

POLITICS IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

by

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Ph.D. Thesis

Leicester University

1979

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ABSTRACT

POLITICS IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES - J. RICHARDS

I have sought to examine the nature and operation of politics in small independent communities in order to see what they have in common and what distinguishes them from larger political communities in the ways in which basic political activity is carried out.

The method has been, following a general introduction to the principles and problems involved in the study which are considered in Chapters One and Two, to present case studies of three selected areas - the Faroe Islands, Malta, and the Isle of Man respectively. As an initial focus for the case studies I have taken the assembly or parliament of the community concerned together with an outline of the basic legislative-executive relationship. From this institutionalised forum of local political activity, however, the study broadens its scope to take in the wider play of forces, beginning with an examination of the electoral system and spreading to the political cleavage system to take account of the political parties and major sectional interest groups. Particular emphasis is placed on the nature and 'flavour' of the local political environment of the case study areas. In this way I have attempted to link the basic political culture through the patterns of group representation and interest articulation to the central political institutions of the three communities.

The later chapters of the thesis are concerned with summarising and comparing the findings of the case studies and discuss the extent to which the features common to them distinguish such 'small independent communities' as a specific category of polity.



# POLITICS IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

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## PART ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE STUDY OF SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

1:1 INTRODUCTION

1:2 PROBLEMS OF METHODOLOGY

1:3 PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION

1:4 SUMMARY



## CHAPTER ONE

## THE STUDY OF SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

## 1:1 INTRODUCTION

Micro-politics has been described as being concerned with small scale, localised studies, or 'face-to-face' situations. Two parallel courses of enquiry have been followed from this basic starting point. One has been to see micro-politics as the politics of relatively closed groups 'encapsulated' in larger, more complex, more inclusive 'groups' - the most inclusive group envisaged being primarily the modern nation-state. The second approach, and the one which I propose to follow in this research, is the study of the politics of small societies (a relative term as we shall see) in and for themselves as alternative modes of conducting basic political activities to that of the large nation-state. The communities I have chosen are tolerably self-contained in all social respects and inclusive, possessing their own organs of political representation and a self-conscious political identity.

I suggest that there is sound academic value in the study of such communities where the effects and influences connected with the operation of politics and government can often be more plainly seen than in a large nation-state.

...."With economic necessity leading to ever larger human units, it is good for the world to have a few examples of the contrasting values inherent in the small self-conscious community:



the community that can command the personal loyalty of its members, and in which its members are aware of the part their community is playing in the affairs of the world."<sup>1</sup>

## 1:2 PROBLEMS OF METHODOLOGY

The study of politics continues to present problems of relevance and rigour.

One of the delights, and at the same time one of the dangers, of the study of micro-politics is that there appears to be a unity of method but not of concepts. This poses problems of definition but does also provide valuable opportunity for 'live' research.

The usual study method seems to be as follows:-

1. Prior study of published sources, including statistical sources.
2. Choice of a field (or fields) small enough for personal observation.
3. Use of interviews locally, both formal and otherwise.

I have attempted broadly to follow this approach. In examining the nature and working of politics in small communities I have found it helpful to be aware of some of the work done in social anthropology and small group studies. I should make it clear, however, that my interest and approach is primarily political rather than sociological. It is the way that fundamental

<sup>1</sup>John F. West Faroe - the Emergence of a Nation. Page 261. 1972

political problems are tackled in small communities that interests me, and not class or kinship activities for their own sake.

The method of presentation employed in this thesis divides the analysis into two parts; general observation and theory, and case studies of the Faroe Islands, Malta, and the Isle of Man. In the case studies, it will be seen that a great deal of attention has been paid to the discussion of historical background details. This has been made necessary by the relative absence of alternative available reading to which the reader could otherwise be directed. Fortunately this can prove to be a positive factor. Such detailed descriptive historical analysis of discrete situations and events largely by random fact-gathering, often at first hand, can provide a wealth of information about individual cases of interest to the investigator. This 'on the ground research' and personal observation has, through the case study visits, allowed an appreciation of the cultural background to develop alongside the study of both the formal and informal political relationships which exist in the selected political systems. In addition to meetings with politicians, officials, and citizens of these communities, my visits have allowed me to see documents and articles in the State Archives and Libraries at first hand and this has proved most rewarding. The problem has then been to sift through this vast amount of information and to abstract the significant features for comparative analysis. The conclusion of the thesis is concerned with summarizing the findings of the case studies and discusses the extent to which an understanding of the generality of features can accrue which distinguishes such 'micro-states' as a specific category of polity.

Methodology is, at bottom, a means of organising one's subject matter. It has a vital role to play, but it should not become more important than the content which it presents.

### 1:3 PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION

Classification is an indispensable requirement of comparative analysis. In our search for comparative concepts we must demonstrate that the entities which we are concerned with are members of the same class. This usually involves laying down a set of two or more criteria which must be satisfied in order for an object to be deemed a member of the class with which we are concerned. This, in turn, raises the problem of definition of terms.

I shall begin by examining the title of this thesis to see just what it is I shall be concerned with. I refer to 'small' independent communities. Already I have admitted that small is a relative term. In 1967 the Institute of Commonwealth Studies faced a similar problem when they held a seminar on 'The Problems of Small Territories'.

"Scattered over the globe are a vast number of small territories. Many are islands. Some are small enclaves carved out of a larger country or continent by a colonising power. Others are independent nations. Since the end of the Second World War, many of the islands and enclaves have become politically independent. More are becoming so.....

..... What sort of independence can such small territories have? How can they survive economically? How can they administer themselves?

How can they provide for their own increasing populations? Can they hope to maintain, or even improve, their standard of living? What political forms can they develop? What are the social consequences of living in small territories?"<sup>1</sup>

Many of these questions are similar to the ones which I shall be considering in this paper . The following extract from the seminar reports sets out a basic problem of size definition.

"A persistent problem for the seminar was the definition of a small territory. Was the primary criteria to be area? This would make Hong Kong small and the Aden Protectorate large. Was it to be population? This makes Hong Kong large and the Aden Protectorate small. Was it to be population density? Clearly some large countries like India and Indonesia are also densely populated .....The questions of area and population when considering smallness, are complicated by a number of other factors. Many of the territories considered were isolated or geographically remote, and this proved to be an important dimension when considering the problems of smallness. The geographical positions of small territories are important variables in considering their economic and political future." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Problems of Smaller Territories - 1967. Ed. Burton Benedict.

Institute of Commonwealth Studies. Papers 10 University of London Athlone Press. Page 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Page 2.



Smallness is then a relative term. Perhaps one solution is to adopt a specific term such as 'micro-state'. Indeed George Reid<sup>1</sup> refers to the use of the neologism 'micro-state' which he says seems to convey a belief that very small political entities differ in a significant way from those to which conventional usage accords the designation of 'state'. 'Micro-states' have been defined by the United Nations Secretary-General as "entities which are exceptionally small in area, population, and human and economic resources, and which are now emerging as independent states".<sup>2</sup> A more specific working definition is given in the UNITAR Series No. 3 'Status and Problems of Very Small States and Territories'<sup>3</sup> which refers to polities with a population of less than one million.

The small territories referred to in the United Nations Studies and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies Papers have only one apparent general characteristic and that is diversity.

<sup>1</sup>George Lincoln Reid. A Comparative Study of the Foreign Policies of Very Small States, with special reference to the Commonwealth Carribean. University of Southampton Ph.D thesis. October 1971 Page 14

<sup>2</sup>Introduction to the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organisation. 22 UN-GAOR, Supp. 1A(UN DOC.A/6701/Add.1). 1967. Para 164.

<sup>3</sup>Taylor's Annexe on "A Statistical Typology of Micro-states and Territories: Towards a Definition of a Micro-State". UNITAR Series No 3. 'Status and Problems of Very Small States and Territories'. 1969. (Mimeo) pp. 221-229.

They vary in resources, population, their degree of economic and political development, and area. Because of these considerations it is impossible to decide what 'smallness' means with any precision. It is a comparative and not an absolute idea. Whatever scales of magnitude are employed seems arbitrary and it is difficult to pick out on them where smallness begins or ends. As we have seen, countries can be small in one sense and not in another.

Smallness, in whatever form it exists, is only one of the variables. The issue is complicated still further by the significant factor of remoteness, whether simple geographical remoteness or isolation from the intellectual mainstreams of the world. Remoteness may, for instance, make economic integration or even co-operation with a larger state inconceivable and this in turn may hamper political developments. For this reason the selected case study areas are all islands and thus share a degree of isolation and a self-conscious identity on the part of their inhabitants which distinguishes them as separate political communities.

These factors of relative smallness and relative remoteness combined with a self-conscious socio-political identity and a system of state governmental structures and institutions create what I have chosen to refer to as 'independent' communities. This does not mean that they have all yet achieved full sovereignty status with, for example, a seat each in the United Nations General Assembly. Nor does it infer necessarily that all three countries will at some stage reach this point. Nevertheless the international status of political communities in the world

is subject to considerable change over time, and Malta, though an independent sovereign Republic since 1974, has been governed during most of the last 170 odd years or so under a system of dyarchy (as a Crown Colony) similar to that in existence in the Isle of Man. I shall use the word 'independent' to denote the existence of distinct national communities occupying a given territory (in these cases groups of islands), possessing a set of political and governmental structures for their particular societies, and with a strong sense of national identity and cultural uniqueness to the point of having their own national tongue - whether it be Faroese, Maltese, or Manx Gaelic.

In addition, I have selected for the case studies areas which may broadly be said to be 'European' in a general sense. At this point I beg the indulgence of the reader in refraining from reopening the old problems of defining either the geographical meaning of the term Europe (and admit that my case studies lie on the peripheries) and more particularly the idea of a general Western European socio-political culture. These issues will be dealt with specifically in each individual case study. For the moment I wish to say that 'European' case study areas have been chosen in order to set at least some limits to the many problems of definition inherent in any attempt to compare differing value systems.

Finally, it may prove salutary to remember that "definitions are only conventions, and apply only because of agreement that they should apply".<sup>1</sup> Definitions are not statements of fact and should

<sup>1</sup>A. Ryan - The Philosophy of the Social Sciences. Macmillan. 1971

not be treated as such. This is merely to emphasise that statements about definition are of a different order from the definition itself and its use as a means of clarification.

#### 1:4 SUMMARY

A) The criteria which have been taken for the case study areas are as follows:

- a) A small community as defined in terms of
  - i) area (less than 1,000 sq.miles).
  - ii) population (less than 1 million).
- b) A relatively remote or isolated community as defined in terms of geography - all being islands.
- c) A community possessing organs of political representation capable of conducting basic political activities AND a self-conscious political identity.
- d) Membership of a broadly Western European Socio-culture.

This is in order to set at least some limits to the many problems of definition inherent in any attempt to compare differing value systems.

B) The case study areas chosen are:

- 1) The Faroe Islands
- 2) Malta
- 3) The Isle of Man



## C) Some basic details concerning the case study areas

	<u>FAROEES</u>	<u>MALTA</u>	<u>MAN</u>
Size: Land area	550 sq. miles (1,400km <sup>2</sup> - 18 islands)	122 sq. miles	227 sq. miles
Population	41,600 (1977)	320,000 (1977)	60,000 (1977)
Constitutional Status:			
	Limited Home Rule under the Danish Crown (Home Rule Act 1948). Own Assembly (Løgting) plus representation in the Danish Folketing	Sovereign nation-state: Republic of Malta. Own Parliament (House of Representatives /Kamra ta - Deputati).	Limited Home Rule under British Crown. Own Assembly (Tynwald - House of Keys and the Legislative Council). No Representation in the U.K. Parliament.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES:

#### THE BASIC PROBLEMS

2:1 INTRODUCTION

2:2 GENERAL SOCIETAL PROBLEMS

2:3 GENERAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

2:2 GENERAL POLITICAL ASPECTS

## CHAPTER TWO

### SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES:

#### THE BASIC PROBLEMS

##### 2:1 INTRODUCTION

The problem of method has for long plagued those attempting to make a comparative study of politics.

Little genuinely comparative theory has been accumulated which links general conceptual frameworks and the techniques of data manipulation to produce empirically founded, logically structured, and conceptually coherent explanations of politics in a substantial number of societies. Two major factors have impeded the development of such theories; firstly, a shortage of relevant and comparable data and, secondly, a host of problems centring around contextual control, such as the identification and systematic treatment of actual or potential intervening factors that may affect interrelationships between the variables under investigation. Even if we had more descriptive material at our disposal, however, we would still encounter problems when trying to explain the meanings and causal relationships of particular political phenomena in different socio-cultural settings. Leading contemporary conceptual frameworks are too broad to permit the analytical control required for cross-cultural comparisons, and they are not particularly helpful for plotting specific research strategies.

Instead of getting sidetracked or "bogged down" here in an arid attempt to construct an elaborate conceptual framework I

intend rather to plunge straight into the study by examining some of the basic problems which are often said to confront small independent communities or micro-states. In this problem-orientated approach, attention will be directed to particular aspects and questions. The specific points raised will then be related to the case study areas to see if they apply in practice. These points may pose problems or raise principles which are economic, historical, political, sociological, or administrative in nature, or a combination of these; or may even arise from the very nature of life in small polities itself.

## 2:2 GENERAL SOCIETAL PROBLEMS

There are some general questions to be considered about the very nature of life in small polities.

What are the social concomitants of smallness? Are the differences between larger and smaller political units merely quantitative or are there qualitative differences too? Do the social concomitants of smallness foster or inhibit political development or are they of no material significance?

In the following section I wish to examine these questions in more detail paying particular importance to the 'size' dimension.

A distinction can be drawn between a small scale society and a small scale state. It is possible to have a small scale society in a very large territory (e.g. the Eskimo or the Bedouin). It is also possible to have part of a large scale society in a small territory (e.g. Luxembourg or Monaco). According



to Burton Benedict "the criteria of scale for territories are area and population; the criteria of scale for a society are the number and quality of role relationships".<sup>1</sup>

I shall be concerned in the case studies with small scale societies which are also micro-states.

a) The 'face-to-face' dimension

One of the more significant elements in definitions of micro-politics has been the concept of the 'face-to-face' relationship.

Peter Laslett has suggested that the 'polis' of Ancient Greece was a 'face-to-face' society as is the modern family. "The psychology of the face-to-face society is intuitive psychology".<sup>2</sup> The contrast is the modern large scale territorial society. Laslett claims that in the latter we create substitute face-to-face situations in such political institutional arenas as Parliament in order to represent society in these territorial political societies in an arithmetic or rational way. Political parties and interest groups act as brokers and substitutes for the influence of the traditional means of influence by patron and kinship.

Whilst political parties and interest groups are to be found in micro-states the traditional means of influence tend to have retained

<sup>1</sup>Burton Benedict Problems of Smaller Territories Institute of Commonwealth Studies Seminar Papers No 10. Page 45.

<sup>2</sup>The Face-to-face Society Peter Laslett. Et al.(ed.) Philosophy Politics and Society Vol I. Oxford 1965. Page 160

In such polities, where national politics are still often 'parish pump' politics, the 'face-to-face' dimension is very important.

According to Walter Kohn, referring to another micro-state - Liechtenstein<sup>1</sup> "...Personal-politik rather than Partei-politik is practised" and .... "it does in the final analysis boil down to a matter of personal relationships. In a small community, where everybody knows everyone else,<sup>1</sup> no crisis between Prince and people has been allowed to occur nor is one likely to develop. The country is homogeneous, and disagreements in all probability will be solved privately behind closed doors long before they can reach unmanageable proportions."<sup>2</sup>

b) Conflict, Consensus and Cleavage

In the first chapter of his book on the subject J.D.B. Miller pursues his theme that 'Diversity is the stuff of politics' and deals at length with this basic question. "Politics, then is about disagreement or conflict; and political activity is that which is intended to bring about or resist change, in the face of possible resistance. It is not necessary to suggest that people engaged in politics never agree, or that open and flagrant disagreement is necessary... what is important is that we

<sup>1</sup>Liechtenstein The Principality of Liechtenstein has an area of 62 sq. miles and had on 1 December 1970 a population of 21,350. Official figures issued by the Amt fuer Statistik des Fuerstentums. Liechtenstein Vaduz. 3.9.71.

<sup>1</sup> The underlining is mine

<sup>2</sup>Walter S.G. Kohn Politics in Liechtenstein Journal of Parliamentary Affairs 1972/73. Page 332.



should recognize that conflict lies at the heart of politics.

In a world of universal agreement, there would be no room for it".<sup>1</sup>

A different view may be based on the objection that men fundamentally seek agreement, even though they may be unaware of it, and that political action seeks to ensure unity and agreement in order to hold a society together. Indeed at nation-state level a political system may be said to be effective to the extent that the history behind it has brought about underlying consensus on an ideology or set of beliefs so that the system is accepted as being legitimate. This latter view would appear to enjoy a wide currency in small political communities. The stress laid on the need for a common front as against outsiders, the homogeneity of the community, the assumptions of an underlying system legitimacy and consensus seem, at first appearance, to be general features. One manifestation of this is what Sidney Verba terms the 'No-conflict assumption'.<sup>2</sup> There are, according to this view, no conflicts within society which are real in the sense that intelligence and effort cannot resolve them. Taken to an extreme this denial of the conflict element in society can lead to the phenomenon of "apolitisme".

<sup>1</sup>J.D.B. Miller The Nature of Politics Pelican Books 1962. Page 14

<sup>2</sup>S. Verba Small Groups and Political Behaviour: A study of Leadership 1961

Commenting on this proposition W.J.M. Mackenzie<sup>1</sup> states "It is fair to set against this not Marxist dialectic but the doctrine quite strongly held in social anthropology, that society is a structure Gothic rather than Grecian, arched and buttressed by conflicts, which must be lived through, and cannot be resolved, because they arise out of the conflicting social roles and principles which in fact constitute society". He cites as a good example of this Margaret Phillips' book<sup>2</sup> which "tells one a great deal about how the English political culture works in matters which have nothing to do with party politics".<sup>3</sup>

Mackenzie states that Ron Frankenberg's work 'Village on the Border' on the place of strangers in the local politics of a Welsh village is freely used by Max Gluckman as paradigm for a device often used to control and minimize conflict in small societies. However "some social anthropologists insist that conflict is the price of social order".<sup>4</sup>

The lines of divergence of interest or opinion amongst groups and individuals within a society may come to be represented in a political cleavage pattern. According to Seymour Lipset "the

<sup>1</sup>W.J.M. MacKenzie Politics and Social Science. Pelican Books. 1967 p.207

<sup>2</sup>Margaret Phillips Small Social Groups in England London 1965

<sup>3</sup>W.J.M. MacKenzie Politics and Social Science Pelican Books. 1967. p.208

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. Page 208



available evidence suggests that the chances for stable democracy are enhanced to the extent that groups and individuals have a number of crosscutting, politically relevant affiliations. To the degree that a significant proportion of the population is pulled among conflicting forces, its members have an interest in reducing the intensity of political conflict".<sup>1</sup>

Such cross-cutting cleavages are particularly strong in small communities where ties of friendship or kinship tend to cut across other differences. This would suggest that in small political communities one should expect to find a relatively high degree of system legitimacy and basic consensus. Basic consensus, as defined by Easton and Hess<sup>2</sup> means the congruence of basic value and attitudinal orientations, not necessarily at the level of the government, but at the level of the political community.

