

European Communities

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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30 May 1983

DOCUMENT 1-368/83

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee

on the situation in Malta

Rapporteur: Mrs I. van den HEUVEL

PE 77.866/fin.



The European Parliament referred the following motions for resolutions to the Political Affairs Committee pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure:

- at its sitting of 24 October 1979, the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) and the European Democratic Group on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-421/79/rev.),
- at its sitting of 14 September 1981, the motion for a resolution tabled by Lady ELLES and others on political developments in Malta (Doc. 1-215/81),
- at its sitting of 18 June 1982, the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr HABSBURG and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-371/82).

At its meeting of 18-19 December 1979, the Political Affairs Committee decided to draw up a report.

The committee appointed Mrs van den HEUVEL rapporteur at its meeting of 23 January 1980.

At the request of the Political Affairs Committee, the Bureau of the European Parliament, at its meeting of 25 January 1983, authorized Mrs van den HEUVEL to carry out a fact-finding mission to Malta in her capacity as rapporteur for the Political Affairs Committee; this visit took place on 23-24 February 1983.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 23-25 June 1982, 29-30 November and 1 December 1982, 22-24 February 1983, 20-22 April 1983 and 24-26 May 1983.

At the last meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution by 14 votes to one.

The following took part in the vote: Mr Haagerup, first vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Fergusson, third vice-chairman; Mrs van den Heuvel, rapporteur; Mr Antoniozzi, Mr Bournias, Lord Douro (deputizing for Sir James Scott-Hopkins), Mr Gerokostopoulos (deputizing for Mr Barbi), Mr Habsburg, Mr Hansch, Mr Lomas, Mr van Minnen (deputizing for Mr B. Friedrich), Mr Mommersteeg (deputizing for Mr Penders), Mr Newton Dunn, Mr Prag (deputizing for Lady Elles) and Mr Walter.

The report was tabled on 25 May 1983.

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
A. MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION .....	5
B. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT .....	7

A N N E X E S

<u>ANNEX I</u> : FURTHER EXPLANATIONS .....	16
<u>ANNEX II</u> : MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION tabled by Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) and the European Democratic Group on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-421/79/rev.) .....	17
<u>ANNEX III</u> : MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION tabled by Lady ELLES and others on political developments in Malta (Doc. 1-215/81) ....	18
<u>ANNEX IV</u> : MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION tabled by Mr HABSBURG and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-371/82) .....	20

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The Political Affairs Committee hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the situation in Malta

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the following motions for resolutions tabled by:
    - Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) and the European Democratic Group on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-421/79/rev.),
    - Lady ELLES and others on political developments in Malta (Doc. 1-215/81),
    - Mr HABSBURG and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-371/82),
    - Mr SCHMID and others on relations between the European Community and Malta (Doc. 1-206/83)<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the European Parliament's resolution of 10 March 1983<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the report of the Political Affairs Committee (Doc.1-368/83),
- A. whereas the European Economic Community has a special relationship with Malta,
- B. having regard to the historical links between the Community and Malta,
- C. whereas the political situation in Malta is affected by the consequences of extreme polarization,
- D. whereas it is in the interests of relations between the Community and Malta that the democratic character of Malta should not be open to doubt,
- E. having regard to Malta's strategic position, in the Mediterranean area,

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<sup>1</sup> The committee accepted an amendment to make reference to this motion for a resolution. It was subsequently learned, however, that this resolution had been referred by plenary to the Committee on External Economic Relations

<sup>2</sup> OJ No. C 96, 11.4.1983, p. 62

1. Expresses its alarm at the political and socio-cultural polarization in Malta;
2. Notes with approval that the Nationalist members have taken their seats in Parliament;
3. Calls on the government of Malta to do all in its power to prevent the problems which have arisen in the past from recurring in future;
4. Calls on both parties represented in Parliament to work together constructively towards the normalization of political relations in Malta;
5. Expresses the hope that relations between Malta and the European Community will develop in a positive manner so that the Commission's proposals for financial aid to Malta can be adopted by the Council in the near future;
6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Government of Malta.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

As early as 23 January 1980 the Political Affairs Committee appointed Mrs Ien van den Heuvel rapporteur on the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Cassamagnago Cerretti and others on the situation in Malta (Doc. 1-421/79/rev.). She submitted a preliminary working document to the Political Affairs Committee. However, the situation in Malta was continually changing and the rapporteur consequently felt obliged, in connection also with the motion for a resolution tabled by Lady Elles and others on the political developments in Malta (Doc. 1-215/81) to submit a revised working document. However, this was again overtaken by events when being considered by the committee. Referring also to resolution 371/82 by Mr Habsburg and others, she gave a verbal report on recent events at the meeting of 23 June 1982.

