



EDDIE'S LEGACY

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MaltaToday Midweek looks back on over 30 years of the man who changed the face of Malta



TROUBLE AHEAD: Opposition leader Eddie Fenech Adami, wearing a bulletproof jacket under his cardigan, looks towards Zejtun before the notorious Tal-Barrani incident of 1986

Malta narrowly misses two extra national days

MALTA could have had seven national days instead of five, MaltaToday has learnt, had the historian commissioned by Cabinet to analyse the island's historical milestones carried out his original intention.

"I never knew they (the Cabinet) would choose all five days," Henry Frenco said about his report which listed five days to serve as potential national days, namely: Independence (21 September); Republic Day (13 December); Freedom Day (31 March); Victory Day (8 Sep-

tember) and the Sette Giugno (7 June).

Frenco had been asked by education minister Louis Galea to prepare a report that could help the Cabinet choose a national day.

In drawing up his historical analysis of the political development of the Maltese islands, Frenco came close to suggest two

other important dates in Malta's history: the Break with Britain resolution passed on 30 December 1957 by the Labour government after the unclear referendum result on integration;

and also the departure of the French forces, who surrendered to the British on 4 September 1800, and left for Marseilles soon after.

"I was asked to draw up this report and propose

what could be the national day, and I suggested five possibilities. I never imagined they were going to choose all five!" Frenco said.

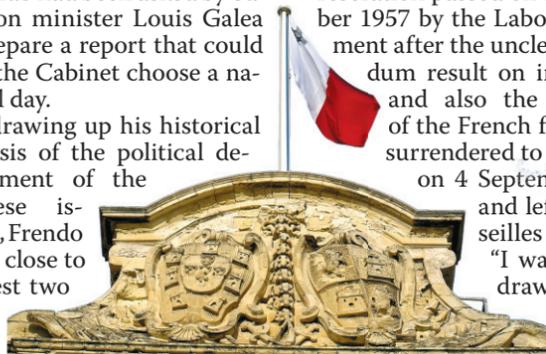
It was just as well that he didn't propose his other two days of historical note: two new public holidays would have been added to the growing list.

With the parties still at loggerheads over the importance to be given to Freedom Day, which commemorates the departure of the British forces from Malta in 1979, Frenco said the prob-

lem was not whether it should be commemorated, but "how it should be celebrated and how much."

"The British should have left five years before (1974). I don't see the comparison with Independence. Even Republic Day is more important."

Frenco said that if the country wanted to defend the idea of diversity and uniqueness of the Maltese people, "and its ethnicities and characteristics that people identify with, you cannot not teach history."

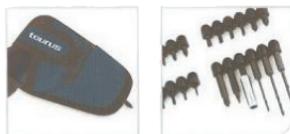


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