### c) 'Particularist' Societies? -

#### Particularism versus Universalism

One of the features of small scale societies in general is that there tends to be an overlapping and coincidence of roles compared with more structurally differentiated larger societies.

<sup>1</sup>S.M. Lipset Political Man 1960 - Conditions of Stable and Effective Democracy. Cited in "Comparative Politics" - Epstein & Apter (ed) 1963. Page 213.

See also B. Berelson, P. Lazarsfeld, & W. McPhee - Voting. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1954)

<sup>2</sup>David Easton & Robert D. Hess. "Youth and the Political System" in Culture and Social Character ed S.M. Lipset and R. Lowenthal. (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press 1961) p.p. 229-37

Not only are there fewer roles in a small-scale society but because of the smallness of the total social field many roles are played by relatively few individuals. It is common in anthropological studies of small communities that economic, political, religious, and kinship systems are very often coincident or nearly so. The same individuals are brought into contact over and over again in various activities. "Different types of primary groups tend to coincide or overlap in large measure".<sup>1</sup>

This question of the role relationship pattern in different types of societies has been approached in various ways. Works on political development tend to refer to the two basic types as 'modernized' and 'traditional'. In such cases the contrast is usually between pre-industrial traditional societies and those of industrial modern societies. Compared with traditional societies, modern societies have experienced a demographic revolution with a sharp decline both in birth-rate and death-rate, a decrease in the size, scope and pervasiveness of the family, an opening up of the stratification system with a shift from ascribed status to achieved status, a levelling of culture with the development of mass communications and mass education, a high level of education, and the secularization and bureaucratization of society.

<sup>1</sup>R. Firth Elements of Social Organisation. (London 1951) Page 47



An alternative conceptualization of the comparison between pre-industrial and industrial society has been developed by R. Redfield, who distinguishes the 'folk' society as the polar opposite of the 'urban' society. According to this thesis the folk-type of society is "Small, isolated, non-literate, and homogeneous with a strong sense of group solidarity. Behaviour is traditional, spontaneous, uncritical and personal. Kinship, its relationships and institutions, are the type categories and the extended family group is the unit of action. The sacred prevails over the secular; the economy is one of status rather than of the market".<sup>1</sup> The urban type is the polar opposite and is characterised by heterogeneity, the decay of kinship groups, the dominance of the secular and of the market. As Miner points out, the two concepts are ideal type constructs and must be viewed as the poles of a continuum. Most societies in practice combine both folk and urban elements.

Where do our small independent communities lie on this continuum? From our basic starting criteria we have noted that generally they form part of the modernized western european world and yet are small and relatively isolated.

The famous sociologist Talcott Parsons described folk society as particularistic, affective, and ascriptive whilst urban society is governed by universalism, affective neutrality and achievement orientation. In Parsons' typology 'particularism' refers to the relationship of persons to each other in all their particularity

<sup>1</sup>H. Miner 'The Folk-Urban Continuum'. in A. & E. Etzioni. Social Change: Sources, Patterns & Consequences. (1964) Chapter 18.

or uniqueness. It lays great stress on who they are as defined by their social and kinship relationships. 'Universalism' on the other hand, refers to a situation in which the relationship of individuals is based on more or less fixed standards and criteria. It stresses what people do in the society giving 'modernised' emphasis to the 'bureaucratic' ethic of dealing impartially on merit and not privilege, partiality or favour.<sup>1</sup>

Parsons illustrates his point by the contrast between the socializing methods of school and family on young children. The socializing function of the primary school is particularly important. It is here that the child is exposed to social norms and values beyond those which are available for learning in the family. In the family, individuals are judged by 'particularistic' standards which are applied impartially to all. Furthermore, while in the family, ascriptive roles based on the age and sex predominate, school reflects the orientation of the wider society in which roles are allocated on the basis of achievement. The emphasis placed on achievement legitimizes selection and reduces the strains imposed by differentiation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>T. Parsons - 'The Structure of Social Action'. 1937 and especially - 'The Professions in Social Structure', in Essays in Sociological Theory, Pure and Applied. Glencoe. Illinois 1949.

<sup>2</sup>T. Parsons The School as a Social System and some of its Functions Halsey, Floud & Anderson. Chapter 31.



The point I wish to make is that in this context the school is a larger social system than the family. There is a size factor involved here. I suggest that the smaller the social system or sub-system, the more important are particularistic norms and values even in relatively modernized states.

Let us take another example of this - the industrial sphere. The increasing division of labour which characterizes mechanization, and the organization of the labour force in factory production is normally accompanied by work relations which are functionally specific (confined to specific duties) impersonal, and affectively neutral (based on contractual relations rather than personal loyalties). Yet in many smaller factories, kinship relations again play an important part in the recruitment of the labour force, wages often reflect seniority and employment relations are highly particularistic.<sup>1</sup>

According to Parsons "the more two people's total personalities are involved in the basis of their social relationship, the less it is possible for either of them to abstract from the particular person of the other in defining its content".<sup>2</sup> This is what occurs in a small scale society. Where the total social field is small relationships tend towards the particularistic pole.

<sup>1</sup>B.F. Hoselitz & W.E. Moore Industrialization and Society (1960)  
Chapter 15

<sup>2</sup>T. Parsons The Professions and Social Structure (1938) reprinted in Essays in Sociological Theory, Pure and Applied Glencoe, Illinois 1949. Page 191.

It is the small scale of the society which slows down the trend to universalistic norms and values in small communities even in areas which could be considered relatively modernized. This attachment to, what are to us, relatively particularistic norms has important socio-political implications. Modern bureaucratic norms of government are weakened; the principle of anonymity of public servants and impartiality of service are made more difficult. Traditional loyalties and values may conflict with 'universalistic' elements. These tendencies are strengthened by the overlapping and coincidence of roles, already mentioned, which are common to small polities.

For example, what may constitute corruption in the form of bribery in a large modernized nation-state may seem to be just a traditional device to compensate for the deficiencies of the political and administrative arrangements; merely sociability and 'good neighbourliness' in a small community. It may be seen as a way of overcoming institutional obstacles, of cutting through 'red tape' and generally accelerating the administrative performance by 'gifts' or 'favours'.

"Modernization involves a change in the basic values of the society... and behaviour which was acceptable and legitimate according to traditional norms becomes unacceptable and corrupt when viewed through 'modern' eyes. Corruption in a modernizing society is thus in part not so much the result of the deviance of behaviour from accepted norms as it is the deviance of norms from the established pattern of behaviour"<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>S. P. Huntington Political Order in Changing Societies. Yale U.P.



Clearly Huntington sees the particularistic character of pre-modernized society as the natural state of societal relations and behaviour. This may be supported not only by looking at under-developed and developing societies large or small but also at the values and norms still to be found in some sub-systems in large modernized states.

"Behaviour which is accepted and even highly valued in private business is frequently seen as illegitimate or illegal in the public service. After all, the traditional family business is but the most common form of nepotism (literally 'jobs for the boys'.) In the public service, appointments are formally made on achievement rather than ascriptive criteria but it is widely believed that many developing countries only pay lip service to this principle; but it would be a mistake to believe that developed nations are free from nepotism as the invasion of government by the Kennedy clan in the USA testifies".<sup>1</sup>

Where public and private sectors meet, as say in the realm of public expenditure contracts, the interface of the two codes of behaviour can result in cases of the Poulsen type.

In a small polity, with overlapping and coincidence of roles, where a few influential individuals wear many different hats the lines between their different public and private activities can become increasingly blurred.

<sup>1</sup>Robert J. Williams The Problems of Corruption: a Conceptual and Comparative Analysis. Dept. of Politics, University of Durham. A Paper to the Public Administration Committee Conference, York University September 1976.

- i) An overlapping and coincidence of roles.
- ii) A tendency to 'Particularistic' norms and values.
- iii) Anonymity made difficult.
- iv) Impartiality made difficult.
- v) The importance of the 'notable' - either the private or party patron.
- vi) A tendency towards 'apolitisme'?
- vii) A less rigid application of Weberian bureaucratic norms in relation to behaviour in the public service.

### 2:3 GENERAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

In order to gain a fuller appreciation of the nature of political activity it is necessary to be aware of the relevance of economic considerations. In particular in the case of this study it is important to consider the economic problems caused by the smallness of microstates.

#### a) Dependence on larger states

Micro-states, according to the Institute of Commonwealth Studies Seminar findings, are particularly prone to economic dependence on large neighbours.<sup>1</sup> I wish to examine in this section some of the factors which suggest this to be a general condition bearing in mind the criteria laid down in Chapter One for the case study areas and that the Commonwealth Studies Seminar was mainly concerned with developing 'Third World' states and territories.

<sup>1</sup>Burton Benedict Problems of Smaller Territories Institute of Commonwealth Studies. Papers No. 10 Page 40.



A small state may have maintained or achieved nominal political independence from a large state but if it is still dependent in economic terms then just how 'sovereign' is it in practice? This problem can be seen in the case of the developing countries of the 'Third World' which having achieved independence find themselves still dominated by 'economic imperialism' as a form of 'neo-colonialism'. That economic dependence can mean political dependence too is shown in the thinking of the 'neo-functionalist' school of integration theorists particularly in respect of their forecasts for the European Community.

Historically many small and isolated communities, have by necessity, been almost economically self-sufficient. The case study areas, however, being all islands, have long maritime trading traditions and established commercial links with other lands. These will be examined more closely during the case studies.

b) Some economic problems which seem to be common to small states.

- i) Small internal markets - with a lack of opportunity for diversity, specialization, division of labour, and economies of scale.
- ii) Reliance on one or a few industries - these mainly being for export or services.
- iii) Lack of large locally based industrial enterprises - necessitating a search for outside capital for investment.
- iv) A proportionately high cost of public administration.
- v) An overall loss of population through emigration with its impact on the demographic pattern - this includes the loss

of the younger, more economically productive people;  
it also affects the quality of public administration  
(high ratio of personnel to total population; relatively  
low calibre).

- vi) Economic advantages of granting concessions to foreigners  
e.g. tax havens, tourist centres, gambling casinos.

This is easier for those micro-states situated in the  
right areas with proximity to large markets and a good  
share of holiday sunshine, such as Malta and the Isle of Man.

- vii) The economic attractions of foreign money in the form of  
military bases, tourism, finance capital etc. versus the  
political disadvantages for the natives reflected  
particularly in nationalist anti-foreign feeling over  
their presence and the attendant effect on employment,  
housing, and the cost of living.

#### 2:4 GENERAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS

For the individual case studies the details of the structure  
of governmental institutions and machinery of state administration  
will be dealt with separately from the other 'political' areas  
such as the politicians themselves, the political parties,  
interest groups, electoral systems, etc. This is merely to  
assist in the manner of presentation of material and in no way  
should be interpreted as illustrating the writer's belief in the  
policy/administration dichotomy. To offset any such impressions  
both governmental and political aspects of small states will be  
considered here.

##### a) The Scale of Government and Politics

One of the first characteristics of small polities to be  
mentioned is the ubiquitousness of government. In a small state  
one cannot progress very far in any public or business activity



without running into government. The same is true as far as progressing up any occupational or prestige ladder is concerned. In small-scale societies the established elite must necessarily be small. Opportunities for upward mobility are limited and more easily monitored by those in power because the whole social field is smaller. Whereas in a large-scale society, political relationships are only partial relationships they are much more inclusive in a small-scale state. Closely knit families, particularistic ties within the community, traditional bonds of patronage or clientage all tend to militate against radical social mobility.

A word should be said here about the form of government related to scale. A small governing elite is after all not a peculiarity of small countries. The 'iron law of oligarchy' will tend to operate whether the state be large or small.

The relative power of the decision-makers in micro-polities tend to be compounded, however, by the coincidence and interlocking of role relationships among the established elite. Decisions in the economic, political, and legal fields have a pervasiveness in small-scale societies which they lack in larger ones. This is because people are connected to each other in so many different ways and because the implementation of decisions can be more readily checked upon and enforced by economic, legal, political and social pressures.

Literal democracy in the sense that everyone has a direct say in government can only exist in very small communities where everyone can meet and discuss a problem until agreement is reached<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See L.P. Mair Safeguards for Democracy. London 1961 Page 2

but even in micro-states this is physically impossible - certainly as far as the case study areas are concerned.<sup>1</sup> Representative government generally takes the place of democracy in its 'pure' form. In theory a small state with an informed electorate should operate a representative democracy very well. The Swiss, who by my criteria live in a large state, claim this distinction. In even smaller polities it should be possible to enjoy something even nearer to the ideal of representative democracy.

A former Head of Government in Liechtenstein, Dr. Gerard Batliner suggests this when he maintains that

"in a small country the relationships between the state, economy, and society are less complicated and easier to recognise than in a powerful nation and the mini-state, which by its very nature is tailored to human measurements, presupposes conditions assuring the value and dignity of the individual".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Batliner may well be correct. On the other hand there are factors which might suggest otherwise.

<sup>1</sup>As we shall see this does not stop the Faroese and the Manx from utilising the myth that their systems of government spring from 'open air assemblies' of this type.

<sup>1</sup>Gerard Batliner. Struckturelemente des Kleinstaates in Liechtenstein Politische Scriften. Heft 1. Vaduz. 1972 Page 16

We have already seen that a particularistic value orientation is apt to dominate in a small social field. Universalistic norms of government come up against peculiar snags in small polities with a limited pool of manpower. Here the conflict of small private loyalties with wider impersonal allegiances can touch murky depths among those who find themselves in fairly constant contact for both work and relaxation. Private roles of kinship and obligation are entangled with public roles of office, and even if the established elite be enlarged it will still tend to be one in which everyone who counts knows everyone else. Personal antagonisms can estrange private life. The results of this situation can differ. Sometimes a climate of mutual non-criticism among the political elite is created and maintained in which no-one 'rocks the boat'. This tends to lead to a situation of 'apolitisme' and makes it very difficult for an opposition to develop. In other cases, however, private and public disagreements become entwined. Micro-states do not always exhibit signs of greater social cohesiveness which push them towards common goals. A strong network of particularistic relationships does not necessarily mean social harmony. The overall effect of such roles can be negative as well as positive. The intense factionalism of some small communities has been a matter of repeated observation by sociologists.<sup>1</sup> In such cases the polarisation of the society between the rival political parties is often reinforced by personal antagonisms at both national and village levels.\*

<sup>1</sup>See R. Firth et al. Factions in Indian and Overseas Indian Societies British Journal of Sociology. Vol. VIII London 1957

\*In this respect Malta provides an interesting example.



A considerable proportion of the national income in small states tends to be taken up by administrative costs. In such a situation one might expect the emphasis to be placed on a well-trained and efficient body of public administrators. It is here that the small polities often encounter considerable difficulties.

Firstly there is a limited constituency from which to recruit staff. Secondly there is the conflict between the universalistic bureaucratic norms assumed by constitution makers or inculcated in the training of staff abroad and the particularistic nature of government and politics in micro-states. Thirdly there is the problem of retaining newly qualified staff. The result is that often the relatively high quantity of public servants employed in small states are drawn from relatively low quality material.

Impartiality in administration is difficult to achieve in small states, even in judicial matters. Because of the multiple connections between litigants, lawyers, and judges, small countries often experience difficulties in applying impersonal law. Party politics, where it has developed, tends to resolve into a system of 'ins' and 'outs'. Political issues become structured in terms of personal encounters. Those in power reward their own supporters. Those out of power often have few alternatives left to them. In these circumstances maintaining an impersonal and impartial civil service is even more difficult. Anonymity is virtually impossible in a small scale society. Loyalty tends to be partisan loyalty. The civil servant is placed in the dilemma of either becoming a supporter of one party or politician or becoming so cautious that he is trusted by no party and is unable to make effective decisions.

Only the outsider such as the overseas civil servant (e.g. from the tutelary state<sup>1</sup>) can preserve something of a universalistic orientation and can separate his occupational from his non-occupational roles, but the longer he remains the less possible this becomes for him because the rest of the population do not play the game according to these rules. He himself becomes involved in a series of highly particularistic relations either with other 'outsiders' who form a small clique with limited contact with the rest of society, or becomes socialised into the norms of the local population itself.

Many small states which export their undergraduates for further or higher education or training have difficulty in inducing them to return to stay and work at home after qualifying. For some of these young people the confined atmosphere of a small-scale society, which can also be found in larger states where the elite is still small, is distasteful, and herein lies another disadvantage of smallness. Youths who are educated abroad, perhaps at the expense of their governments or families, often discover on returning that the country which was once their home now seems like a prison. In spite of the prestige of their qualifications they seek a career in voluntary exile in the larger societies of the world. No country, least of all a small one, can afford to lose a potential administrator, professional person, or top politician. Often if they do return, they become agents for social and political change.

<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of the case studies this will be Britain for Malta and the Isle of Man, and Denmark for the Faroes.

### c) The Institutional Focus

As political activity is so general in its scope the case studies will begin by centring on the local assembly or parliament and its relationship with the executive. From this institutionalised forum of local political activity, however, the focus will change to take in the wider play of forces, beginning with the electoral system and spreading to the political cleavage system to take in the political parties and major sectional interest groups.

Thus I hope to avoid the approach criticised by Alan Ball when he says that "previous emphasis on constitutional law in the study of politics has tended to confuse the discussion of assemblies, with the result that there has been an exhaustive accumulation of detail on procedural matters but less consideration of the wider relationship with the total political system".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Alan Ball Modern Politics and Government. London Macmillan 1971. Page 145.