On 3 November 1982 the Political Affairs Committee requested the rapporteur once more to submit a new text containing her account of the situation.

Partly in view of the fact that the Labour Party of Malta had been requested to appoint a representative to inform the Political Affairs Committee of the situation in Malta, the Political Affairs Committee decided to instruct the rapporteur to visit Malta and interview all political parties and groups whose opinion she considered relevant.

On 25 January 1983 the Bureau of the European Parliament granted permission for Mrs van den Heuvel to visit Malta.

The visit took place on 23 and 24 February 1983.

#### 1. Contacts

During her visit to Malta the rapporteur spoke to the following individuals and bodies:

- the Chamber of Commerce represented by the Chairman Wilfred N. Hammo and the Honorary Secretary Louis E. Galea;
- representatives of the Young Christian Workers;
- the Vicar-General, Mgr. Carmelo Xuereb;
- the European Movement;
- the Editor-in-Chief of the Times of Malta;

- representatives of 'L'Orizzont';
- the Nationalist Party, in the person of Mr Fenech Adami, party leader, Guido de Marco, Vincent Tabone, Ugo Mifsud-Bonnici, Louis Galea and Noël Buttigieg-Scicluna;
- the General Workers' Union;
- the Confederation of Trade Unions;
- the Employers' Organization of Malta;
- the Chamber of Advocates
- the Leader Designate of the Malta Labour Party, Dr Carmelo Mifsud-Bonnici;
- the Speaker of the House;
- the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alex Sceberras Trigona;
- for the Communist Party, Mr Anthony Vassallo;
- the Deputy Advocate-General.

## 2. Background to the events in Malta

Almost all contacts emphasized that the present political situation in Malta could only be understood in the light of

- (a) the island's history,
- (b) the situation in a small community

In the past, political life in Malta has been characterized by a large degree of consensus in a joint struggle for independence.

From the early 1950s (1951-1971), with the exception of the Labour Government of 1955-1958, the Nationalist Party was the main governing party in Malta and during that time laid the foundations of the social, political and legal system of the country.

A study of election results shows that the number of parties taking part in the elections has decreased, particularly during the 1970's. In 1966 for example, five parties took part, three of which won no seats. In 1971 only three parties took part, of which one obtained no seats. These election results alone demonstrate how a two-party system has developed in Maltese politics. This polarization largely permeates the entire social climate in Malta's small community.

The election results of the two 'surviving' political parties are always very close. For example:

	Nationalist Party	Labour Party
1966	28 seats	22 seats
1971	27 seats	28 seats
1976	31 seats	34 seats

The way in which this polarization permeates numerous areas of social life (one contact remarked that even children of 8 or 9 years of age are divided into two camps) leads to a climate of mutual accusation between the two sides. There have even been incidents where the supporters of various factions have even resorted to physical violence towards each other despite the fact that leaders of all political groups strongly reject violence. One noteworthy phenomenon in all this is that the representatives of all parties and groups remain on speaking terms with each other. There was an extraordinary willingness to accompany us to the other party on which occasions the conversation between the two sides was extremely friendly. Perhaps this is to be explained by the fact that the dividing line runs straight through a number of families, which is inevitable in a small society of this nature.

This polarization, which is immediately noticeable to even a brief visitor like the rapporteur, was also to be felt during the various talks. For a 'foreigner in Malta' it is difficult and even dangerous to establish who is right. The different views have therefore been set out as far as possible next to each other, in some cases followed by comments by the rapporteur.

