to take the lead. Back came Vella, a welcome return after injury, with a Kavallieri try, converted by Attard, to which he added a penalty. Then new 'Gator Cape scored a brilliant try with an evasive solo run from half way, only to hurt his arm as he scored and leave the field. Acheson converted this too and added two penalties to regain the lead for 'Gators.

Grima scored two tries, one converted by Attard to give Kavallieri a half time lead of 27-20.

Kavallieri opened the second half with a slice of luck when Camilleri was awarded a try after touching the corner flag, only for the Gators' Acheson to intercept and run in some 60 metres under the posts. Converted by Farrugia. Grixti was yellow carded for a high tackle and this really sapped the stamina of his team. Beppe Sammut has developed a bad habit of taking quick penalties and running away from his own support which wasted much of 'Gators potential. Bob Bonavia at number 8 for Kavallieri began

a series of devastating runs off the back of the scrums with a fine burst, supported by Cutajar who flipped to Doublesin to score, converted by Attard. Borg came on for Kavallieri and his experience immediately shone as he won two balls off the head which launched B. Bonavia to set up tries by Doublesin and Grima, both converted by Attard. Bonavia scored a try himself as 'Gators tired and the young Schembri, up from the juniors scored his first try in his first match, converted by Attard. Alligators Acheson had to be awarded Man of the Match.

BEN BENNETT CUP WOMENS RUGBY

Panthers Huggins 0 Kavallieri York Cisk Excel 31 Although Panthers are improving and made determined efforts to use their strength and tackle properly, Kavallieri were never in danger of losing. Romina Vella scored two good tries and showed an eye for angled running, mini speedster Vicky Aquilina scored three tries and Esther Azzopardi converted three.

Shark Saddles walk over Panthers Huggins.

Panthers were unable to field a team after injuries in the first match.

Berlusconi: Adriano not Cassano

SILVIO Berlusconi has insisted that he would rather sign Adriano for his Milan side than equally troubled marksman Antonio Cassano.

Adriano's career is hanging by a thread as he has been threatened with the axe at Sao Paulo, where he is rebuilding his career on loan from Inter.

After a dismissal for a headbutt, skipping training and an altercation with a photographer, L'Imperatore's future is in doubt, but Berlusconi would happily see him in the Rossoneri side.

"Adriano is a great player with such physical ability," the media tycoon stressed.

'I'm sure that Milan would be the ideal environment for him | to ltaly? to return to being the Adriano that played for Parma. "I hope that this period in Brazil can put him back on the

right track, but I think it is unlikely that Inter would agree to sell him to us." Sampdoria striker Cassano's

temper is also ruining his career and the gifted hitman faces a long spell on the sidelines after throwing his shirt at the referee yesterday following a dismissal for dissent.

Unlike Adriano, it seems that Berlusconi wouldn't be willing to gamble on the Bari native. "What a shame to see a talentKavallieri York Cisk Excel 12 Sharks Saddles

sports

Kavallieri closed the gap on Sharks with the second win in succession, and must now feel they have a real chance to retain the championship, after yet another extremely close and tough match

A lucky bounce from the kickoff bamboozled Sharks into giving away a scrum on their own line, but they defended well and opened the score when Beverie Sultana broke away with a powerful run to score a try.

Kavallieri hit back with a superb break from kick-off by Esther Azzopardi to score under the posts. Again the kick off into space bounced badly for Sharks and Kavallieri attacked with gusto. Acquilina was bursting through when an illegal tackle by Gauci earned her a yellow card and gave Kavallieri a penalty try, converted by Azzopardi to give a half time lead of 12-5.

Sharks spent practically all the second half attacking furiously, but their handling was bad as their excitement overcame their control. Time and again overlaps were wasted in the desperation to score against the sturdy Kavallieri defence. A major part was played at scrum half where experienced Kavallieri Sara Vella was always too quick for Sharks newcomer Claire Casha.



new gear of Adriano on his return

the Diavolo chief said. "He has such potential, but he just doesn't have the ability to

behave like a normal person." Berlusconi concluded his interview by commenting on the rumour that Marcello Lippi will replace Carlo Ancelotti should Milan lose to Arsenal in tomorrow night's Champions League last 16 clash.

"Going out of the Champions League will not lead to Lippi being brought in," he maintained. "I have great respect for Lippi

and consider him to be a great Coach, but Ancelotti will stay."

sports

mours McLaren team boss and shareholder Ron Dennis will announce his departure from the team later this week. The 61-year-old Briton has taken this decision without any pressure from Mercedes or the rest of the team.

Ron Dennis joined the McLaren

Renault needs to rebuild confidence -Alonso

FERNANDO Alonso says Renault needs to rebuild its confidence after a difficult 2007 season, if it is to regain the kind of form that helped him and the team to two championships in 2005 and 2006. "Two years ago the team had

after two titles," Alonso said. "Now, every time something new is out on track, they feel like then need to keep their fingers crossed - that's the negative effect 2007 has had." "However, in 2004 we had

problems and the following year we won the championship," Alonso added. "I'm convinced we can do it again, the team knows how to do it.'