## **PART TWO**

### **THE CASE STUDY AREAS**



## CHAPTER THREE

### THE FAROE ISLANDS

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## CHAPTER THREE

### THE FAROE ISLANDS

#### 3:1 INTRODUCTION

The Faroes are a group of some twenty rocky islands far out in the north Atlantic, halfway between Shetland and Iceland. They are the home of one of Europe's smallest nations - some 41,000 people descended from Norse settlers. The earliest use of the name by which they are known today is in a manuscript of c.1225 where they are called 'Faereyar' meaning Sheep Islands.

After a period of complete independence they acknowledged, probably in 1035, a King of Norway as their king, thus becoming in effect a province of Norway though being regarded as a specific community by the inhabitants of mainland Norway. With the union of the crowns of Norway and Denmark in 1380 both Iceland and the Faroes came to be governed more and more as Danish provinces. When Denmark lost Norway to Sweden in the Kiel Peace Treaty of 1814, she retained Faroe, Iceland and Greenland. Today the Faroe Islands are still under Danish sovereignty but have since 1948 enjoyed a generous measure of home rule.

#### 3:2 CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

According to the Home Rule Act passed by the Danish parliament in 1948, the Faroes are "within the framework of the law a self-governing community within the Danish Kingdom". In theory, the Danish parliament can unilaterally change or revoke this law but in practice such action is highly unlikely. The Faroese have two seats in the Danish Folketing (and had one in the Landsting until its abolition in 1953).

The Home Rule Act recognizes the Faroese language (a form of Old Norse similar to Icelandic and that spoken in the western provinces of Norway) and the Faroese flag (a blue bordered red cross on a white field).

The areas of authority in the Faroes are divided into SERMÁL (the area of separate responsibility where the legislating LØGTING and the administering LANDSSTYRI have power) and FELAGSMÁL (the area of joint responsibility which is administered by governmental authority according to laws written in Denmark). The area of joint responsibility can be further divided into three; those affairs for which the Faroese Government may assume responsibility if it so wishes, those affairs which may be taken over with the agreement of the Danish Government, and those affairs which cannot be made separate.

To date, the Faroese Government has administered its own local government, taxation, customs, community services, all usual labour and industrial matters, secondary education and the postal services. FELAGSMÁL (joint affairs) are established according to Danish legislation and expenditures are either paid fully by Denmark or alternatively Denmark is bound to defray a set part of the expenditures. 'Danish' affairs for which the Faroese government has the right to assume responsibility include primary schooling social services and the health service.

Some of the most significant areas where the Faroese government is not allowed to exercise authority are civil rights, the judiciary, foreign affairs, defence, the monetary system and banking. Areas where responsibility can only be assumed with the permission

of the Danish government are police, national church affairs, and underground natural resources.

The RIKISUMBODSMADUR ( Danish High Commissioner ) represents Danish authority in the Faroes. He has the right to speak in the Løgting, serves as a link between the Faroese and Danish governments and heads the Danish administration in the islands.

The Faroes constitute an independent duty zone, but otherwise the responsibility for all foreign affairs lies with the Danish government.

As agreed in the Home Rule Act, the Faroese government is over-ruled by those treaties, pacts, or agreements drawn up by Denmark with foreign countries.

The Faroese are, however, often represented in Danish negotiating committees when Faroese trade is being dealt with directly. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs can empower the Faroese home government to negotiate directly with the assistance of Danish Foreign Affairs personnel.

As an example of Faroese independence it should be mentioned that although Denmark is a member of the European Community the Faroes are not. On the other hand, when Denmark left E.F.T.A. the Faroes were also obliged to leave. Also, the Faroese belong to N.A.T.O. but do so against their own express wishes.

The Faroese economy is based on the fishing industry and the Danish state subsidy. The latter, during recent years, has accounted for about  $\frac{1}{7}$ th of the national revenue.

Tax and customs are special Faroese affairs. No tax is paid to the Danish government. Average duties are 20% of the value of imports. Only income tax is applied; there is no wealth tax, inheritance tax, or capital gains tax. The highest marginal rate of taxation is 50%. In 1975 all public revenues amounted to 653 million kroner. Of this Denmark paid 33%, 23% was due to import and other duties and the remaining 44% derived from income tax.



### 3:3 GOVERNMENT IN THE FAROES

#### - LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE STRUCTURES

##### a) Origins and development of the Løgting.

During the Faroese period of independence (approximately from 825 A.D. to 1035 A.D.) the local legislative body and high court, as in Iceland, was an 'althing' or assembly of freemen. This met in Torshavn, the main settlement, on the peninsula still called Tinganes (Assembly Headland).

After becoming part of the Kingdom of Norway, and subject to the legal code of its western provinces, the Faroese 'Thing' was converted from a full legislative body to one of the King's judicial courts and, from about 1400 A.D., it became known as the Løgting like the provincial courts of Norway. The crown of Norway was united with that of Denmark in 1380 A.D., and from that time Iceland and the Faroes came to be governed more and more as Danish rather than Norwegian provinces.

When Denmark lost Norway to Sweden in the Kiel Peace Treaty of 1814 she retained Faroe, Iceland, and Greenland. The process of closer integration into Denmark continued and the Faroese Løgting (spelt in Danish 'Lagting'), now a shadow of its original self but deriving from probably the oldest parliamentary institution in Europe, was abolished in 1816. Henceforth the Faroes were to be considered as a Danish 'Amt' (County) under the authority of a resident provincial governor or sheriff known as the 'Amtmand' who was usually Danish.

In 1852 the Danish government established a county government in the Faroes similar to the other Danish county governments. This local council was called the Løgting but it was a purely consultative body. Executive power remained in the hands of the Amtmand and legislative power resided in the Landsting and Folketing in Copenhagen. In 1855

it was officially decided that the Danish legislature should have the power of determining the applicability of Danish law to the Faroes. This meant that all Danish laws would be valid in the Faroes unless it was specifically stated to the contrary.

The composition of the reconstituted Løgting was at first sixteen, later eighteen elected members, together with two ex-officio members, the Amtmand and the 'Provst' (the chief representative of the Established Church in the islands). The Amtmand, by a rule which caused considerable resentment was the Løgting's permanent chairman.

The Venstre administration which came to power in Denmark in 1920 made certain reforms concerning the Løgting in accordance with the more democratic spirit of the C20th. By an Act passed in March 1923 which came into effect on 1st January 1924 the Amtmand and Provst were excluded from ex-officio membership of the Løgting. The assembly was in future to elect its own chairman and vice-chairman; and although the Amtmand was allowed to take part in debates and to address the assembly as often as he wished, he now had no vote unless he happened to be an elected member in his own right. The number of Løgting seats was fixed at eighteen, with the possible addition of up to five supernumary places. These latter seats were unattached to any particular electoral division but allotted on a basis of popular votes cast to produce in the Løgting a voting strength proportional to the number of votes cast for the political parties throughout Faroe. (The development of the party political system will be outlined in a later section). Also, elections were in future to be held every four years. It was not necessary to extend the suffrage to women at this point as they had benefited from the general Danish emancipation in 1915, voting for the first time in Løgting elections in 1918.

The 1923 reforms granted the Løgting a much enlarged financial

power, particularly regarding transport and communications between and within the islands. In general, however, the Løgting remained what it had been since its revival intended it should be - a body proposing legislation to the Danish parliament rather than one with extensive authority of its own.

During World War II and the German occupation of Denmark government in Faroe was carried out by a temporary form of administration with the agreement of the British forces which had moved into the islands. Existing laws and regulations remained in force as far as possible. Where the law required administrative action by a government minister, however, this was carried out by the Amtmand in consultation with a committee of the Løgting. New legislation applicable to the islands could be proposed by either the Amtmand or the Løgting, but before it came into force it had to be debated and voted by the Løgting and then confirmed and proclaimed by the Amtmand. The Løgting committee, which with the Amtmand now constituted the executive, consisted of three members.

After World War II the demand for more freedom had grown so strong that, in 1946, a referendum was held. The choice was between independence and a modified county status. The majority, by a narrow margin of valid votes cast\*, chose independence and there was a majority (of one) in the Løgting as well. Then the Danish government dissolved the Løgting and sent a naval vessel to Torshavn. In the newly elected Løgting there was no majority for complete independence and there has not been one since.

Under the Home Rule Act of 1948 the Løgting was given legislative powers in all matters concerning the Faroes alone. Provision was made

\*For details of the referendum of 14th September 1946 see Appendix V



for matters of internal administration to pass into the hands of the Løgting as the popularly elected body, and the Faroese administration ( in Faroese termed 'Landsstyri', in Danish 'Landsstyret ) a committee of three ministers elected from the Løgting. Matters affecting the defence or foreign relations of the islands would remain in the hands of the Danish government. If doubt were to arise over whether a particular matter came within the competence of the Faroese or the Danish government the question was to be referred to a joint commission made up of two members appointed by each side plus three High Court judges. If the government members agreed amongst themselves then the matter would be settled; if not the judicial members would decide the issue. Another important change under the 1948 Act was that the chief Danish administrative officer in the islands was no longer to be the Amtmand (or provincial governor), but the 'Rigsombudsmand' (or State Commissioner), spelt in Faroese 'Ríkisumbodsmadur'.

b) The workings of the Faroese Legislature and Executive.

The Løgting is a unicameral assembly and it meets in the 'Tinghúsid' in the centre of Torshavn.

Standing Orders for the business of the assembly were approved on 5th May 1948 when the first Home Rule Løgting met to begin its legislative business and to elect the country's first Home Rule government. These Standing Orders provided for the scrutiny of the credentials of newly-elected members, the election of a chairman and vice-chairman, the publication of order papers, the appointment of Løgting committees, the manner of proposing legislation, the permitted length of speeches, and so on. For a motion to be passed more than half the Løgting's members must be present and vote in its favour. A substitute, however, is allowed to take the seat of any member who is sick or absent on other lawful excuse. The business of the Løgting is normally held in public, but on the proposal of the chairman, or any four members, it may elect to go into private session.



Faroese government consists of the Løgting and the Landsstyri, which is chosen by the assembly. The Løgting first elects a prime minister, who is known by the historic title of "lawman" (in Faroese 'Løgmadur', in Danish 'Lagmand'), and at least two other ministers. As with all other Løgting resolutions, these appointments must be made by at least half the assembly present and voting in favour. The Faroese government is in charge of all affairs on Lists A and B taken over from the Danish government. Under the 1948 Act List A contained those functions which the Faroese administration would run immediately and List B those which could be negotiated over for future transfer. The areas of authority in the Faroes which are divided into 'sermál' and 'felagsmál' have been outlined previously.

In 'sermál' matters it is normally the Landsstyri that proposes legislation, and each measure must be discussed three times by the Løgting. When a law has passed the Løgting, it must be signed by the lawman and one other minister and then published. The lawman has no power on his own initiative to dissolve the Løgting. This can only be done when its four year term has expired, or when the Løgting itself resolves on a dissolution. The new Løgting must meet within a month of its election.

Certain features of the Faroese constitution thus differ quite considerably from British constitutional practice. One difference is that government ministers need not be members of the legislative chamber. Another is that, since at least half the Løgting must be present and vote for a new government, minority administrations are impossible but coalition governments are invariable. The rejection,

however, of legislation proposed by a Faroese government is not followed by the automatic resignation of the ministry or the calling of fresh elections.

In order to propose legislation, or to answer questions, the members of the government may address the Løgting, but they may not vote unless they are elected members. The Danish State Commissioner has a similar right to address the chamber and to propose legislation on matters within his special competence.

It has been observed by commentators that these rules make a Faroese administration especially powerful at the beginning of its term of office, since the Løgting can turn the government out of office only by dissolving itself, which it is rarely willing to do soon after an election, but as the date for automatic dissolution approaches, the power of the Løgting over the government increases.

A minister receives an agreed salary and is not allowed to carry on any other employment during his term of office without special sanction.

At present (1977) there are 26 members of the Løgting and these represent six different political parties. The Landsstyri has six members from three different parties. These are the Javnadarflokkurin (the Social Democrat Party whose leader, Attli Dam, is the current "lawman") with 7 seats; the Tjóðveldisflokkurin (Republican Party) with 6 seats; and the Fólkaflokkurin (People's Party) who have 5 seats. The other parties represented in the Løgting are the Samband or Sambandsflokkurin (Unionist Party) with 5 seats; the Sjálvstyri or Sjálvstyrisflokkurin (Home Rule Party) with 2 seats; and the Framburdsflokkurin (Progressive Party) with 1 seat. Thus it can be seen that the members of the Landsstyri are supported by 18 members in the Løgting.

'Felagsmal' (joint affairs) matters are subject to Danish legislation and accordingly expenditures are either paid for fully by Denmark or, alternatively, Denmark is bound to defray a set part of the expenditure. Danish authority in the Faroes, as we have seen, is represented by the Rigsombudsmand. In the annual procession from the main church in Torshavn to the Tinghusid at Olafsøka (the Faroese National Celebration) he appears in full uniform at the head of the procession alongside the 'lawman'.

### 3:4 THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The electoral system used to return members to the Løgting is based on that in operation in Denmark for elections to the Folketing. It is a modified Party List system of proportional representation.

Faroe is divided into eighteen traditional electoral divisions. Each elector is presented with a ballot paper listing both the names of the political parties and their various candidates and is allowed to cast one vote either against the name of the party itself or against a particular candidate. In addition to the seats matched against these eighteen electoral divisions there are a number of supernumary seats, which during the present Løgting number eight. These are unattached to any particular electoral division but are allotted on a basis of popular votes cast throughout the islands for the parties to produce in the Løgting a voting strength proportional to the total number of votes cast. In this way a Party with a widely scattered following is still able to win a fair number of seats even though it may not win many electoral divisions outright.

The Danish variant of proportional representation is very complex and thorough-going : this seems in a sense only proper as it was after all a Danish mathematician to whom the idea of P.R. is said to have first occurred. The mechanics and effects of the system are



traced with great lucidity by Kenneth Miller\*. I have attempted to summarize the main points from his description of the process as it applies in Denmark and to apply it to the Faroese situation where appropriate in the remainder of this section.

Each of the electoral districts is divided into "nominating districts" or constituencies ('opstillingskredse' in Danish). The number of constituency seats in each district varies and the distribution is liable to change every ten years following the population census. Nominations tend to rest in the hands of the party organisations but whereas in Denmark a candidate need not live in the constituency from which he/she is nominated, in Faroe he/she invariably does.

The ballot paper will contain the names of all the candidates in a district grouped according to party. At the top of each party list in each constituency is placed the name of the party candidate who has been nominated there; below this name appear the names of the other party nominees in the electoral district, either in alphabetical order or, if the party so desires, in a particular numerical order. It has sometimes been known for a party to list all its candidates simultaneously in all the nominating areas of a district, and then their names have appeared bracketed together on the ballot in each district. Candidates may run without party affiliation if they have the necessary twenty-five supporters in a nominating constituency and this partly explains the presence of Kjartan Mohr in the Løgting. Such 'mavericks', however, are rare and it is significant that since his first election he has formed his own political party (Progress Party) to reap the benefits which accompany political party status under such a system.

\* Kenneth E. Miller. "Government and Politics in Denmark".  
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(Houghton Mifflin, London : George Allen & Unwin, 1968.)



The voter casts either a "personal vote" for one of the candidates nominated in his/her district (not necessarily one nominated in his/her own constituency), or a vote for one of the party lists. In Denmark in 1964, according to Miller, 41% of the voters cast personal votes; in other past elections about half of the electorate generally have done so. The incidence of "personal voting" in Faroe is rather higher than this stressing the importance of selecting a local man as well as a party man.

After the polling has taken place and the results in each district have been collated the number of constituency mandates for each party is calculated by use of a modification of the Sainte-Lague<sup>"</sup> formula. This determines the number of constituency seats for each party, not the individual candidates chosen. At the end of these calculations the supplementary seats remain to be allocated. Distribution of constituency mandates may give results that are close to proportionality (i.e. an exact relationship between seats won and votes cast); on the other hand, two parties might get almost identical totals of popular votes but greatly different numbers of constituency seats. The supplementary seats are used to redress the balance. If a party has already won more constituency seats than the total number it should have proportionate to total votes cast it may keep the excess seats but does not share in the supplementary allocation.

These calculations then, so far, give the number of seats gained in the assembly for each party, and show which districts they represent but they do not, however, indicate who has been elected. This forms the final stage in the electoral process. It is based on the total number of votes which each candidate has received in a district. A candidate's votes are the total of his party's votes in his constituency plus the personal votes he has received in the entire electoral division (not just his own constituency). Kenneth Miller cites the

example of Edel Saunte who in 1960 in Copenhagen South received 1,695 personal votes in her own constituency, 10,103 personal votes in the six other constituencies in Copenhagen South, and 2,628 party or list votes in her own constituency, for a total of 14,426 votes. Thus, 81.8% of her votes were personal votes. He goes on to add that this was exceptional in her district and that the next highest percentage of personal votes for a Social Democrat in the same district was 33.4%. In the Faroese context, however, there would be nothing remarkable or exceptional about such a high percentage of 'personal' voting.

If a party has submitted a list of candidates in a certain rank-order a quota is determined. The party's candidate with the highest number of votes, if this is equal to or greater than the quota, is elected as the party's first member. Any surplus votes are then redistributed to the party's second in line in the district, and so on. If no candidate meets the quota and there are still seats to be filled then the party's bottom candidate drops out and his votes are reallocated. If voters have taken advantage of the right to cast a personal vote, a candidate who is not at the top of the party list may be elected before those preceding him on the list. When a party has not submitted a list of its candidates in rank-order then its candidates with the most votes are elected, up to the total number of seats allotted to the party in a given district.

A list of substitute members is maintained from those candidates who fail to be elected. The non-elected candidate in a district who came closest to winning a seat becomes the first substitute for his party there and enters the Løgting as a replacement for an elected member of his party from that district if a vacancy occurs. This obviates the need for bye-elections.



The end result of this rather involved electoral system is a distribution of seats in the assembly that is almost exactly proportional to the share of the popular votes received by the parties.