### 3. The political situation since the 1981 elections

According to the Constitution (last amended in 1974) the boundaries of the electoral constituencies must be drawn in such a way that the number of people entitled to vote in a given constituency does not differ from the number in another constituency by any more than 5%. On the basis of this provision, an independent committee specifically set up for the purpose made a proposal for amending the boundaries of the constituencies. The procedure followed is as follows:

1. The committee makes a proposal to the Parliament;
2. Parliament debates the proposal;
3. the proposal is referred back to the committee;
4. the committee takes a final decision.

The first proposal by the committee was adopted by Parliament. The Nationalist Party voted in favour because - as we were informed - it considered that to reject the first proposal could only lead to a more serious situation in the event of a subsequent proposal.

When the committee's final decision was announced, the Nationalist Party stated that if the redefinition of constituency boundaries meant that the Labour Party would obtain a majority of seats with a minority of the votes cast, it could not accept it.

When after the elections this indeed proved to be the case (result: Nationalist Party 50.92% - 31 seats, Labour Party 49.07% - 34 seats), the Nationalist Party decided not to take up its seats in Parliament because, as we were told, it was no longer prepared to cooperate on keeping up a democratic 'facade'. According to our contacts, democracy had already been in danger for some time, but this development was the last straw. Our attention was drawn to the fact that, under these circumstances, a party which had the absolute majority in Parliament (in terms of the number of votes) was not empowered to govern.

The Labour Party took the following view:

- the redefinition of constituencies was necessary under the Constitution;
- the redefinition was undertaken by an independent committee; there had certainly been no party political intention to manipulate the results;
- a majority of votes and a minority of seats was nothing new. It also happened in the 1951 elections. At that time the Labour Party obtained 35.7% of votes and 14 seats the Nationalist Party 35.3% of votes and 15 seats. Likewise in 1962 when a number of smaller party assigned their votes to the Labour Party, the Labour Party obtained a smaller number of seats, thus obtaining a higher percentage of votes than the Nationalist Party.

A study of the new constituency boundaries shows just how erratic their development has been. There is no doubt, however, that the definition of boundaries has not been incompatible with the letter of the law.

Leaving aside the question of whether or not the Nationalist Party was wise to boycott Parliament under such circumstances, it must be said that, from the point of view of democracy, an untenable situation exists where the majority of voters is not represented in Parliament.

Although the fact that the unoccupied seats have still not been filled (by law the Labour Party would be entitled to do so) can be seen as a proof of good will, no structural solution has yet been found for the problem.

Round about May 1982 a solution seemed to be close at hand. In a discussion between Dom Mintoff and the opposition leader, Fenech Adami, agreement was reached on a number of contentious points. More specifically:

- amendments to be made to the Constitution so as to prevent any repetition of the events which occurred at the last election;
- guarantees for the opposition concerning broadcasting time on radio and television (see also paragraph 6).

However, the Labour Party could not accept the Nationalist Party's demand for new elections.

4.

In the motions for resolutions which provided the impetus for this report a number of events are mentioned which call for some response by the European Parliament.

(a) Attack on the 'Times of Malta' premises

On 15 October 1979 the buildings of 'Progress Press' were attacked by a group of people. A great deal of damage was done. Reports vary as to the number of people involved in the attack: the highest number referred to is between 180 and 200 and the lowest between 50 and 60.

As for the newspaper itself, the Times of Malta complains about the lack of police protection. Protection had been expressly requested but, at the time of the attack, only an inspector, a sergeant, four constables and the driver of a minibus were in the vicinity.

The newspaper also complains about the failure to bring the culprits properly to book.

The other party claims, however, that, at the time, the police were occupied with a number of other tasks, and that the attack on the Times must be seen against a background of a number of other instances of violence against leaders of the 'governing' camp. A report on the matter was submitted to the Maltese Parliament where the failure to identify the culprits was also deplored.

(b) Blue Sisters' hospital

The two Maltese parties also adopted opposing stances on the matter of persecution of the Blue Sisters referred to in Resolution No. 1-215/81 tabled by Lady Elles and others.

The Nationalist Party points out that the Blue Sisters' hospital had been operating since 1912 and that the Sisters had done their utmost to continue.

The government had done everything in its power to make them leave Malta:

- it had attempted to withdraw the authorization already granted;
- when this attempt failed, the government had refused work permits to foreign nurses;
- the nurses had been subsequently deported.