Pursuits



15

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D. Arrest (3)

7. Confer (7)

Deliberately ambiguous (9)

Reposes (5)

16. Figure out (5)

Yesterday's solution

Removes errors (8)

Provide with fresh air (9)

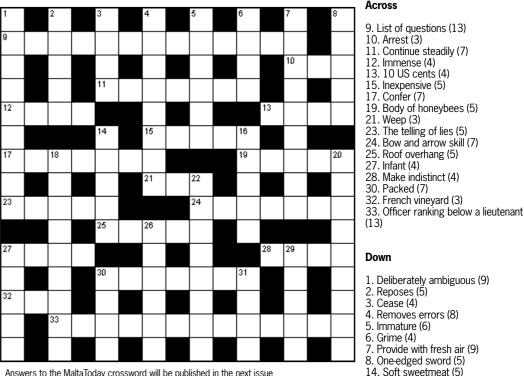
One-edged sword (5)

Cease (4)

Ron Dennis to announce exit this week? ACCORDING to the latest ru-Formula 1 team back in 1981 and | Formula 1. While leading his | Hakkinen to the top. It is expect- | nis starting in Melbourne. Ron ed that Martin Whitmarsh will | Dennis has decided he wants to made it one of the most suc- team he brought men like Ayrcessful teams in the history of ton Senna, Alain Prost and Mika take over duties from Ron Denspend more time with his family. Laptops for everyone **MSI** Intel Dual Core T2330 1.6Ghz AMD Dual Core TK55 1.8Ghz 2GB DDR 2 Memory 2GB DDR2 Memory Intel Graphics GMA ATI HD2400 128M DDR3 15.4" TFT Glare Type WXGA 15.4" TFT Glare Type WXGA 160GB SATA Hard Disk 160GB SATA Hard Disk Dual DVD Writer Supermulti Dual DVD Writer Supermulti 802.11b/g WiFi & Bluetooth WIFI 802.11 abg & Bluetooth MSI VR601 MSI EX610 MS Windows Vista Premium MS Windows Vista Premiun ¢620 €671 (Lm266.16) (Lm 288.06) Intel Core 2 Duo T5250 1.8Ghz Intel Core 2 Duo T5450 1.6Ghz 2GB DDR2 Memory 2GB DDR 2 Memory nVidia GeForce 8400 128MB nVidia GeForce 8400Go 512MB 15.4" TFT Glare Type WXGA 17" TFT Glare Type WXGA 160GB SATA Hard Disk 250GB SATA Hard Disk **Dual DVD Writer Supermulti** Dual DVD Writer SuperMulti WIFI, Bluetooth & Webcam WFI, Bluetooth & Webcam MSI EX600 MSI EX700 MS Windows Vista Premium MS Windows Vista Premium €689 €935 (Lm 295.78) (Lm 401.39) Fantastic Offers! Intel Core 2 Duo T7500 2.2Ghz Intel Core 2 Duo T7250 2.0Ghz more confidence in its ability 2GB DDR2 Ram + 1G Rohson 2GB DDR 2 Memory nVidia GF 8800 TC1280MB nVidia GF 8600 TC 1280MB The best MSI Notebook & PC Prices 15.4" ACV TFT WXGA 7" TFT Glare Type WSXGA4 Buy any PC or Notebook for € 0.99 per day 250GB SATA Hard Disk 320GB SATA Hard Disk Prices include 16% Government Subsidy Dual DVD Writer Supermult Dual DVD Writer Supermulti MSI GX700P MS Windows Vista Premium Blue Skies Internet scheme at €3 per month MSI GX600P MS Windows Vista Premium € 1,062 MSI Gaming Series (Lm 455.91) € 1,232 MSI Garring Series (Lm 528.89) All MSI Laptops: C 2138 5911 - 2137 6485 Sirap - Carry a 2 Yr Parts & Labour International Warranty info@sirap.com.mt Include a Free Mouse and Carry Case. www.sirap.com.mt - Can be purchased using a Student Smart Card Sirap Computers, Mensia Rd. -MONTHLY PAYMENT SCHEMES AVAILABLE BEST PRODUCTS, BEST PRICES, BEST SERVICE San Gwann

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extremely easy: Fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear once in each row, column and 9x9 box.