This "Danish" electoral system is complicated and quite difficult to understand. A Danish editor wrote, "In a certain sense, every change (in the electoral law) has been an improvement - considered in isolation - but all in all, the system has become quite obscure except for a rather small number of specialists".<sup>1</sup> According to Poul Møller, a Danish Conservative leader, "our proportional representation method, which is an extremely ingenious mathematical system, is so complicated with its arrangements for supplementary mandates, by which votes are transferred from one part of the country to another, that many voters cannot understand it at all, and even experts are quite ignorant of who really benefits from their votes".<sup>2</sup>

The voter is limited to the expression of one preference among the candidates in his/her district, and has no assurance that the candidate he/she prefers will be elected even if he gets the most votes in the constituency.

"If simplicity and comprehensibility are characteristics of a good electoral system, the Danish one falls short on both points. For almost all the political parties, however, and so ostensibly for their members and voters, the exactitude of the system in relating seats and votes is apparently a more important characteristic; and proportional representation is considered an essential element in a democracy".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Poul Dam "Valgloven", Højskolebladet, 85. no.43 (November 4, 1960,P.674

<sup>2</sup>Poul Møller "Det politiske demokrati", in Inga Dahlsgrård, ed.,  
'Demokrati - Kommer Det Mig Ved?' (Copenhagen:Fremad,  
1961), P.156

<sup>3</sup>Kenneth Miller "Government and Politics in Denmark".

(Houghton Mifflin, London : George Allen & Unwin, 1968) P.103

### 3:5 THE POLITICAL CLEAVAGE SYSTEM

#### a) FAROESE SOCIETY - MAIN LINES OF CLEAVAGE

For centuries the Faroe Islanders remained an isolated community. The majority of the population were engaged in either small scale farming and/or fishing for a livelihood. The very name 'Føroyar', sometimes written as 'Faereyar', meaning 'Sheep Islands' refers to what was once the only major economic activity in the islands - sheep rearing. Wool from Faroese sheep, either in raw or knitted form, was the chief article of production and export until the nineteenth century, and it was used to pay for the timber, corn, and iron which the early settlers could not obtain at home. There are no trees in the Faroes ( apart from a small modern plantation in a sheltered valley near Torshavn ) and only about 2% of the rocky surface of the islands is arable. Even today people live in a total of eighty communities, still sited where the Norsemen first settled. As a result sheep dominated the life of the people and their economy as witnessed in the use of a ram as the ancient heraldic device of the Faroes, and in the use of the saying "Faroe Wool is Faroe Gold".

In such a situation the matter of land tenure was of paramount importance. The land in every Faroese community is divided into two types; infield and outfield. The distinction is that houses and crops ( mainly grass for winter fodder ) are located infield separated by a boundary wall from the outfield where the sheep graze in the milder months. The system of rationing adopted by the Faroese over the centuries to ensure survival was to make most things contingent on owning infield land in the community, and in strict proportion to the amount held.



"It applied to attending and voting at village meetings, building a house, or even getting married. One's fraction of the total amount of the community's infield determined exactly how many ( if any ) horses, cows, or dogs one could own; how many sheep and geese one kept in the outfield; how many birds and birds' eggs one could take from the sea cliffs; and one's rights in whales caught, in peat, sand, seaweed, driftwood, and in cockles and mussels on the shore".<sup>1</sup>

There are three types of land tenure in the Faroes. The oldest of these is 'udal' or freehold land. Then there is 'crown land', derived chiefly from confiscated church property which was leased out after the Reformation. Finally there is newly cultivated land taken from the outfield. This latter form of tenure carries with it none of the rights associated with 'udal' and crown land. As differing inheritance laws apply to these two other forms of tenure there has been a progressive differentiation between the Faroese holders of land. 'Udal' land is by ancient custom equally divided up between all one's offspring whilst crown land passes wholly to the eldest son. Hence, over time, 'udal' holders become gradually impoverished possessing smaller and smaller fractions of land compared to the crown farmers. As a result crown farmers, with their large stake in the infield, tended to become the most influential people in a community where there was crown land.

Another economic factor which greatly affected the political development of the Faroes was the existence of the trade monopoly. From 1035A.D. trade with the Faroes had become a Norwegian monopoly;

<sup>1</sup>Anthony Jackson The Sheep Islands Article in New Society

this became transferred subsequently to Denmark after the union of the crowns in 1380. The Faroe Islands were included in the trade monopoly of the Royal Icelandic Company in 1619. It was not originally a state monopoly but was leased out to various people. The monopoly went through a succession of private hands until 1709, when the government itself took over its management, an arrangement which lasted until its abolition in 1856. It was aimed at providing the scattered communities of islanders with their needs and rarely proved profitable for the monopolists. Indeed it often acted as a valuable cushion against hard times. Nevertheless, it was in some ways a doubtful benefit in that it ensured the encouragement of commercial and intellectual stagnation and isolation. Until 1836 foreign trading was not allowed anywhere in the Faroes but in Torshavn and, in all, the Monopoly was largely contributory to the backwardness of the Faroese people and economy in subsequent years. In John West's view

"Even today the Faroe Islands are the home of one of the remotest communities in Europe, and it is hardly surprising that ideas and new cultural forms were slow to penetrate there. Changes that did take place came largely through the Danish priests and officials, though partly too through the work of Dutch and British smugglers. The isolation imposed by distance and the commercial monopoly thus preserved in Faroe a cultural pattern that had long become extinct elsewhere."<sup>1</sup>

With the abolition of the trade monopoly following a resolution in favour of the principle of free trade in the Folketing and a unanimous vote in the Løgting it was felt that a turning point had been reached in the history of the Faroese people.

"Thus, in the 1850's, largely because of constitutional developments in Denmark, but partly also because of a growing prosperity based on

<sup>1</sup> John F. West Faroe - the emergence of a Nation. London C. Hurst & Co.



on the export of fish, the Faroe Islands were at last granted free trade, and in addition they had acquired an advisory council at home and representation in the legislature in Copenhagen. Most Faroese regard the Free Trade Law as the most important landmark in their country's history and speak of it as marking the end of the medieval period in Faroe. On economic grounds this could be disputed with the argument that free trade only reinforced tendencies that were already in motion. Yet, with the arrival of politics and the growth of trade in every village, the old patriarchal peasant community began to break up, and a new social order came into being."<sup>1</sup>

The modern Faroe gold is no longer sheep wool but fish. According to the 1970 census, more than one fourth of the total work force in the islands was employed in fishing industries. About one third of the gross national income stems from fishing and 95% of exports consist of fish or fish products. Today the Faroese fishing fleet is amongst the most modern and efficient in the world. "The sea is the Faroeman's storehouse" and "the sea is always with us" are traditional Faroese sayings. As a Faroese author puts it, "the Faroese have the choice between fishing and starving : so they fish."<sup>2</sup>

The rise of the fishing industry caused both an economic and a social revolution in the Faroes. The increasing export of fish, which accelerated even further in the 1870's with the purchase of some second-hand British long distance fishing boats, became the main basis of the Faroese economy and challenged the traditional dominance of the crown tenants in the villages. The rise of the fishing industry brought wealth to the islands on a scale previously unknown. Instead

<sup>1</sup> John F. West Faroe - the emergence of a Nation London C. Hurst & Co. 1972. Page 90

<sup>2</sup> Jørgen-Frantz Jacobsen Faerøerne, Natur og folk Bókagardur - Torshavn. 1974.

of living on smaller and smaller plots of land and often working as servants for the crown farmers the freeholders and landless men were now able to engage in profitable employment. The crown tenants tended to concentrate on farming and the freeholders tended to spend seven months away at sea leaving the old men and young boys behind to work their smaller plots of land. This pattern has generally continued and, as a result, the extended family still plays an important role in Faroese life. The modern fishermen earn very good wages and have allowed many of their traditional rights to lapse as they know that they can buy what they want for cash.

Land ownership, nonetheless, still confers status and prestige in the community. In his sociological survey of Smábygd, a small Faroese community with a population of 2,000, Anthony Jackson<sup>1</sup> suggests that one could construct a 'structural' analysis of Faroese life, based on the notion that land is purifying and fish is polluting, even though ( or possibly because ) fishing is today's major industry. The changeover to a money economy brought wealth but it also undermined the traditional way of life. This in turn touched upon questions of identity and change.

Traditional Faroese society had been, with the exception of the land tenure differentiation, relatively homogeneous. The people were of Norse origin, spoke Faroese, and were Lutheran by religion apart from a small group of Baptists. In addition there was a small but important Danish element of officials, priests, and merchants.

Social changes induce uncertainty that can lead, by a spiral of rapid changes, to the disintegration of a society if unchecked. A key

<sup>1</sup>Anthony Jackson The Sheep Islands Article in New Society



role in the political modernization process in the Faroes was carried out by the search for a national cultural identity which occurred in the years between the 1870's and the early 1900's. By the end of the C19th almost all the villages in Faroe had schools but the language of instruction was Danish. In 1899, partly as a result of the rise of Faroese cultural nationalism, a Faroese Folk High School was established in Torshavn. It was a growing public interest in the language and oral literary heritage of Faroe that gave the impetus to Faroese nationalism. What began as a form of antiquarian research gave rise, in time, to a new pride among the Faroese people in their language and a desire to use it in everyday life. There was an urge, in consequence, to build up a modern printed literature. By the end of the C19th this cultural struggle had begun to spill over into Faroese politics.

Indeed the issue which saw the emergence in Faroe of political parties for the first time was the national one. The national issue was, and still is, a cornerstone in Faroese politics. It led immediately to the creation of the Samband Party in 1906 as a reaction to the financial danger perceived by conservative opinion in the programme of the nationalist and home-rule minded Joannes Patursson. Later in the same year the Sjalvstyri Party was formed in opposition to the Samband and in support of Patursson. These two parties dominated politics in the Løgting and in Faroe in general for over a decade until the rise of the so-called 'economic' parties.

In 1925 the Danish Social Democratic Party set up a Faroese branch which was called locally the Javnadar (Equality) Party. The 1932 elections which gave the Samband an overall majority were the last to give any

party such a position. From the 1936 elections onwards coalition politics became the rule of the day in Faroe between groups within the Løgting. Also, in 1936 a new political party had emerged on the scene and entered the Løgting. This was the Vinnuflokkurin, or Economic Party, a party of the Right and opposed to Social Democracy. Thus at this stage the basic pattern of Faroese party politics had been set. Cutting across the national issue was now the economic issue - the usual Left/Right division. The rise of the Social Democrats had robbed the Samband of some of their traditional working class support whereas the Economic Party made headway at the expense of the Home Rule Party. Neither of the two older parties disappeared, but their power and influence was reduced.

In the late 1930's the Sjalvstyri, the old Home Rule Party, split on an issue of land reform. A proposal was made, in the depressed state of the Faroese fishing industry in the 1930's for a wide extension of the allotment system, making landless fishermen a grant of a small amount of land sufficient for subsistence - at the expense of the uncultivated outfield of the crown tenancies. Also, an attempt was to be made to arrest the endless subdivision to which 'udal' land was subject on inheritance. These measures were supported by the Samband, the Social Democrats, and most of the Sjalvstyri but were bitterly opposed by the old Sjalvstyri leader, Joannes Patursson, who was the largest crown tenant in Faroe. He now left the Home Rule Party along with the right-wing elements in Sjalvstyri to join the Economic Party in launching a new party, the Folkaflokkurin or People's Party, which was to favour the home rule side on national issues and state fostered capitalism in the economic field.



The other major Faroese political party - the Tjodveldisflokkurin or Republican Party - was born out of the constitutional crisis surrounding the independence referendum of 1946. This fifth party was formally established in May 1948 with a programme favouring separatism on the national issue and a left-wing stance on the economic line of cleavage.

In 1956 an independent Løgting member, Kjartan Mohr, launched the sixth Faroese political party which is represented in the Løgting. It is known as the Framburdsflokkurin or Progress Party and is widely regarded in Faroe as Mohr's personal and private political organisation.

To sum up; there is a two-fold political spectrum in Faroe whereby parties differ from left to right on economic issues, and from unionist to separatist on national issues. A successful government coalition thus demands that a group of parties shall sink their differences in one problem area ( or along one axis ) in order to pursue common aims in the other. The political spectrum in Faroe since 1956 can best be understood if the position is summarised in the following table :-

ECONOMIC ISSUES	NATIONAL ISSUES
Left Wing	Separatist Wing
Republican Party	Republican Party
Social Democratic Party	Progress Party
Sjalvstyri	People's Party
Samband	Sjalvstyri
People's Party	Social Democratic Party
Progress Party	Samband
Right Wing	Unionist Wing

## b) THE POLITICAL PARTIES

I now propose to deal briefly with each political party having representation in the Løgting in turn. They are presented in order of their appearance on the Faroese political scene as outlined in the previous section.

### i) Samband (Unionist) Party

This is the party which stands for the continued connection with Denmark. On economic issues it is generally a conservative party. It was the first Faroese political party and was formed in 1906 in response to the higher tax/ public spending implications of Joannes Patursson's Faroese nationalist programme. Samband's leaders were the old political establishment of Faroe - the merchants and the Danish officials ( who unlike their British counterparts were allowed to actively participate in party politics). Even today the Samband retains something of the aura of the Establishment party. Its newspaper is the 'Dimmalaeting' ('Daybreak') which despite its Faroese name originally only printed in Danish. This has changed over the years but the newspaper still doubles as the official gazette for the promulgation of Faroese legislation and, in a sense, can be regarded as the Faroese equivalent of 'The Times'.

During the two-party period (1906-1928) the Samband dominated in the Løgting for most of the time. It suffered a loss of working class support after the arrival on the scene of the Social Democrats but was the last party to gain an overall majority in the Løgting in the 1932 elections. In modern times although it has lost its former dominance it is still an important factor in Faroese politics polling around 20% of the vote and usually forming part of the governing coalition in the Landsstyri.

The background of Samband Løgting members shows an interesting variety which mirrors their support in the wider community based mainly on those who gain from employment or subsidy through the Danish connection.



Løgting members of the Samband tend to be merchants, teachers, farmers, sheriffs, and both professional and working men.

In Danish politics Samband has traditionally supported Venstre. On matters of foreign affairs the party favours membership of the European Community and N.A.T.O., following the general Danish position.

## ii) Sjalvstyri (Home-Rule) Party

The Sjalvstyrisflokkurin was founded to oppose the newly-created Samband in 1906 by the minority of Løgting members who had supported Joannes Patursson. This Home-Rule party campaigned for greater autonomy for the Løgting, with increased financial powers, and as wide a use as possible of the Faroese language for all purposes within the islands.

The newspaper which supported the party, and still does, was the 'Tingakrossur' (named after the 'bidding stick' sent round the islands to summon people to the meetings of the old medieval Løgting).

One of the strongest cards of the party was the emotional pull of the Faroese language and the impetus of the national movement in general. For many years the language issue, especially centred on the use of Faroese rather than Danish as the medium of instruction in school classrooms, was the burning issue in Faroese politics. The Faroese flag was used as a party symbol by the Home-Rulers whilst the Unionists would display the Dannebrog.

It was disagreement over economic issues which all but destroyed the Sjalvstyri in the inter-war years, plus the fact that the Home Rule Act seemed to have met the party's historic demands in 1948. This once great Faroese party (which in some ways is similar to the British Liberal Party) is now only a shadow of its former self. Indeed some of the Faroese I spoke to dismissed it completely and some commentators ignore it in covering the Faroese political party

scene, although it had one Løgting member returned in the 1970 elections and two in the 1974 elections with 7% of the total votes cast. The circulation of 'Tingakrossur' is very small compared with the other newspapers which support the political parties and, again, some of the younger Faroese people whom I spoke to did not know what or who it represented.

The Sjalvstyri, nonetheless, played a crucial role in Faroese nation building. Out of it sprang two further political parties which are both separatist in outlook - the People's Party on the Right and the Republican Party on the Left. An irony of the Faroese political system is that, due to the electoral system and the nature of the cleavage system, the Sjalvstyri found their small party since 1948 an essential feature in almost every coalition government over the next twenty-five years, enjoying far more continuous power than they ever did in the days of their greater numerical support. The party, occupying an almost central position on both cleavage issues, have found themselves in almost constant demand as a makeweight in coalitions formed on sometimes national, sometimes economic, alliances.

In Danish politics they have traditionally allied themselves with the Radicals.

### iii) Social Democratic Party

The party was officially founded in 1925 by the Danish Social Democratic Party with the name Javnadarflokkurin (Equality Party) but is known in Faroe simply as the Social Democrats. It is operationally independent from the Danish party but receives financial help for its election campaigns and the party newspaper originally 'Føroya Social-Demokrat' but now retitled 'Sosialurin'. The new party picked up support mostly from working class defectors from the Samband and this factor allied to the dependence on financial assistance for welfare



and other public sector projects from the Danish state and the parent party has led the party to identify with the unionist wing on the national issue and with the Left on economic issues.

Social Democratic Løgting members are usually manual workers or lower paid salaried staff. Their support comes mainly from the trade unions and fishing and poorer farmer co-operatives.

Since the 1958 elections the Social Democrats have been the largest party in the Faroes sharing in most of the government coalitions with over 25% of the votes cast. The leader of the Social Democrats, Attli Dam, has been lawman since 1970.

In Danish politics, rather naturally, the party supports the Danish Social Democrats. Like the larger party it has mixed feelings over E.E.C. membership.

At home it suffers somewhat from competition on the left wing from the rather more 'cultural' and 'literary' Republicans with their Faroese separatist line and a Faroese Communist Party founded in 1975 which is articulate but has, as yet, no representation in the Løgting.

#### iv) Folkaflokkurin (People's Party)

This right-wing separatist party was formed to contest the 1940 Løgting elections by a merger of the Economic Party and the right-wing of the old Home Rule Party. It represents the commercial, banking, and large farmer interests.

People's Party Løgting members are mainly skippers of large fishing vessels, merchants, bankers, company directors, and teachers. The party regards itself as a Liberal party in the general continental tradition seeing the Samband Party as the Faroese Conservatives. Its rivals, however, see it as the major conservative party in Faroe and so far its attempts to join the Liberal International have been abortive.



Folkaflokkurin was the dominant party during the British wartime occupation of Faroe and virtually declared U.D.I. In the constitutional crisis which culminated in the referendum the party's leaders favoured dominion status which was not an official option. They thus spoilt their ballot papers whilst many of their supporters voted for complete secession.

The party newspaper is 'Dagbladid' and it enjoys a wide circulation. At home the party has often featured in nationalist or right-wing government coalitions. On foreign affairs the party often displays mixed feelings caused by the two main strands of its support. For example, for commercial reasons it favours E.E.C. membership but on national grounds it does not.