For its part, the Labour Party points out that the problems relating to the Blue Sisters had arisen in connection with adaptation to the National Health system. The government was entitled not to extend work permits of foreigners and in so doing was not obliged to provide any justification of its actions. There was no question of the sisters having been expelled or deported.

The Blue Sisters' Hospital has since been closed. The rapporteur was therefore unable to interview those directly affected.

(c) Foreign Interference Act

The Foreign Interference Act currently in force is seen by both the Nationalist Party and other social groups as a serious assault on the freedom of expression. The fact that ministerial approval is needed for a visit by any foreigner who, in one way or another, intends to express an opinion on Maltese politics means - according to the Nationalist Party - that, for example, the Church has to refrain from inviting foreigners because it does not wish to apply for visitors' permits.

The Labour Party's argument for justifying the act is that in a small community such as Malta, foreign interference is dangerous because of the extent to which it can influence public opinion and that it willingly accepts this restriction even in its own case.

In this connection it is interesting to refer to the discussion which took place with the various contacts as to whether the visit by a rapporteur from the European Parliament fell under the provisions of the act. The Nationalist Party confirmed that such was the case, whereas the Labour Party denied it. The representative of the Bureau of the Advocate General, to whom the rapporteur put the same question, expressed the view - subject to the reservation that further study would be needed - that if the law were applied literally, ministerial permission would indeed be necessary.

(d) Religious services at the airport

The religious services which used to take place publicly in the airport building were prohibited by the government. They now take place in a chapel next to the airport.

The report by the US State Department asserts that there are no restrictions on religious freedom in Malta whatsoever.

5. The legal system in Malta

The legal system in Malta is a hybrid of English and Roman law, with the emphasis on English law. This is easy to explain in historical terms. We were told on several occasions that a system which works well in a country with a very long democratic tradition such as the United Kingdom can give rise to problems when superimposed on a society such as that which exists in Malta. Judges are appointed by the President. By Presidential decree they are assigned to a particular court. A judge can be dismissed by a decision taken by a two-thirds majority of the Maltese Parliament.

In recent years a number of reshuffles are reported to have taken place on the bench, which (according to our sources) were intended to prevent findings from being made against the government. However the official version is that reshuffles took place as a result of new appointments and an attempt to bring about a better distribution of work. The Advocate-General showed us a document which in fact confirmed the existence of these appointments and the resultant reshuffles.

Whether the lack of confidence in the impartiality of the legal system is justified or not, it is certain that this lack of confidence exists and in a constitutional state this, in itself, provides grounds for suspicion.

In this connection, reference must also be made to the March 1981 amendment of the Code of Organization and Civil Procedures. As a result of this amendment it is no longer possible to submit a government decision to legal judgment. The opposition takes the view that this amounts to an attack on democracy.

The governing party takes the view, however, that the opposition abused the existing law to such an extent that appeals at law were made in respect of an unacceptably high number of administrative government decisions. As a result of the amendment the number of cases brought before the courts has fallen considerably.

The problems appear to arise mainly in connection with ministerial decisions not requiring any form of justification. It is to be noted that a large number of cases

remain pending for a long time before a final judgment is issued (the Blue Sisters' procedure, for example, is still not complete).

The full-scale polarization of social life also plays a major role in this respect. The opposition has no confidence in the judiciary and has also called into question the work of the police.

The police are also accused of partiality. The rapporteur is not in a position to reach any conclusion in this respect. In a situation such as that which obtains in Malta, partiality cannot be altogether excluded.

However, it is also possible that unjustified accusations are levelled against the police, who can act entirely in good faith and in certain circumstances may have good reason not to intervene.

#### 6. Radio and television

The Constitution (Articles 121 and 122) stipulates that all parties must have equal access to radio and television. Supervision to this effect is exercised by the Broadcasting Authority. While the opposition claims that this government-appointed body manipulates public opinion by excluding the voice of the opposition, Labour takes the view that since the Nationalists have decided on a boycott themselves, they are also excluded from the Broadcasting Authority.

It is difficult to determine who took the first wrong step at what time. It is encouraging to note that this problem is clearly not insoluble. According to the Times of Malta of 3 May 1982, in the agreement almost reached in April 1982 the Labour Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff, and the opposition leader, Fenech Adami, were at one on this point.