Answers to the MaltaToday crossword will be published in the next issue

Yesterday's solution		18. Small brush for cleaning fingernails
Chess ⁸ / ₇	Today's Weather	(5) 20. Office of a mayor (9) 22. Largest drum (4,4) 26. Fiddle (6) 27. Cured pig meat (5)
	WARNINGS	
		Partly cloudy becom- 31. Musical composition for two (4)
6 <u>発</u> 2 <u>主 2 </u> 企 主 <u>2</u> 企		ing rather cloudy in the afternoon
	VISIBILITY:	Good
4 宜 Ž 注 Yesterday's solution	WIND:	Light to moderate
3 White had play and mate in three moves		Southwest (force 3 to 4) becoming light $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 2 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 1 \\ 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 3 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 $
2 <u><u><u>A</u></u> 1. Kf6+ Re5 (Kxf4)</u>		Northwest (force 3) $\begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$
1 2. Rxe5+ Kxf4 3. Re4++		Slight to moderate $E = E = \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2}$
A B C D E F G H I. I. Kxf4 White to play and mate in three moves 2. Re4++	UV INDEX: 4	becoming light

All parties agree: Lino Farrugia out of line

DAVID DARMANIN

ALL four political parties concur that hunters' federation (FKNK) secretary Lino Farrugia stepped out of line in Gozo on Saturday, when he informed hunters that he would not encourage them | of democracy but nobody should to observe the law if the spring ever resort to violence," Muscat hunting season fails to open as | told MaltaToday. "Of course, usual towards the end of March. | there are certain instances when

Quizzed separately by MaltaToday, spokespersons for the four political parties distanced the army's remit." themselves to varying degrees from Farrugia's apparent suggestion of incitement to unlawful behaviour, made in front of a | said: "This is not a crowd of some 500 hunters and trappers in Victoria on Saturday.

"Whereas I usually encourage you not to break the law, this pains of those who time, if the spring hunting season will not be opened by whoever is hunting measures. in government after these elec- We have to undertions, I will not say anything," Farrugia told hunters. "And Dr | small country, that Gonzi: don't come crying to me | we're very densely popafterwards, if hunters do not respect the law ... "

With the exception of Azzjoni Nazzjonali, all parties have | lence does no good to anyone." publicly agreed that whoever is re-elected to power cannot do much with regard to prospective hunting bans imposed by the European Court of Justice.

Over the last weeks, the Azzjoni Nazzjonali (AN) leader has promoted itself as the only political party protecting the interests of the hunting lobby. Last

Today that hunting needs to be defended, even at the cost of EU membership.

But even Dr Josie Muscat stopped short of supporting the FKNK in its latest tactic. "That one fights for one's rights is part violence may be required, but that would be within

Asked whether he agrees with Farrugia's statements, Muscat question of agreement or disagreement. One has to understand the are affected by antistand that we are a ulated and that everyone has hobbies."

Again, he insisted that "vio-Muscat described Lino Farrugia as a very sensible individual and as one who would "never resort to unlawful measures." Referring to a writ-

month Josie Muscat told Malta- | ten agreement between Azzjoni Nazzjonli to FKNK, Muscat said "I am sure he would honour all we've agreed on."

"At the end of the day, whoever breaks the law is a criminal and I'm quite sure Lino Farrugia will not resort to such measures," Muscat confidently concluded. AD chairperson Harry Vas-

Tonio Borg were however less optimistic. According to both, Lino Farrugia has already broken the law. "Whoever encourages unlawful behaviour is breaking the law," they said, echoing each other almost to the letter even though contacted separately.

Borg, when, was asked whether he thinks that the commissioner should take action against Farrugia, he curtly replied: "Ask that question to the police."

On his part, Vassallo said: "It is in the Commissioner's interest and responsibility to take the necessary action in an adequate and timely way, considering the current circumstances," adding that he is quite sure that action against Farrugia is already being considered.

Less committal was the position of Labour Party spokesperson Gavin Gulia: "Everybody must take responsibility for his actions. Lino Farrugia decided to express himself in that manner and he must take responsibility for it," he said. Asked to elaborate further, he added: "I will have to see the exact context in which the statement has been

> Last week, Moviment Kacca-

> > Lino Farrugia

sallo and Deputy Prime Minister | turi Nassaba Ambjentalisti (MK-NA) representatives met Labour Party officials to discuss "the future of hunting and trapping, now that Malta is a full member of the EU," as a statement issued by MKNA revealed. Described by MKNA secretary general as "cordial", the meeting established that there is room for more talk on the matter in the future.

"MKNA, while it wishes success for the Labour Party for the 8 March elections, hopes that what has been discussed and agreed during this meeting is applied," the statement said. What exactly has been discussed and agreed, remains unclear.

Meanwhile, 13 prominent NGOs from environmental, social and cultural sectors addressed a letter to both the PM and the Opposition Leader to endorse a full implementation of the Birds Directive by outlawing spring hunting and trapping in 2008 and beyond.

"Malta's insistence on allowing spring hunting and trapping of turtle doves and quails has already become a European wide embarrassment for our country," the letter read. In the appeal, the NGOs asked the political leaders to "avoid further embarrassment for our country and ask you to endorse the full implementation of the

Birds Directive by outlawing spring hunting and trapping in 2008 and beyond."



Jeffrey spins hard beyond green limits

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