#### v) Tjodveldisflokkurin (Republican Party)

This party was founded in May 1948 by people holding left-wing views who had favoured secession from Denmark in the referendum. They had rallied around a newspaper which was set up in June 1947 and was to become the party newspaper. It is called '14 September', a title intended to keep fresh in the public mind the date of the referendum which in the view of the publishers ought to have brought complete independence for the Faroes. One of the founders of the new party was Erlander Patursson, a son of Joannes Patursson, who had followed an academic career in Denmark until the end of the war. Like many of the Faroese who have lived in Denmark he became a fervent separatist, while his economic outlook was left-wing.

The Republican Løgting members tend to be mainly fishermen, lawyers, and teachers. They challenge the Social Democrats for left-wing votes in the larger settlements and take an anti-N.A.T.O. and anti E.E.C. line. Their aim is the establishment of a Republic rather like that of their Icelandic cousins.

## vi) Framburðsflokkurin (Progress Party)

This party was formed in 1956 by the independent Løgting member Kjartan Mohr. There is a strong suspicion in Faroe that this sixth political party owes its existence to the electoral law which gives parties a subsidy from the public purse. Its leader is known as a local 'card'. The party's stance is distinctly conservative in economic affairs, standing to the right of the People's Party, but in national terms it is nearly as extreme separatist as the Republicans. It has continued in existence as a one seat party based on the power and influence in Torshavn of Kjartan Mohr as a shipyard owner and large employer of local labour.

Following the general Scandinavian pattern all the parties represented in the Løgting are 'middle-of-the-road'. Outside the Løgting there are several small left-wing groups such as the Faroese Communist Party.

The 1974 Løgting elections produced the following results compared with those of 1970 :-

	<u>1974</u>			<u>1970</u>		
	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
Social Democrats	7	5,118	25.8	7	4,904	27.2
Republicans	6	4,463	22.5	6	3,962	22.0
People's Party	5	4,067	20.5	5	3,617	20.0
Samband (Unionist)	5	3,707	19.1	6	3,921	21.7
Sjalvstyri (Home Rule)	2	1,433	7.2	1	1,010	5.6
Progress Party	1	489	2.5	1	667	3.5
Independents	-	487	2.4	-	-	-



### c) THE NATURE OF POLITICS IN FAROE

Despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that six political parties are competing for less than 20,000 votes the political atmosphere in Faroe is generally one of 'give and take'.

To some extent this may be due to the general cultural pattern and electoral system common to Scandinavian political systems. Proportional representation and the multi-party system - as in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden - operate within the framework of a political tradition that sets great store by conciliation and compromise and that has what may be called a natural inbuilt bias towards maximising the area of inter-party agreement. As Miller observes in his book on Danish government and politics, "It cannot be assumed that, in Denmark, the role of the opposition is to oppose". He also adds that, "a party that acquired a reputation as inflexible and uncompromising would most likely suffer at the polls".<sup>1</sup>

In addition to these constraints applied by the mechanics of the systems of government and election which Faroe may tend to share with the Scandinavian systems in general there are the special considerations which apply in a small community. The traditional need for co-operation and self-discipline in order to survive as a remote and isolated community has placed unwritten limits on the level of dissension in Faroe and the manner of its expression.

This is not to say that rivalries between individuals, localities, and political parties are not real and they may even be bound up together. In fact, with the formal organisation of political parties personal animosities began to grow in Faroese politics reinforced by the medium of the partisan local press. What holds the Faroese community as a whole together are the dual lines of cleavage which prevent total

<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Miller Government and Politics in Denmark

(Houghton Mifflin, London : George Allen & Unwin, 1968) P.114



polarisation on any one major line of division and also the very strong sense of national culture and communal identity shared by all Faroese.

Their pride in the maintenance of their national customs in the face of the rapid economic and social changes is a necessary device. In recent years there has been a drift of population away from the smaller villages to Torshavn which is now inhabited by a third of the total population of Faroe. The lack of jobs for women is a major element in this drift, indeed many go to work in Copenhagen and never return. As the modernization process speeds up more value is placed on the remaining traditions which mark out Faroese culture as unique. For example, the only residual form of collective fishing is the pilot whale hunt, when boats from many villages take part. The blubber and whale meat are still shared out according to traditionally fixed rules between the catchers and the islanders where the whale school is run aground. This is followed by medieval ring-dancing and by drinking in what is seen as a unique Faroese occasion. At annual festivities such as Olavsþoka, when football tournaments and rowing boat contests are held between rival village and island teams in Torshavn and family reunions take place, and at the traditional life-cycle ceremonies, the people link arms and stamp out the old ring-dances, singing the choruses of the songs which relate old Norse sagas or contemporary political satires.

According to John West, "The Faroe Islands constitute a sociological laboratory of peculiar interest in a world where national feeling plays so prominent a part in human affairs. The effects and influences connected with national feeling may well be more plainly seen in a tiny nation than in a large one. ---- In a world of ever larger human agglomerations, the politically interested have much to learn from the recent history of Faroe".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John F. West Faroe - the emergence of a Nation.

London. C. Hurst & Co. 1972. Preface. Page vi.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MALTA

#### 4:1 INTRODUCTION

#### 4:2 CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

#### 4:3 GOVERNMENT IN MALTA

- a) Origins and development of the Maltese Parliament (including a broad outline of Maltese constitutional development)
- b) The workings of the Maltese Executive and Legislature

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## CHAPTER FOUR

## MALTA

## 4:1 INTRODUCTION

The Maltese islands are not large; the whole group consisting of Malta proper, Gozo, Comino, Cominotto, and Filfla occupies only 122 square miles, which is less than the area of the Isle of Wight and approximately the same size as the British sovereign bases in Cyprus. The island of Malta itself is 17 miles long and 9 miles across at its widest point. The islands lack any important natural resources, the soil is not particularly fertile, and one would wonder why such an apparently small, poorly endowed group of islands have played such a major role in the history of the Mediterranean.

The answer lies in their important strategic location in the narrow channel between Sicily and Tunisia joining the eastern and western basins of the Mediterranean. Even in Homeric times Malta was looked upon as 'the navel of the inland sea'.

The Maltese are a people of Semitic origin who have been much influenced by the successive waves of invaders who have controlled the islands but have retained an identity of their own. Following on from the original Phoenician settlers and traders Malta was colonised by their offspring, the Carthaginians, in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. According to the available records and evidence the modern Maltese language has derived from the Punic dialect which survived the later period of Roman rule and is more Semitic than Latin in its structure.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Opinions vary on this matter. Some commentators cite authorities which claim a Phoenician/Carthaginian base for the Maltese language whilst others state that it derives from Arabic. At any rate it is a Semitic language; it is distinctive but is similar to Tunisian Arabic., e.g. the Maltese word for God is 'Alla'.



After the defeat of Carthage in the Second Punic War Malta passed under Roman control and was known as 'Melita' - the land of honey. During the C5th A.D. as Roman power waned the Vandals from North Africa dominated the area until dislodged by the Byzantines in the following century attacking from Italy and Sicily. From the middle of the C9th until 1091 the Moslem Arabs ruled the islands, finally giving way to a Norman invasion from Sicily. During the course of the Middle Ages Malta and Sicily fell within the orbit of the Spanish Kingdom of Aragon.

In 1530A.D. Malta was given by the King of Spain to the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem as their new headquarters following their expulsion from Rhodes by the Ottoman Turks. The price was to be the payment of the famous Maltese falcon annually on All Saints' Day to the Spanish Viceroy in Sicily. Malta was ruled by the Knights (Hospitallers) of St. John from 1530 to 1798. They held out successfully during the 'Great Siege' by the Ottoman Turks in 1565, an event which made Malta renowned throughout Christendom. Voltaire observed that "Nothing is better known than the siege of Malta". The episode earned for the island the Papal title 'the bulwark of the Faith'. After the siege the Knights of St. John built the modern capital of Valletta on the Sceberras peninsula in memory of the Grand Master De La Vallette who had led the resistance. The city eventually became, together with Floriana - the suburb through which it is approached by land, a microcosm of the great baroque, absolutist capitals which developed in Western Europe. In the latter part of the C18th an English visitor to the island, Patrick Brydone F.R.S., having seen the buildings and society of Valletta described the city as "an epitome of all Europe".

The Order of St. John continued to rule Malta until expelled by Napoleon Bonaparte on his way to Egypt in 1798. Following the Napoleonic

wars Malta came under British control. The formal British presence in Malta was initiated in 1801 when the United Kingdom Parliament passed :-

"An Act to empower His Majesty to regulate the trade and commerce to and from the isle of Malta until the signing of a definite Treaty of Peace, and from thence until six weeks after the next meeting of Parliament; and to declare the isle of Malta to be part of Europe".

The British soon realised the value of Malta as a naval base and in the Treaty of Paris of May 1814 it was stipulated that "the Island of Malta and its dependencies shall belong in full right and sovereignty to His Britannic Majesty". Malta was to remain a part of the British Empire with a degree of internal self-government for the next 150 years.

On 21st September 1964 Malta became independent under the British Crown, assuming full responsibility for her own affairs.

On 13th December 1974 the independent sovereign Republic of Malta was declared.

#### 4:2 CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

According to the Maltese Constitution, Chapter One :-

" 1. 1) Malta is a democratic republic founded on work and on respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual.

2) The territories of Malta consist of those territories comprised in Malta immediately before the appointed day, including the territorial waters thereof, or of such territories and waters as Parliament may from time to time by law determine."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Constitution of the Republic of Malta - Maltese Dept. of Information



It may seem strange to be including here a case study on what is clearly an independent sovereign state, at least in the legal sense of a different degree to the Faroes and the Isle of Man. This has been done for what I consider to be three very good reasons.

Firstly, Malta has been chosen for reasons of contrast with the positions of Faroe and Mann. I could have selected instead, for example, Corsica, but as part of a metropolitan state, despite its having an insular nature and a culture of its own, it would not have met the criteria which I established for the case studies. For similar reasons I did not choose one of the 'postage stamp' microstates such as Andorra, Monaco, or Liechtenstein.

Secondly it introduces what I consider to be the salutary effect of the time element. Of course, everyone now sees Malta as an independent state but it was the same political community which was ruled under a system of dyarchy by Britain for 150 of the last 164 years.

The third reason for including Malta in the case studies is simply because I find the nature of politics in Malta so interesting and fascinating.

Malta joined the United Nations Organisation and the Council of Europe shortly after independence in 1964. In 1968 Malta became a member of the International Monetary Fund and in 1970 became an associate member of the European Community.

Following their victory in the 1971 General Election the Mintoff Labour Government demanded a revision of the Defence Agreement with Britain which would affect the N.A.T.O. base in Malta. In March 1972 agreement was eventually reached. Malta was to receive a combined annual payment from the United Kingdom and other N.A.T.O. sources of £14 million



per annum in return for a seven-year agreement on the use of the base facilities. The forces of the Warsaw Pact powers were to be excluded. In addition to the payment for the use of the military facilities Malta was to receive economic aid on a bilateral basis from certain countries, principally Italy. An agreement had been concluded the previous year with the E.E.C. to give full customs union by 1981.

In April 1972 it was announced that the Peoples' Republic of China had agreed to provide a £16.9 million low interest loan, to send technicians to the island to help with development projects such as the Malta Dry Docks Scheme, and that a Chinese embassy and a Libyan diplomatic office and cultural centre were to be established in Valletta.

By turning for aid to such states as China and Libya as well as the E.E.C. the Maltese government was attempting to adopt a position of neutrality in international affairs. It also proposed to make the islands independent of income derived directly from military bases during the term of the seven-year agreement up to 1979.

To ensure continued economic progress in the medium term Malta requires basically three things; sources of finance, sources of tourists, and markets for the products of manufacturing industries. Whilst countries such as China and Libya can make capital available it is Western Europe which provides the bulk of Malta's tourists and markets for export. The ties between Britain and Malta have become less directly dependent financially on the United Kingdom, and Britain has established the principle that the Malta base is a joint N.A.T.O. financial responsibility. The relationship has moved into the foreign policy framework rather than the old imperial connection - the major step in this process coming in 1974 with the change to the status of an independent Republic within the Commonwealth.

#### 4:3 GOVERNMENT IN MALTA

- a) Origins and development of the Maltese Parliament - (including a broad outline of Maltese constitutional development).

During the centuries of rule by the Knights of St. John there had been no Maltese representative body or assembly. Indeed the expulsion of the Order from the islands by Napoleon was the cause of little regret on the part of the islanders who had come to dislike 'The Religion' intensely. Following the defeat of the French fleet by Nelson at Aboukir Bay and the unsound and unpopular administration under General Vaubois the Maltese rebelled against the French occupation. They besieged the French garrison in Valletta and the 'Three Cities' of Grand Harbour, formed a National Assembly ( consiglio popolare ) and requested assistance from the British Navy. On 5th September 1798 Vaubois surrendered to the Royal Navy. The Treaty of Amiens of 1802 which would have returned the islands to the Knights of St. John was never implemented as hostilities soon broke out again. The islands were placed firmly under the British Crown and the consiglio popolare was dispersed.

During the early years of British rule there was still a body of native opinion in Malta which hankered after the formation of a Maltese parliament. In July 1811 a petition was sent to King George III requesting that the ancient rights of the Maltese, which had been suppressed by the Order of St. John, should be restored. The demands included the restitution of the consiglio popolare, a free press, and trial by jury with the right of appeal to the consiglio.

In 1812 a Commission of Inquiry was sent out from Britain to make recommendations as to the manner in which the civil government of the



island was to be run, and to give the Maltese "as large a share of civil liberty as is consistent with the military circumstances of the island".

The Commissioners, who took their evidence with great care and produced a very important document, concluded that a revived consiglio popolare would be composed of illiterates and fanatics who might well manipulate the population into an anti-British attitude. It did, however, decide that the existing make-shift division of Malta's government into civil and military compartments was unsatisfactory; in future the two spheres should be ultimately the responsibility of one man; a Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the islands. The Governor was to be advised, if he wished, by a committee of local citizens.

The Commission, also reported on the economic and financial affairs of the island. "Overall it is true to say that the commissioners made a better job of recording the state of the islands in 1812 than they did in recommending future courses of action".<sup>1</sup> Their approach to the question of taxation was limited by the fear of upsetting certain local persons of influence; thus direct taxation was kept out of Malta for another 150 odd years whereas indirect taxes on imported food bore heavily on the poorer sections of the community.

The report of the Commission was accepted in London. Sir Thomas Maitland arrived in Malta in 1813 to take up the post of Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Malta. He introduced some changes, many of which were undoubtedly necessary, which caused offence to certain sections of Maltese society and his autocratic manner earned him the nickname of 'King Tom'. Amongst other things the scope of the ecclesiastical courts was restricted; all property left to the Church had to be sold within a year; notaries

<sup>1</sup>The Story of Malta Brian Blouet. Faber & Faber 1967. P. 170



and advocates were in future to have written and verbal facility in the English language; and all petitions and government contracts were to be presented in English, which was to become the language of government rather than Italian. This latter point was to become increasingly important politically towards the end of the nineteenth century. The proposed committee of citizens, suggested by the 1812 Commission, never materialized and Maitland made his decisions unassisted.

The British possession of Malta was recognized by the other European powers in the Treaty of Paris signed in 1814. This ratified Malta as a Crown Colony ruled by a Governor whose power was unfettered by any consultative or legislative body in Malta.

In 1835 a revised constitution was introduced which laid down that the Governor should be advised by a council consisting of seven members and the Lieutenant Governor. The Council, on which the Maltese were to be represented by at least three members was, however, to remain an advisory body only.

The form of the Council was altered slightly in later years. A Constitution in 1849 provided for a council of eighteen members; the Governor, nine official members and eight elected members. Although the Council had a built-in official majority, the Maltese were at least being allowed to take part in debates leading to the formulation of policy subject to the permission of the Governor.

Blouet considers that the new constitution did not work particularly well "as the Maltese members felt they should have a measure of real control over the internal affairs and should not have to operate within the constitutional strait-jacket provided by the official majority".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Story of Malta Brian Blouet. Faber & Faber 1967. p. 192

The British administrators, in their turn, were divided in their opinions at the time. Some felt that the Maltese should have a greater share of responsibility whilst others felt that the majority of Maltese politicians were unfit to hold public office. As one described it "the small legislative council was palpably factious and unreasonable" and in it the "few agitators who strutted on this miniature political stage represented very imperfectly the views and true interests of the mass of the population". The 1849 constitution in fact virtually ceased to function as originally intended under Governor Sir Gaspard le Marchant (1858-1864) who employed the cruel but effective method of ringing the division bell every time one of the "strutters" got up to oppose a measure introduced by the Governor. This device brought the debate to a close and the official majority did the rest.

In 1864 Sir Henry Storkes replaced le Marchant and it became a matter of policy not to press those matters relating to expenditure against the wishes of the elected members.

In 1887 a reformed constitution<sup>1</sup> was introduced which gave the elected members of the council a majority. The Council had the power to legislate on most matters relating to the island's internal affairs and it controlled financial matters. The British Crown retained the right of intervention but these powers were only to be used in exceptional circumstances. This constitution remained in force up to 1903.

<sup>1</sup>Known as the Strickland-Mizzi Constitution.



The period of the 1887-1903 constitution saw the development of two main bodies of opinion amongst the Maltese members of the Council. These early groupings, with a few adjustments, were to form the basis of the later political party division in the islands. (This development and its significance will be dealt with more fully in Section 4:5).

In 1903, largely as a result of the unsatisfactory situation caused by the non-co-operation of the anti-reformist group in the Council, the 1887 constitution was replaced by another which returned to the principle of an official majority. This constitution lasted until the end of the First World War.

At the close of the war a body of local politicians founded the Maltese National Assembly which made demands on the British for a higher degree of autonomy. In 1919 a combination of difficult economic circumstances and student unrest at the Royal University of Malta led to a building up of tension which exploded in the form of anti-British riots in Valletta on 17th June. Amongst the targets of the rioters were the University, the pro-British 'Malta Daily Chronicle', the homes of several politicians with similar sympathies and some flour mills (in protest against the high price of bread). A new Governor, Lord Plummer, was despatched to restore the situation firmly but to make it clear that the Maltese were to be given a larger share in the running of the Internal affairs of the islands.