#### 7. Foreign policy

Opinion is also divided with regard to foreign policy. In general the Nationalist Party is more inclined towards a fixed link with the EEC. Some of the party's support is in favour of accession.

The Labour Party, on the other hand, wants a policy of non-alliance. Much importance is attached to good relations with the Community and we were urged to promote special arrangements between the Community and Malta.

In view of Malta's strategic position and the Community's trade interests, it would certainly be in the Community's interest to give serious consideration to the possibility of a special relationship.

In the meanwhile, the polarization has already had an effect in foreign policy to the extent that the Foreign Affairs Minister instructed the foreign mission to refrain from making contact with 'extra-Parliamentarians' (meaning of course the Nationalist Members of the Maltese Parliament, who have not taken up their seats).

Of course the reaction of diplomatic missions was to state that the members were free to entertain relations with the subjects of the state to which they were accredited.

The Foreign Minister then stated in Parliament that members of the corps diplomatique in Malta would be regarded as *personae non gratae* if they consorted with the Nationalist Party as if the latter were the official opposition or the legal Government of Malta.

In the meanwhile questions with regard to this matter have been asked in the Dutch Parliament. The answer given by the Dutch Prime Minister was that he could see no reason for any action.

## 8. Conclusion

1. It is most deplorable that the political situation in Malta has become so polarized that the normal democratic operation of all parties has been impeded.
2. The absence from Parliament of one of the two largest parties in Malta (and, more precisely, the party which, in the last general elections achieved the majority of votes cast) acts as a serious threat to Parliamentary democracy.
3. The European Parliament would be advised to urge all parties involved in the conflict to enter into consultations with a view to solving the problems. In this connection, the 'quasi-agreement' of April 1982 could constitute the point of departure.

Further explanation

This report has been overtaken by events in Malta.

A large part of the report dealt with problems caused by the fact that the Nationalist members of the opposition had not taken up their seats in the Maltese Parliament.

On 10 March 1983, however, the Maltese Parliament adopted a resolution to coopt the 25 members of the Nationalist Party. On 29 March 1983 they were sworn into Parliament.

The events that led up to this about-turn were as follows :

There was an exchange of letters between the deputy leader of the Nationalist Party, Dr De Marco, and the leader of the Socialist Party, Dom Mintoff, through the President of Malta, Mrs Agatha Barbara. This did not lead directly to an agreement.

Further exchanges of letters and talks finally led to the Nationalist Party agreeing to take up its seats in Parliament. Agreement was reached on the fact that both parties will make efforts, by means of changes in the 1974 constitution, to prevent a repetition of the events that led to the problems in Malta. The election procedure will be modified and changes will be made in the procedure for both parties' radio and television broadcasts. All other problems are subject to discussion.

Now that both parties are represented in Parliament, it is the rapporteur's hope that the situation in Malta will rapidly return to normal.

The rapporteur is of the opinion that the European Parliament should show some caution in its relations with Malta so that both parties may genuinely work towards a return to normal.

The rapporteur would like to congratulate those who have contributed to this solution.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-421/79/rev.)

tabled by Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI, Mr HABSBURG, Mr KLEPSCH, Mr BERSANI, Mr RYAN, Mr PENDERS, Mr HERMAN, Mr SEITLINGER, Mr FISCHBACH, Sir James SCOTT-HOPKINS, Lady ELLES, Mr SPICER and Sir John STEWART-CLARK

on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group) and European Democratic Group

with request for urgent debate pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure on the situation in Malta

The European Parliament.

- having regard to the privileged relationship between the Maltese Parliament and itself and to the agreements governing relations between Malta and the European Community,
  - aware of the important and courageous contributions made by Malta to the cause of freedom and democracy,
  - deeply shocked by the acts of violence committed against the printing offices of the Times of Malta on 15 October 1979,
  - alarmed by the reports of widespread destruction of private property on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of Mr Dom MINTOFF's leadership of the Maltese Labour Party,
  - recalling the attack on the family of the leader of the opposition, Dr Fenech ADAMI,
1. Stresses, in the interests of pluralist democracy, the importance of upholding freedom of the press and respecting the political forces in opposition;
  2. Asks the Maltese Government to assure Maltese and world opinion of its unwavering commitment to human rights and democratic principles;
  3. Asks the Maltese Government to compensate individuals and firms for the material losses and damages they have suffered, to hold an impartial enquiry into the outrages that have been perpetrated and to bring to trial those responsible in order to prevent the recurrence of such incidents;
  4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the governments of the Member States, the President of the Maltese Parliament and the President of the Court of Human Rights.