In December 1919 Malta was granted full self-government 'in all matters of purely local concern'. This new self-governing Constitution<sup>1</sup> came into effect in May 1921. It was to be a

<sup>1</sup>Known as the Amery-Milner Constitution.



system of dyarchy similar to the one introduced into India in the same year. The despatch from Downing Street declared that "there will in fact have to be two concurrent systems of government in the Island; a government for matters of Imperial concern which must take orders from the Imperial Government, and a government for local affairs which will be controlled by the wishes of the inhabitants of the Island expressed through popular institutions".<sup>1</sup> The two forms of government were to be united in the person of the Governor. The Imperial side of the dyarchy, aided by a Nominated Council, would deal with the 'Reserved Matters' which included defence, armed services, foreign relations, nationality, immigration and coinage. On the Maltese side of the dyarchy were created a Senate of 17 members (with special representation for the clergy, the nobility, the university, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Trade Union Council), and an elected Legislative Assembly of 32 members, and a Ministry composed of a maximum of seven ministers. The life of the Legislature was fixed at three years. Elections were held as soon as the necessary arrangements were made, and on 1st November 1921 Malta's new Parliament was ceremonially opened by the Prince of Wales.

On paper the new constitutional arrangements went a long way to meeting the interests of all concerned but the key problem was one of definition: where did Imperial interests end? Although this matter was worked out in the detailed wording of the constitution, in practice after a smooth initial period, the system did not function very well. It would, however, be misleading to suggest by reference to this point and the 1919 riots that the islanders and the British were continually in conflict. Only a limited

<sup>1</sup>An Outline of the Constitutional Development of Malta under British Rule. J.J. Cremona, Royal University of Malta. 1963.

number of Maltese were involved in politics during the nineteenth century and at the turn of the century out of a population approaching 200,000 only about 10,000 persons had the vote and less than half of these ever bothered to use it.

In 1930 the British Government suspended the 1921 constitution as a result of conflict between the internal state ministry headed by Lord Strickland, leader of the Constitutional Party, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Malta. The Church threatened the imposition of spiritual sanctions on anyone voting for, supporting or standing as a candidate for any party which was pro-Strickland. Indeed they went so far as to instruct the faithful to

"vote for those persons who, by their attitude in the past, offer greater guarantee both for religious welfare and for social welfare".<sup>1</sup>

Correspondence between Whitehall and the Vatican providing no way out of this impasse, the British Government felt that in view of the spiritual sanctions to be imposed on those voting for the candidates of one of the two major political parties - sanctions particularly effective with a people so loyal to their Church as the Maltese - they had no option but to suspend the General Election and the Constitution. The Strickland Ministry remained in office pending the report of a Royal Commission which was despatched 'to make a full and diligent inquiry into the existing political situation in the Island of Malta and to put forward recommendations as to the steps which can and should be taken

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence with the Holy See relative to Maltese Affairs.



for its amelioration".<sup>1</sup>

Briefly the Royal Commission recommended that the services of the Strickland Ministry - which was in the anomalous position of being in office but not in power - should be dispensed with, that the Constitution should be restored and that new elections should be held.

The resignation of the Strickland Ministry was obtained in March 1932 and was followed in June by a General Election. This resulted in a victory by the pro-Church and Italianate Nationalist Party over the Constitutional Party.

Constitutional problems soon arose again, however, as a dominant element in the new Ministry was determined not only to reverse the policy of the previous Administration but also that of the Imperial Government favouring the encouragement of the Maltese language and the restriction of Italian as a compulsory medium of instruction in schools. In this way the Nationalist Administration of Sir Ugo Mifsud were held to be assisting the propagandist activities of Mussolini's Italy which, in view of Malta's position as a key point of Imperial defence, could be construed as falling within the category of the "Reserved Matters". The Ministry, having failed to heed the warnings of the Imperial Government as to the course it was following, was dismissed on the 2nd November 1933.

With the withdrawal of the 1921 Constitution the Governor again assumed the full administration of the Island. The constitutional situation had reverted to that of a Crown Colony Government as in 1813.

<sup>1</sup>Report of the Malta Royal Commission (MacDonald Report).

1931, 1932 - Terms of reference



It was the Governor's Administration which in 1934 made Maltese the language of the law-courts in preference to Italian and in 1936 made English and Maltese the languages of administration. Also in 1936 a constitutional change was made providing for nominated members to join the Governor's Executive Council.

In 1939 the so-called 'MacDonald Constitution' restored representative instructions by providing for members to be elected to a Council of Government presided over by the Governor and elected representation in the Governor's Executive Council. Such election resulted in Lord Strickland's Constitutional Party being returned to office. This new arrangement was, however, far short of the degree of self government which had been granted in 1921 and was not to be restored until 1947.

In 1944 a National Congress representative of all the constituted bodies recognized by the Government of Malta prepared the way for a National Assembly summoned in 1946 to consider plans for a new Constitution. In addition a Constitutional Commission (chaired by Sir Harold MacMichael) was sent out to consult with the National Assembly. The result was the 1947 Constitution which reintroduced self-government under the dyarchial structure with reserved powers as before but for a unicameral Legislative Assembly of 40 members to be elected under a system of proportional representation.<sup>1</sup>

On 5th September 1947 the islands returned to internal self-government and in the following General Election a Labour Party Administration was returned in Malta for the first time.

<sup>1</sup>The workings of the Maltese electoral system will be examined in Section 4:4

In 1948 there took place an amendment of Letters Patent by the Crown altering the title of Head of the Maltese Ministry to that of Prime Minister.

This laid the pattern for the structure of internal administration and the legislature during the late 1940's and most of the 1950's.

In 1957 the Maltese Labour Party leader and Prime Minister, Mr Dom Mintoff, came into conflict with the Imperial Government on the key matters of both Anglo-Maltese future constitutional status and the future of the Royal Naval Dockyards in Grand Harbour. On 20th December 1957 his party was supported by the representatives of the Nationalist Party Opposition in a resolution in the Legislative Assembly threatening severance of the link with Britain. The resolution was passed unanimously and with acclamation. This was followed by circulars to Heads of Departments and all other Malta Government employees in February and April 1958 forbidding them to have any dealings with any member of the other side of the Dyarchy without the personal permission of the appropriate Minister. On 21st April 1958 Mr. Mintoff handed his resignation, and that of his Cabinet, to the Governor.

Following the resignation of the Mintoff Administration Dr Borg Olivier (the Leader of the Opposition) declined the Governor's invitation to form an alternative government and the Governor, Sir Robert Laycock, following a series of strikes and demonstrations, assumed powers to ensure the maintenance of law and order. In November and December 1958 constitutional talks in London between H.M. Government and Maltese political party leaders failed to produce any basis for restoring self-government.



The Maltese politicians were Mr. Mintoff (Malta Labour Party) Dr. Borg Olivier (Nationalist Party), and Miss Mabel Strickland (Progressive Constitutional Party): the latter having assumed the leadership of her father's renamed Party. The constitution was suspended in 1959 and the islands were once more placed under a colonial administration. The Malta (Constitution) Order in Council, 1959 and the Malta Royal Instructions, 1959, came into force on 15th April, the 1947 constitution being simultaneously revoked. The interim arrangements provided for an Executive Council including Maltese non-official members.

In July 1960 a constitutional commission under Sir Hilary Blood was set up. The 'Blood Constitution' was published in 1961 by Order-in-Council. It recommended that there should no longer be "reserved matters". The Maltese Government would be able to legislate on all questions but on certain areas it would have to consult with Britain, and could, if necessary, be over-ruled. In the meantime a measure of self-government was restored under a Maltese Prime Minister and Cabinet. In addition Malta was to be known as the "State of Malta".

In February 1962 a General Election under the new Constitution was held and the Nationalists under Dr. Borg Olivier won. The new Prime Minister informed the British Secretary of State for the Colonies in August 1962 that the Maltese wished to be granted full independence. The following year an independence



conference was held in London which led to an announcement by the British Government that Malta would become independent not later than 1964.

In 1964 a draft Constitution presented by Dr. Borg Olivier and endorsed by the Legislative Assembly and by a popular referendum<sup>1</sup> was approved by the British Government with a few minor amendments.

On 21st September 1964 Malta became a Sovereign and Independent nation within the British Commonwealth. The Governor, Sir Maurice Dorman, became its first Governor-General and the Duke of Edinburgh, as the Queen's Representative, handed the Constitutional Instruments to the Prime Minister and opened the first Parliament of the newly independent island state which Dr. Borg Olivier described as "one of the oldest nations in Europe".

With the return to office of Dom Mintoff following the 1971 General Election, Sir Maurice Dorman resigned and a distinguished Maltese lawyer, Sir Anthony Mamo, became Governor-General. In 1974 Malta became a Republic within the Commonwealth and Sir Anthony Mamo became its first President. He was succeeded in 1976 by Dr. Anton Buttigieg.

<sup>1</sup>1964 Independence Constitution Referendum figures.  
A total electorate of 156,886 persons was entitled to vote and of these 129,649 (83.4%) actually voted. There were 65,714 'yes' votes; 59,919 'No' votes and 9,016 invalid votes. Malta Year Book 1976

b) The Workings of the Maltese Executive and Legislature

The Maltese state was created by the Malta Independence Order 1964, which came into force through the Malta Independence Act 1964 on 21st September 1964, and by the Acts no. 57 and 58 passed by the House of Representatives on the 12th and 13th December 1974, respectively which amended the constitution.

As from 13th December 1974, Malta ceased to have a monarchical form of Government and became "a democratic Republic founded on work and on respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual". The Executive authority of Malta ceased to be vested in Her Majesty the Queen and is now vested in and exercised by the President of the Republic. A person who holds or has held the office of Chief Justice or that of a judge of the Superior Courts is not eligible to be appointed to the office of President. The President is appointed by resolution of the House of Representatives for five years and may be removed on the grounds of inability to perform his functions or misbehaviour.

Malta is a parliamentary democracy with a structure of government based on the Westminster model. The party with the most seats in the legislature forms the Cabinet from amongst its leadership. The Offices of Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the Leader of the Opposition are all recognised by the Constitution. The Clerk of the House of Representatives assured me that his 'bible' concerning matters of procedure in the chamber was Erskine May's 'Parliamentary Practice' and that whilst the House

produced its own precedents close contact was maintained with Mr Speaker's Office at Westminster. Much constitutional practice which operates by convention in the United Kingdom system of government is laid down in the written Maltese Constitution. The political cultures are, as we shall see, rather different.

The House of Representatives (Kamera il-Deputati) is the one and only chamber of the Maltese Parliament. Its members are elected by a system of proportional representation. The number of members of Parliament has varied, though growing progressively, from 40 in 1947 to 65 in 1977. From 1921 up to 1976 the various Maltese legislatures met in the historic Tapestry Chamber of the former Grand Master's Palace (built by the Knights of St. John) in Valletta. On 13th August, 1976 a new Legislative Assembly Chamber was inaugurated in the former Armoury.

A Constitutional Court, consisting of three judges, exists to give rulings on disputes under the Constitution of the Republic of Malta - subject of course to larger adjustment by Parliament.

#### 4:4 THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The electoral system used to return members to the unicameral Maltese Parliament is the so-called "single transferable vote" system of proportional representation. How did Malta come to adopt this famous yet rare method of conducting her elections, and how has it worked in Maltese experience?.

The "single transferable vote" was invented in the nineteenth century by a British lawyer, Thomas Hare. It found an eloquent



advocate in John Stuart Mill, and later in the Proportional Representation Society and in the writings of Enid Lakeman<sup>1</sup> and others of the Electoral Reform Society.

It was in 1921 that the "single transferable vote" system was introduced into Malta. Some Maltese elections in the nineteenth century had actually used the single member constituency 'first past the post' system still used in Britain. When the Maltese Assembly pressed for a new constitution after the First World War, it favoured proportional representation with a party list system as it was practiced in the major countries of Continental Europe<sup>2</sup>. L.S. Amery, an admirer of John Stuart Mill and then serving in the British Colonial Office, insisted that Malta should use instead the "single transferable vote" method. He argued that this would give "the most accurate representation of the true wishes of the electorate and is best calculated to secure the return of representatives who individually enjoy the confidence of their fellow citizens!"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Enid Lakeman and James D Lambert. Voting in Democracies (1954 et.seq.) London. Faber.

<sup>2</sup>J.J. Cremona An Outline of the Constitutional Development of Malta under British Rule (Malta 1963. p.p. 14-20

<sup>3</sup>Papers Relating to the New Constitution of Malta Cmd.1321. (London:HMSO, 1921) P.124

Amery's preference prevailed and so, ever since 1921, under successive constitutions and into the period of her independence, Malta has used this singular method of choosing its national legislature. There can be few countries that have had such continuity in their electoral system, and fewer still where there has been such nearly universal satisfaction with the method of election. Over the years, of course, there have been a number of changes in the details of the Maltese election laws and there have been occasional disputes over their proper administration; but the fundamentals of the electoral method have never been seriously challenged in Malta. Such apparent continuity and satisfaction with the "single transferable vote" method make it particularly interesting to study in the context of Maltese politics.

The mechanics of the 'S.T.V.' system are quite complex; yet the essential features of its operation in Malta can be presented in a fairly concise manner. The country is divided into 13 Electoral Divisions with roughly equal population. An Electoral Commission exists to supervise the conduct of elections and to review the size of constituencies. Before 1976 there were fewer electoral divisions. From each electoral division five representatives are returned. In order to win election a candidate must receive a specified "quota" of votes in his Division. In a five-member constituency this "quota" amounts to one vote more than  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the total number of valid votes cast. Every voter has only a single vote, but he/she may indicate on the ballot paper a preference for as many as five or more candidates; these preferences must be ranked in numerical order; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th. When the ballot papers are opened, the first preferences on all ballots are examined, and any candidate in excess of the needed "quota" will be elected.

Any additional votes, however, received by this winning candidate do not become an excess which is disregarded. Rather, these surplus votes are transferred to, and added to, the total votes of the candidate who was indicated on the ballot paper as the voter's next-ranked choice. Furthermore, on each successive count of the votes when votes are transferred, the candidate with the fewest number of votes is eliminated and his votes are also transferred to the candidate who is the next-ranked choice on the voter's ballot. The process, in short, transfers both surplus votes of candidates who have already won, plus the votes of candidates who have the least support on each count. Each transfer of votes, it should be remembered, is in accord with the specially indicated ranked preferences of the individual voter. If a voter fails to indicate more than one preference his vote naturally, becomes "non-transferable" and thus unusable after the first count. The transferring of votes proceeds until five candidates have accumulated the requisite "quota" of votes to be elected. Sometimes this procedure will be lengthy, an extreme case is provided by the election of 1962 in the Seventh Division where 38 candidates competed and it required 37 counts to determine the five winners. It must be noted, however, that the complexity involved in the transferring of votes is only a chore for the officials who count the ballot papers and not for the voters who cast the ballots. This, in a brief outline, is the manner in which the system of "S.T.V." operates.

We can now look at some of the effects of this voting system in Malta.

Firstly, the voting turnout in Malta is remarkably high. In the 1976 General Election, for example, more than 95% of all eligible voters went to the polls, and the rate of participation



has never dropped below 75% in any election since 1947. Of course, the use of the "single transferable vote" cannot be proved to account for this high rate of participation. Other factors such as the political issues at stake, the growing political awareness of the electorate, the intensity of the campaign efforts - including motor-cades, an abundance of political spray-can graffitti, posters, fireworks, the not infrequent bomb explosion at rival party clubs - all tend to produce a highly charged atmosphere during election time which cannot be ignored and probably explain better the high turnout on polling days. Nevertheless, without "single transferable vote" the supporters of minor parties and candidates might well have been discouraged from voting for a losing cause, whereas with the "single transferable vote" their secondary ballot preferences still carry real weight in determining the outcome of elections, and thereby give a real purpose to the act of voting.

How do the voters distribute their preferences among the many candidates who present themselves in each Division? The ballot in any given Electoral Division will contain an average of 21 candidates, ranging in recent years from a minimum of 11 to as many as 38 candidates. A voter is free to give all of his preferences to the candidates of just one party, or he may distribute them among candidates of different political parties. Indeed, proponents of the "single transferable vote" stress this opportunity of the voter to cross party lines on the ballot. Yet in practice we find that most Maltese voters give all their ballot preferences to candidates of the one party of their choice, at least as long as any candidates of that party are still in the running.

There are, to be sure, the ubiquitous so-called "floating voters" who shift their support from one party to another at different elections. The appearance and disappearance of various political parties has, of course, made some such "floating" inevitable. The available evidence, which is very scanty, does not suggest though that "floating voters" are very numerous in Malta. Political campaigns would seem to serve more to mobilise existing supporters rather than to change the party allegiance of voters. Again, once an election takes place and the voter casts his ballot, he is not likely then to let his five preferences 'float' among competing political parties.

While most voters stay loyally with the candidates of their chosen party, we nevertheless find a wide dispersion of preferences among the candidates of each party. Examining the results in more than 80 Divisional contests over the years, one notes that it is rare that all of a party's candidates receive vote totals that are even roughly equal in their Division. A few candidates consistently run well ahead of their party colleagues, often accumulating large vote surpluses which accrue, through vote transfers, to the benefit of the fellow candidates who trailed far behind in the vote.

What accounts for these notable differences in support for candidates of the same party in the same Division?

Some scholars have suggested that the position of the candidate's name high on the ballot sheet increases his



vote share.<sup>1</sup> An examination of Maltese election returns, however, does not support such a contention; nor does it seem likely that mere chance or accident accounts for the dispersion of party vote totals. The different levels of voter support for a party's candidates should be explained by their different individual attributes and actions, as these are perceived by the voters. One would expect that a candidate's appeal is significantly affected by such matters as the style and vigour of his campaign; his personal visibility achieved, for example through party leadership; the personal esteem in which he is held by his constituents; or his professional role in the community. These factors undoubtedly loom large in shaping voter preferences especially as the country is small, its personal communication networks are well established, and the candidates are known personally by most voters.

Since 1947, there have been 1,743 separate candidacies in nine national elections. Several candidates have contested every one of these elections; many more were only one-time contenders. Some of the attributes of candidates for the Maltese Parliament deserve some special mention. The candidates rarely contest elections as Independents; they are very likely to be either lawyers or medical practitioners; they are rarely female; and they stand for election even though their chances of winning are only one in four.

<sup>1</sup>See the literature cited by G.J.G. Upton and D. Brook - "The Importance of Positional Voting Bias in British Elections" in Political Studies. (June 1974) p.p. 178ff.



The infrequent appearance of Independent candidates is interesting because one might reasonably expect that with the "single transferable vote" candidates would not only be enabled but encouraged, to contest elections on their own. In fact, L.S. Amery had expressed the hope that the "single transferable vote" in Malta would weaken "the power of the party organisations".<sup>1</sup> In the event, however, it has been the candidates presented by political parties who have dominated elections and who have won the elections. Out of the total of 1,743 candidacies a mere 27 have been Independent ones, and collectively these have averaged less than one-third of one per cent of the votes!

Only one person has been elected as an Independent since the end of World War II, and that was to the parliament chosen in 1950 which lasted for less than a year. The only sure pathway to parliament in Malta, it seems, is the one provided by the political parties. The political parties will be examined in more detail shortly.

Another marked feature of Maltese elections is the predominance amongst candidates of lawyers and physicians. The following table illustrates this point:-

<sup>1</sup>Papers Relating to the New Constitution of Malta Cmd 1321

(London: HMSO. 1921) P 124

## LAWYERS AND PHYSICIANS AS CANDIDATES 1947-1976

YEAR OF ELECTION	% OF ALL CANDIDATES:			% OF WINNING CANDIDATES:		
	LAWYERS	DOCTORS	COMBINED	LAWYERS	DOCTORS	COMBINED
1947	37.9	16.1	54.0	32.5	30.0	62.5
1950	28.3	14.1	42.4	40.0	20.0	60.0
1951	30.8	10.0	40.8	47.5	10.0	57.5
1953	22.1	8.7	30.8	40.0	15.0	55.0
1955	23.9	9.2	33.1	35.0	22.5	57.5
1962	18.5	12.0	30.5	36.0	26.0	62.0
1966	23.1	10.2	33.3	40.0	18.0	58.0
1971	23.1	12.1	35.2	40.0	23.6	64.6
1976	24.3	17.3	41.6	36.9	26.2	63.1

This tabulation of percentages requires some comment. Firstly, it is obvious that lawyers and physicians are greatly over-represented in relation to all other occupations. Some such disproportionality is quite common in legislatures all over the 'western' world. It is nonetheless striking when one finds, for example, that the 1967 Census for the Maltese Islands lists 116 lawyers among the gainfully employed and that more than half that number (61) are contesting the election in the preceding year. Secondly, it will be seen that lawyers and doctors are much more successful than others in converting their candidacies into winning ones. Finally, regardless of changes in the population and workforce of Malta there has been little change, and certainly no decreasing trend, in the proportion of lawyers and doctors who successfully stand as candidates. The reasons for this phenomena will be examined at a later stage.

The number of women who become candidates in Malta, as elsewhere in the world, has been decidedly small.<sup>1</sup> Their number has never exceeded nine in any election, and it is notable that despite the changes in the status of women in recent years, the number of female candidacies has been smaller in the past three elections than it was in 1950. Several Maltese women, such as Mabel Strickland (Progressive Constitutional Party) and Agatha Barbara (Malta Labour Party) have, however, had outstandingly successful careers.

<sup>1</sup>Lilian Sciberras. "Women and Maltese Politics" The Malta Year Book 1975 (Sliema, Malta 1975) p 372-383



We have seen that there have been few Independents and few women among parliamentary candidates; but there is no lack of persons ready to face the voters even when the odds of being elected can be rather high. The following table illustrates this point:-

NUMBER OF CANDIDACIES, BY POLITICAL PARTY, 1947-1976

YEAR OF ELECTION	NO OF SEATS AT STAKE	TOTAL NO OF CANDIDACIES	NO. OF CANDIDATES BY PARTY <sup>1</sup>							OTHERS+ INDEP!'S
			MLP+ MWP	NP	CP+ PCP	DAP	DNP	CWP		
1947	40	124	39	32	-	36	-	-	17	
1950	40	184	77	40	32	29	-	-	6	
1951	40	130	65	38	23	-	-	-	4	
1953	40	172	84	45	43	-	-	-	-	
1955	40	142	65	61	15	-	-	-	1	
1962	50	302	62	63	50	-	58	54	15	
1966	50	264	72	76	27	-	24	59	6	
1971	55	199	94	78	19	-	-	-	8	
1976	65	226	109	115	-	-	-	-	2	

This tabulation of candidacies shows some very crowded fields indeed. Each of the candidates has, on average, only one chance in four to be elected. The chances for candidates who are nominated by either the Labour Party or the Nationalist Party are of course substantially better. Yet, these two major parties have also tended to nominate more candidates in almost every Division

<sup>1</sup>MLP - Malta Labour Party; MWP - Malta Workers Party; NP- Nationalist Party; CP - Constitutional Party; PCP - Progressive Constitutional Party; DAP - Democratic Action Party; DNP - Democratic Nationalist Party; CWP - Christian Workers Party.

than they could possibly hope to see elected. The Labour Party has presented as many as 14 candidates in one Division and the Nationalist Party as many as 12; this despite the fact that neither party ever wins more than four seats in any one Division and usually not more than three. Such a pattern of "over-nomination" might at first glance seem self-defeating for a political party. The votes received, however, by a multiplicity of a party's candidates are likely, through the process of the vote transfers, to help the few candidates which the party can reasonably expect to win in a Division.

How fair is the Maltese electoral system? Following the General Election of 1976 Professor John C Lane of the State University of New York (at Buffalo) carried out a survey to ascertain how the different political parties in Malta had fared under the system. During the post-war period eleven different political parties have competed in Maltese elections. Of these only two political parties have contested every election since 1947 and remained as the only two parties contesting the election of 1976 - these being the Malta Labour Party and the Nationalist Party. It remains to be seen whether the recurrent pattern of multi-party competition will assert itself once more in Malta. The electoral system itself does not impose formidable barriers against entry into the electoral arena by smaller parties. The system does, however, have a discriminatory effect on the success it permits to small-party candidacies.<sup>1</sup> Professor Lane found that in Maltese election results the percentage of seats

<sup>1</sup>See Douglas Rae Jnr. The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws (New Haven, 1967), especially Chapter Four.



which a party gains in parliament "almost but not quite" matches the percentage of first-preference votes for that party at the polls.<sup>1</sup> An examination of the detailed figures compiled from the results shows that there are only small deviations from a perfect match of votes cast and seats obtained. In this respect Malta does significantly better than those countries, like the United Kingdom or the United States with their single-member district, plurality electoral system.

Professor Lane points out, however, two particular aspects of this picture of near perfect proportionality in Maltese results. Firstly, some political parties tend to fare rather consistently better in translating their votes into seats (e.g. the Nationalists from 1950 to 1971) and others do consistently worse (e.g. most of the smaller parties and all Independents). In part this is because of the former's greater ability to attract lower ballot preferences on the later ballot counts. The second aspect is hidden behind the overall pattern of national results. While a high degree of proportionality prevails in the final national results, there are often considerable discrepancies in particular Electoral Divisions between first-preference votes obtained and the number of seats won. For example, in the 1976 election a Labour plurality of less than 1% in the First Electoral Division meant a 20% difference in the number of seats won there; and in 1951 the Nationalists converted 41% of the vote in the Tenth Division into 60% of that Division's seats. Similarly, when voters divide almost evenly (as they did by a margin of 49.9% to 50.0% in the Fifth Division in 1971) then with a five-member constituency the resulting 3:2 apportionment of seats inevitably creates a disproportionality.

<sup>1</sup>See Appendix XV for Table showing deviations in the percentages respectively, of first-preference votes and seats won, by party 1947-1976. Page 269



Yet the important fact is that such discrepancies tend to cancel each other out. "Consequently, the ultimate representation of political parties in the parliament is a quite accurate reflection of the nation's voter preferences..... in Malta the reflection of the voter's choices is among the most accurate that can be found anywhere in the world today".<sup>1</sup>

#### 4:5 THE POLITICAL CLEAVAGE SYSTEM

##### a) MALTESE SOCIETY - MAIN LINES OF CLEAVAGE

The Maltese language is, as we have seen, Semitic and closely related to North African Arabic. Yet the main features of the culture and the social organisation of the people who speak this language place them firmly within the 'Latin' or southern European portion of the Mediterranean region. It was the period of Aragonese rule from the 13th until the arrival of the Knights of St. John which established this basic pattern. The rise of Christianity in the guise of the Roman Catholic Church to a central place in Maltese society, the creation of a nobility, the development of a local government, the influx of migrants from Spain and southern Italy, and the general cultural influence of Iberia and Sicily all made their lasting mark during this period. The foundation of the Maltese nobility in the early part of Aragonese rule clearly helped to project certain aspects of Spanish culture into local life and the influence of the Royal viceroy in Sicily soon established the cultural superiority of the Italian language over the native Maltese tongue. Language as a badge of cultural identity was to become a major factor in Maltese politics.

<sup>1</sup>J.C. Lane "How Malta Votes" in The Malta Year Book 1977 (Sliema, Malta) 1977. pp 436-438.

When the Maltese islands were given to the Knights of St. John by the Emperor Charles V in 1530 it was against the express wishes of the local aristocracy who, quite rightly in the event, feared the loss of their own authority and the danger of 'foreign' influences in Malta. Although the Order strengthened the position of the Catholic Church in the islands it concentrated most of its activity around the Grand Harbour area of firstly 'The Three Cities', and then Valletta and its environs. This intensified the gap which was already growing between urban 'fortress Malta' and the rural Malta of the villages. The native aristocracy remained mostly hostile to the Knights and their cosmopolitan usurping ways whilst a growing trading class found it profitable to deal with the people in the growing metropolitan area. As we have seen, the expulsion of the Order by the French in 1798 was the cause of no great regret to most Maltese but the tendencies for conflict over the 'culture' question were to continue and to develop under British rule. The Maltese aristocracy wished to preserve their Italianate culture and the dominance of their chief source of support among the inhabitants, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, in the face of a new foreign power, this time a Protestant one, exploiting 'fortress Malta'. On the other hand, the trading and artisan classes, at least in or near the area of Valletta found it profitable to deal with the colonial power.

The period of British rule in Malta witnessed the political and social development of the Maltese people after their emergence from centuries of feudalism and theocratic government. The origins of the first Maltese political parties lie in the struggle over the language issue which will now be examined in some detail because of its importance.



During the period of the 1887 - 1903 Constitution two main bodies of opinion formed amongst the members of the Council of Government. One group was basically reformist and pro-English whilst the other group was anti-reform and pro-Italian in the cultural sense. The latter group was opposed to the teaching of English in Maltese schools at the expense of Italian and made strenuous efforts to block the voting of money for the development of an educational system of which it disapproved. They were also opposed to proposed reforms of the civil service and the taxation system. In general they disapproved of increased public expenditure and were unco-operative in dealing with Government business in the Council. Their rallying call was the defence of 'culture' and the Italian language.

In the early days of British rule in Malta the Maltese language, whilst the spoken tongue of all sections of the native population, had not yet secured the status of a written language. This it was to secure later through the efforts of Lord Strickland (a major figure in the history of Maltese politics) and a number of philologists and authors determined to write in the vernacular. English was known amongst the commercial community, mainly in the area of Valletta but was little understood beyond that part of Malta. Italian was at that time, in default of a written language, the language of the Law Courts. It had been the language used by the Order for the conduct of its administration in the islands and was also the official language of the Church through the link with Sicily. In addition, as the language of the nearest country on the continent of Europe, Italian was spoken in upper-class Maltese drawing-rooms in much the same way that French rather than German was spoken in the Potsdam of Frederick the Great. The use of the vernacular was rather frowned upon in polite society. Camillo Spreti, a noble of Ravenna and a Knight of the Order of St.



John who wrote an account of the island in 1764<sup>1</sup> said of the Maltese that "their language makes them seem more rough than they really are, it being much akin to Turkish since the Turks and the Maltese can understand one another". (Spreti, who described the language of the Maltese as "their own perfidious idiom", confused and combined Turks and Arabs into one identity notes Sir Harry Luke.<sup>2</sup>)

At the time that Britain took over the administration of Malta Italy was still, to quote Metternich's well-known phrase, no more than a geographical expression. Thus the continued use of the Italian language in Malta at this time was free from immediate political overtones. Nevertheless Lord Bathurst's instructions to Sir Thomas Maitland on his appointment in 1813 include this direction: "You will be pleased to issue all proclamations in English as well as Italian, and in a few years the latter may be gradually disused". As British rule developed more and more, the Maltese became dependent upon Britain and the British armed services for a livelihood and it became an increasing advantage to learn and to speak English.

The battle began in earnest in the late 1870s when a report on the civil establishment in Malta recommended that the business of government should all be conducted in English and that promotion should only go to candidates who proved themselves fluent in that language. Within a short time another report was published recommending the reform of the education system. This proposed that both Maltese and English should occupy a more important place in the islands' schools. These suggestions raised violent feelings amongst the anti-reformers and many bitter debates developed in the Council of Government. Slowly the pro-Italian group were forced to give ground. In 1899 it became

<sup>1</sup>Translated from the manuscript in the Malta National Library by Averil Mackenzie-Grieve and published by the Order of St. John of Jerusalem as Historical Pamphlet No.10.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Harry Luke Malta : An Account and an Appreciation 2nd ed. London: Harrap 1960. Page 133.

permissible to use the English language in the law courts in certain circumstances but it was not until 1934 that Maltese was made the principal language of the courts, in preference to Italian.<sup>1</sup> The Constitution of 1921 declared that Italian and English were the official languages of Malta. In 1934 Maltese was added to the list and in 1936 the situation was simplified by making English the language of administration and Maltese the language of the courts. Subsequent constitutions have maintained this basic position with Maltese and English being both widely used in general in the islands and in the fields of administration in particular. Debates in the Maltese Parliament, however, are conducted in Maltese. The Italian language no longer has any official standing in the islands.

The language question might appear to have certain comic opera qualities but Blouet points out that it would be misleading to take the controversy entirely at its face value. "The problem was but one facet of a struggle in which a relatively privileged group in Maltese society attempted to maintain its position. The language question also represented a cultural clash as Maltese middle and upper classes tried to retain certain cultural traits which they felt the British/English influence was eroding. Italian language and culture became a rallying point for these groups".<sup>2</sup>

During the 1930s the language question was exploited by Mussolini and the Italian fascists in their efforts to give substance to their spurious claims for possession of the Maltese islands. This placed some of those Maltese who admired Italian culture but who had always maintained their loyalty to the British Crown in a difficult position. A number of the pro-Italian politicians in Malta were thought to be

<sup>1</sup>It was claimed at this time that only 15% of Maltese could speak Italian.

<sup>2</sup>Brian Blouet The Story of Malta Faber & Faber 1967. Page 196.



displaying irredentist tendencies by the British and when World War II broke out some of them were deported to East Africa while others were held in custody. What support there had been in the islands for Italy soon disappeared once the bombing of Malta by Mussolini's Air Force began.

By the time of the 1921 elections the basic pattern of Maltese party politics had taken shape. Four main parties contested this first election under the new post-war constitution. Two of them, the Unione Politica Maltese (U.P.M) and the Partito Democratico Nazionale (P.D.N.) as the style of their names suggests, had grown basically out of the pro-Italian group in the old Government Council. A third party, the Constitutional Party, had developed out of the old pro-British group and was led by Lord Strickland. Lord (formerly Sir Gerald) Strickland had been Chief Secretary of Malta, then a Colonial Governor, next an Australian State Governor, and was by the descent through his mother the holder of the Maltese title of Count della Catena. He is a major figure in the history of Maltese politics. The fourth party was the small but growing Labour Party based on the trade unions in the Grand Harbour urban area. During the 1920s the U.P.M. and the P.D.N. worked in coalition eventually fusing together to become the Nationalist Party (P.N.). The story of Maltese politics in the inter-war years is one of conflict between Strickland and his party, often with Labour support, on the one hand<sup>and</sup> the Roman Catholic hierarchy supporting, and being supported by, the Nationalist Party on the other. This was to form the basis of another major theme in Maltese political history, that of conflict between Church and State - at least whenever the state is being governed by non-Nationalist politicians. The Strickland-Church conflict of the 1920s and 1930s was a prelude to the Mintoff-Church strife of the 1950s and 1960s.



The Maltese are in general very loyal sons and daughters of the Roman Catholic Church. The sanctions which have been imposed by the hierarchy from time to time on those who have supported the 'wrong' candidates have had considerable effect in the past. The modernization process has, however, increased secularization. There is an observable tendency for the less devout to support the Labour Party and for regular communicants to support the Nationalists. With the disappearance of other parties from the political scene the choice for the Maltese voter becomes increasingly polarised.

"Since the conclusion of the Second World War the domestic political scene in Malta has been dominated by the Malta Labour Party and the Nationalist Party. Smaller parties like the Progressive Constitutionalists and the Christian Workers Party have contested the elections, occasionally won seats in the legislature and, adorned as they have been, by some lively personalities, have contributed to the vitality of political life in the islands. But it is the Malta Labour Party and the Nationalist Party that have been responsible for forming administrations and developing the main lines of policy."<sup>1</sup>

In fact since 1966 these two parties have had a monopoly of representation in the Maltese Parliament and it is fair to refer to modern Malta as having a two-party system.

It would be wrong to suggest that the intensity of the conflict between the MLP and the Church is still as strong as it was in the 1950's and 1960's. On the surface at least the leaderships of the two organisations have become reconciled to an extent, probably out of necessity as Labour have been in office since 1971. The Prime Minister and MLP leader, Dom Mintoff, and Archbishop Michael Gonzi (a participant in the struggles against Strickland, whilst Bishop of Gozo, and Mintoff whilst Archbishop) appeared to have declared a form of truce during the later 1970's.

<sup>1</sup> Brian Blouet The Story of Malta 1972. Faber & Faber. London. Page 238.