JUSTIFICATION

**The outrages perpetrated in Malta.**

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-215/81)

for entry in the register

tabled by Lady ELLES, Mr FERGUSSON, Mr HUTTON, Sir Peter VANNECK, Sir John STEWART-CLARK, Dame Shelagh ROBERTS, Mr KIRK, Mr HABSBERG, Mr BEYER DE RYKE, Mr D'ORMESSON, Mr PÖTTERING, Mrs RABBETHGE, Mr HORD, Mr C. JACKSON, Mr PATTERSON and Mr PURVIS

pursuant to Rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure on political developments in Malta

**The European Parliament,**

- Considering that the Community has an Association Agreement with Malta,
  - Considering that there is an inter-parliamentary delegation with Malta,
  - Noting paragraphs 33-48 of the Maltese Constitution on the Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of the Individual,
1. Notes with the deepest concern recent developments in Malta, which have been described by the Leader of the Opposition as 'opening the way to a state of legalised dictatorship', including dangerous interference in the independence of the judiciary;
  2. Recalls the attempts by the State authorities to take over the Blue Sisters Hospital which is bound by the terms of its foundation to be run by a religious order;
  3. Expresses its indignation at the harassment of the sisters running the hospital, some having been deported and some having been taken to court;
  4. Notes that further to the Blue Sisters case the Government has introduced the code of Organization and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill which removes the right of any individual to sue the Government, establishes a Working of the Law Courts Commission, appointed by the Prime Minister and capable of removing any member of the legal profession, and prevents the bringing of any urgent cases against the Government;
  5. Recalls the view of the International Commission of Jurists that this Bill 'strikes at the basic principles of the rule of law' and 'threatens the independence of the judiciary and the legal profession';
  6. Considers that this bill may simply codify the existing practice of the authorities in removing or replacing any judge who decides against the Government on even the most trivial of matters;

7. Deplores the recent banning of the London Times and the Sunday Times in Malta;
8. Notes that the Times of Malta has been banned recently and that Dr. Guido de Marco has been charged with making false accusations against the Prime Minister and leading police officers;
9. Notes that in addition to other acts of repression against the freedom to practice religion, the traditional church services held at Luqqa airport have been banned;
10. Considers that this pattern of events should be a cause for concern throughout the Member States of the Community;
11. Urges the members of the interparliamentary delegation to step up their contacts with parliamentarians in Malta so as to investigate the situation and to report to the Parliament on their findings;
12. Urges the Council of Foreign Ministers to examine the situation in Malta as a matter of urgency and to make representations to the Prime Minister of Malta so as to prevent any further undermining of democracy;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Government of Member States, the Maltese Government and to the President of the Council of Europe.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-371/82)

tabled by Mr HABSBURG, Mr MAJONICA, Mr O'DONNELL, Mrs SCHLEICHER, Mr LUCKER and Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI

on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure on the situation in Malta

**The European Parliament,**

- A - concerned at the political developments in Malta along lines which might endanger the democratic system in that country,**
- B - deploring the fact that the mandates of the members of parliament of the Nationalist Party, which obtained 51% of the votes at the elections on 12 December, have been annulled,**
- C - dismayed, in addition, by the de facto monopoly on radio and television of the minority party in power and by the new bill imposing very severe punishments for any foreign activities without written permission from the relevant ministers, in particular so as to prevent broadcasts by the opposition using private transmitters in Italy,**
- D - noting the increasing bias of Malta's foreign policy towards the totalitarian countries,**

**Requests the Ministers meeting in political cooperation:**

- (1) To draw the attention of the Maltese Government to the anxiety in European public opinion;**

- (2) To inform it that on many occasions the Communities have frozen their financial aid to countries which have departed from democratic principles;
- (3) To request the Maltese Government to defer to the will of its people.