On the other hand there are very real differences of approach and values between the two camps so that one might almost refer in the Maltese case to a Laager mentality. Here, for example, is a simple item of news as reported in the impartial Malta Year Book:-

"Celebrations on May 1st included the usual big demonstrations in Valletta held jointly by the Malta Labour Party and the General Workers Union. There was a large number of floats depicting the achievements of the Government. In the morning, Mr. L. Sant, Minister of Public Buildings and Works, unveiled a monument to Manwel Dimech, regarded as the father of Maltese socialism, at Castille Square, Valletta. The Church observed May 1st as the feast of St. Joseph the Worker and in a ceremony at St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta, Archbishop Gonzi warned that Communism was infiltrating Malta." <sup>1</sup>

In Malta the cleavage lines tend to reinforce each other. Support for the P.N. comes from areas where the Church is strong. These may be geographical areas such as Gozo or the Northern part of Malta proper beyond the geological fault where rural lifestyles and values still remain dominant, or middle class suburbs such as Floriana and Sliema, the suburb of Valletta much favoured by the British. They may be areas in society such as lay-groups associated with the Church, like Catholic Action (the Youth Movement) and MUSEUM<sup>2</sup> (the Society

<sup>1</sup>The Malta Year Book 1977 Edited by H. Clews. Sliema, Malta. P. 82

<sup>2</sup>From its Latin motto - Magister Utinam Sequatur Evangelium Universus Mundus. (MUSEUM is a strict puritanical body of lay people vowed to celibacy and to the defence of the Church against hostile forces.)



(the Society of Christian Doctrine), or those sections of society such as the women or the aged who generally attend Church and obey its dictates. The Church-State conflict is in essence a conflict between conservative Catholicism and a secular socialism. Added to this is the usual Left/Right economic cleavage. The language issue is no longer a live one with even the P.N. becoming reconciled to the use of Maltese rather than Italian. In fact many Maltese now use both Italian and English words mixed in with their own language in everyday speech with no political overtones.

If, as I have suggested, the lines of political cleavage are reinforced in Malta so that people are polarised into one of two camps what then prevents a total deadlock or explosion of violence? The answer is partly the nature of the electoral system which allows cross-voting between parties for candidates in an Electoral Division, although most Maltese do not; partly the cross-cutting influence of family and localist loyalties for candidates, who you are related to or know well on the other side; and partly because of the overall shared values which hold the community together. Politics in Malta is highly individualised and this is a point which will be investigated further at a later stage.

#### b) THE POLITICAL PARTIES

As we have seen Malta has now, in effect, a two-party system. This section will concentrate on the P.N. and the M.L.P. but will briefly mention some of the third parties which have gained seats in the legislature especially the Constitutional Party and its successor the P.C.P.



The P.N. was formed in 1924 as the fruit of a coalition government composed of the U.P.M. and the P.D.N. which were the Italianate parties of the time. It is a Conservative party in economic affairs, supports the Catholic Church in Malta and is supported by it. Described as reactionary and capitalist by its opponents it prefers to present itself as similar to the Christian Democrat parties of Western Europe.

It is basically a traditional patronage based party whose parliamentary representatives are mostly doctors and lawyers who receive electoral support from their clientele. In the present Parliament over 80% of P.N. members are doctors or lawyers.

Up to the Second World War a large wing of the party was openly pro-Italian and expressed admiration for Mussolini. Even today the party flag is rather reminiscent of a fascist banner and party rallies have an echo of that tradition. The flag consists of a white and red Maltese shield on a gold fringed black field with gold letters P.N. in the bottom left and right corners respectively. Surmounting the shield is the crown of the Norman Dukes of Sicily who liberated Malta from the Moslems and restored Catholicism.

Post 1945 party foreign policy has firmly favoured identification with the western bloc and membership of NATO and the European Community.

It has benefitted from the demise of its original rival the Constitutional Party. With Anglo-Italian rivalry no longer an issue in Maltese politics and the rise of the economic cleavage issues the P.N. has welcomed the influx of Anglophile and British expatriate middle class support.

The P.N. is then the party of free enterprise, the Church, and increasingly the home of anyone who is against the M.L.P. During election campaigns it describes itself as the standard bearer of western/christian civilisation.

Both major political parties have social clubs in most villages or townships although the M.L.P. has more than the P.N. This deficit is compensated in part by the provision of assistance by village priests and church groups.

There are several party newspapers in Malta, the major Nationalist one being 'In-Nazzjon Taghna'.

The party colour, as used on posters, ballot papers, spray graffiti and daubings is usually black, although sometimes green, and contrasts with the M.L.P. use of red.

Until 1977 the leader of the party was the former Premier Dr. G. Borg Olivier. He has been succeeded by Dr. E. Fenech Adami.

## ii) Malta Labour Party (M.L.P.)

The Malta Labour Party is one of the oldest political parties in Malta. It was founded as a socialist party relying heavily on trade union support in the dockyard areas of Grand Harbour. In particular it has always had close affinities with the General Workers Union.

In the 1920's and 1930's it tended to ally itself with Strickland's Constitutional Party in its pro-reformist and pro-Maltese and English versus Italian battles. As Maltese politics became more concerned with economic rather than overtly cultural issues the M.L.P. became a major political party displacing the Constitutionalists as the main opponents of the



Nationalists. In doing so it also became seen as the prime opposition group to the Church.

In 1947 the M.L.P. came into power, with 24 seats out of a total of 40, to form an administration under Dr. Paul Boffa with self-government restored for internal affairs for the first time since 1933. A momentous event in Maltese politics occurred, however, in 1949 when a disagreement between Dr. Boffa and his Minister of Public Works and Reconstruction, Mr. Dom Mintoff, over the handling of negotiations with Britain concerning the dismissal of redundant workers at the naval dockyards led to a split in the party. Dr. Boffa resigned and formed the Malta Workers Party leaving Mr. Mintoff as leader of the M.L.P. After contesting the next three general elections as a separate party the M.W.P. eventually merged with the P.N. giving them a trade union element of sorts. The Church - M.L.P. strife resulted in a further splinter group breaking off in the early 1960's as the Christian Workers Party. This disappeared from the political scene after the 1966 elections.

The assumption of leadership of the M.L.P. by Dominic Mintoff transformed not only the Party but the whole of Maltese politics. This qualified architect and former Rhodes scholar has a highly personalised style of leadership both as party leader and Maltese Prime Minister. To his supporters he is a temporal Messiah; to his opponents he is almost the Anti-Christ. Organisationally he rebuilt the Labour Party in Malta by establishing a party club run by a local committee in every village or township in Malta. Such "kazin Laburista" serve as a social and recreational centre, with drinks, snooker and television, for party members as well as serving as bases for mobilisation of support during election campaigns. In this



way the influence of the Church is challenged in all but the most rural localities. This process has increased the trend to secularization in Malta and will be explored in more detail in the following section.

In recent years Mr. Mintoff has caused some disquiet in the ranks of the Labour Movement itself by attempts to integrate the trade unions and the M.L.P. more firmly and to control, as Prime Minister, the wage negotiation process.

The M.L.P. stands for neutrality in foreign and defence matters. It sees Malta as a Mediterranean state which has links with such powers as Libya, Tunisia, and Yugoslavia as well as with Italy and Western Europe in general. Economic aid has been accepted from Russia and China as well as the West and this rather dangerous course of neutrality has not been too well received by the Church and the Nationalists.

The M.L.P. has several party newspapers which print in both English and Maltese, the major one being 'Is-Sebh'. It also usually has the support of the trade union publications.

The M.L.P. flag is basically that of Malta itself (white and red halves) with the torch of liberty in the centre surrounded by a golden circlet bearing the legend 'Malta Labour Party'.

M.L.P. parliamentary representatives come from a more varied occupational background than do Nationalist members. Approximately 45% of them are doctors and lawyers, following the traditional Maltese pattern, but a growing proportion of them especially in the Cabinet are from other professions such as architects, journalists, teachers or are trade union officials and activists.

The Malta Year Book of 1976 mentioned three Maltese political parties as being in existence. The Year Book for 1977 mentioned only two; the P.N. and the M.L.P. The Progressive Constitutional Party, the third one, did not contest the 1976 elections.

As we have seen, the original Constitutional Party of Lord Strickland had emerged from the pro-English reformist group in the Government Council of the 1880's. With M.L.P. support it was a major power in the inter-war years incurring the severe displeasure of the Church. It retained the alternative support, however, of the British Establishment and the influence of a newspaper group owned by the Strickland family which included 'The Times of Malta' and 'The Sunday Times of Malta'. It emerged from the Second World War as a party with falling support becoming increasingly irrelevant to the new Maltese situation. In the elections of 1950 and 1951 it retained 4 seats in the legislature but gained no representation at all in the 1955 election which returned a House split completely into M.L.P and P.N. camps.

In 1953 a successor party was launched with a slightly more 'Maltese' image under the leadership of Miss Mabel Strickland, daughter of Lord Strickland. This Progressive Constitutional Party contested every election from 1953 up to 1971 but only ever gained one seat and that was in 1962.

As the 1976 election approached the Strickland press threw its support into the anti-Mintoff camp and this "third force" in Maltese politics disappeared. The P.C.P. is now defunct.



Other small parties have arisen from time to time but have soon disappeared. Examples are the Gozo Party and the Jones Party. Some, such as we have seen with the Malta Workers Party and the Christian Workers Party, have been created by splits in the M.L.P. whilst others, such as the Democratic Action Party and the Democratic Nationalist Party, have left the P.N. Eventually however, these groups seem to return to one or the other of the two major political groupings.

### c) THE NATURE OF POLITICS IN MALTA

In a sense there are two Maltas. One is the Malta of the Valletta conurbation while the other is the Malta of the villages. Considering the peculiarities of Malta's economy in the past it is not surprising that there has been for centuries a dichotomy between town and village. This was particularly marked during the rule of the Knights and the British, for the city of Valletta (known locally as IL-BELT) and its environs formed the locus of ecclesiastical, economic, political and military power. It was there that the elite worked and lived. There were considerable differences, not only in power and influence but also in culture dress and language between those who lived in the city and those residing in the villages and rural townships. The difference between town and country still exists, but is much less pronounced than it was sixty years ago. Many of the townships are large villages and, particularly in the central part of Malta between Mdina and Valletta, are less than a mile apart. Though Malta proper, and to a lesser extent Gozo, are becoming more and more industrialised, agriculture still plays an important subsidiary role. Many Maltese work in the conurbation area during the day and travel back to the villages at night. Unskilled and semi-skilled industrial workers may often till land and tend their animals back in the village in their evenings and other spare time. About half the population



lives outside the conurbation centring on Valletta. These people see a difference between themselves and the city dwellers, and especially between themselves and the upper and middle class emigré 'Brits' living in Sliema, the smart suburb just north of Valletta. The number of people active in agriculture increases in proportion to the distance from the industrial part of Malta around the Grand Harbour area. The closer the villages are to the latter, the greater the range of occupations and the various social differences which derive from them. The hold of the Church also tends to be stronger in the more isolated villages.

In spite of the urban-rural dichotomy outlined above there is a remarkable cultural homogeneity in Malta. This is due largely to the interplay of two important constants. The first is structural and the second cultural. All villages and townships in Malta and Gozo have a similar concentric layout. The church and the houses of the local notables are on the main square. These form the core of the settlement. The periphery is populated by the poorer and less influential villagers. The formal structure of the parish is the same everywhere. This, in the absence of any system of local government, usually provides the organisational framework of the village. The striking social and cultural homogeneity of Maltese and Gozitan villages is chiefly due to the unifying influence of a strong Church in a small relatively isolated island society. The important social differences, which do of course exist, lie not so much between the villages themselves. They lie between the villages, the urban area, and Sliema. There is, however, a gradation of differences. Sliema forms one pole of the social continuum in Malta; an isolated village in Gozo, such as Qwala, forms the other. Most villages and townships can be ranged along this continuum.

Formal channels of contact between the administrative

departments of the government in Valletta and the villages usually run via the Police Department, which maintains stations in all of Malta's towns, villages, and major hamlets. Parish priests have, for centuries, been leading local figures and forces of opinion and moral values. During the present century, however, district and local committees of the political parties, especially the government party, provide important informal communication channels. In the post-war period this aspect of Maltese politics has become far more important. Informal channels of influence have always been of paramount importance but under the modernising pressures of a powerful Labour Party with principles of egalitarianism and bureaucratic universalism rather than preference and particularism this pattern is beginning to change.

Family relationships are very important in Malta. The Maltese have large families and reckon kinship equally through males and females. Each individual is thus at the centre of a wide network of blood relatives and relatives through marriage. This has implications for political behaviour in Malta which go further than they would in most larger more industrialised western states. Relatives will generally favour each other with electoral support at the polls in a local Electoral Division even across the political party divide. The English proverb "Blood is thicker than water" has a Maltese equivalent which translates as "Blood will never become poison". The type of electoral system does allow for family loyalty to play a part in choosing rank order of preference either within one party's candidates or between them. A Labour Party M.P. who I interviewed, a journalist for the General Workers Union, told me that he quite confidently expected to pick up some Nationalist support in his Division in the 1976 election because his son had just married the daughter of a wealthy and influential Nationalist family.



Individuals and families in Malta are often known by nicknames. In a small community where the same few surnames abound, nicknames are indispensable as a form of differentiation. They are used openly, in the presence of the person concerned, and often by the person themselves. This contrasts starkly with the practice in Sicily, where nicknames are usually insults and it is considered very rude to use them in the presence of those referred to. Most nicknames in Malta are composed of the noun plus the preposition 'of' (ta). This is illustrated by the case of a Nationalist candidate I met - Anne Agius-Ferrante - a member of a Maltese aristocratic family, as the name suggests. Underneath her picture and full name on the posters and card diaries distributed on her behalf with the exhortation to 'Ivvota Nazzjonalista' was the nickname (Ta'Pullicin) - the physicians daughter. This, it was explained to me, was for the benefit of the peasants of the area who were not sophisticated and needed to be reminded of their clientele loyalties to the family. This brings us on to the question of social prestige and its role in Maltese politics.

There is considerable difference in the amount of social prestige ascribed to various occupations. Despite the insistence in the opening line of the Constitution that "Malta is a democratic Republic founded on work" non-manual occupations still have the highest prestige, manual occupations the lowest. The free professions - the priest, doctor, lawyer, architect, chemist notary - are at the top; the farmer is at the bottom. Education is valued as a means of upward social mobility. In many respects a government clerical officer is at the other end of the scale to the farmer. The civil servant has a steady, relatively easy job with a good cash income and a comfortable pension at the end. He also has ready access to influential persons in the government. He has a life of security and relative independence. The farmer, in



contrast, has been looked down upon for centuries. He represents the traditional life of dependence; upon the weather, the market, the middleman for cash advances, and the patron through whom established authority has always been contacted. The professional and the farmer represent the two poles in the hierarchy of Maltese society. They also represent the two poles of the continuum town-country, city-village. Where professionals do live in the villages they represent the city and the culture of the urban elite. They are not wholly of the village; the social networks in which they move extend far beyond the village. Very often doctors, lawyers, and architects leave their villages to live in the town, usually in Sliema. They do this for social and professional reasons. Many are married to city girls who look upon life in a small village as common and rustic and, therefore, unpleasant. In the town the professions also have a far greater field from which to draw their professional clientele. Living in the town gives them prestige. Many, however, maintain offices in the villages, where they see clients several times a week. As we have noted earlier a very high proportion of parliamentarians and candidates for seats in Malta are doctors and lawyers. The nature of their work keeps them in 'face-to-face' contact with many constituents. Office in the local branch of one of the political parties may also confer a measure of prestige. This is particularly true in the case of the M.L.P. who thus have an alternative structure through which to operate when faced with hostility by the traditional informal holders of prestige positions. The secretary of the local committee of the party elected to form the government has access to power. Requests to government departments and officials often flow through him. He controls important channels of communication. Party office tends only to bring prestige amongst the partisans of one's own party, however, so that while more radical Labour supporters who take an open stand

against the Church's involvement in politics are respected by more cautious M.L.P. partisans they are regarded as communists and agents of the devil by those opposed to Labour's policies. To this latter group office holding in the Labour Party decreases prestige.

In general, the culture of the city has high prestige and that of the country low prestige.

Religion permeates the structure of Maltese society to an extent that makes it quite impossible to classify many institutions as either religious or secular. A parish church, for example, is more than just a place of worship; it is the focal point of a great deal of the social life of the village and the repository of its collective wealth. The church itself is the embodiment of the history of the village. It is a showpiece, which locals are always eager to show to tourists and other visitors, which all, even the most anti-clerical Labour supporters point out with considerable pride to strangers. The parish priest or 'kapillan' is still often seen as the village's chief spokesman. He has considerable authority and influence. The legitimate power that he wields in the field of religion is sometimes used to punish or reward behaviour in other fields. These powers serve to emphasise and reinforce his position in the village, though with a Labour government in power he can be rivalled by the local committee. The strength of the Church in Malta is derived, however, not only from its strong political and economic position but also from the loyalty of a fervently religious people. It thus exercises an important ethical and moral influence. In a small scale society this is particularly effective.

In his study of life in a Maltese village Jeremy F Boissevain



investiges in some detail the importance of the Church and its saints in the life of the people. He makes an interesting parallel between a religious and a political practice and gives an example which, I consider, is well worth quoting in detail.

"Another area in which religious belief influences behaviour is in the political field. I should like to contrast the way in which a person approaches an important decision maker and the way in which he approaches God. A man does not approach God directly. People pray to saints to ask them to intervene on their behalf with God. The saint is closer to God than man is. It is logical, so Farrugin believe, that the saint who once had human form, being in heaven and infinitely closer to God, should intercede on behalf of humans still on earth. For this reason the saints are propitiated. People honour them. Every man, woman and child in Malta has his or her own personal patron saint, who is his very spedal protector. In addition to these personal protectors, there are also many other saints to pray to. Saints act as intermediaries between the here-and-now and the hereafter, between man and God, between the supplicant in need of help and the supreme power from whom all help ultimately is derived.

Messages for help are not only transmitted in the religious field. Similar messages are sent in the political field as well. People work through intermediaries. It is believed especially by the less influential rural folk, that in order to accomplish anything you have to have a protector. That is, you need a patron, someone who can intercede on your behalf with important decision makers. In Farrug the traditional protector and intermediary .....is the parish priest. He is the link between the village and the world outside. This role is also played by other important figures; by lawyers, doctors, and the wealthy merchants -



in short by persons who are the social equals of the persons from whom they would like to extract favourable decisions. The role of the patron is difficult. The services, favours, and protection that he dispenses and the time he spends doing so are limited. They are sought by many persons. By giving to some he deprives others. In all dealings with government, Farrugin are extremely pessimistic about receiving favourable treatment unless they have an influential protector. They often grumbled to me when they had not been successful complaining that they had not had the help of a powerful enough 'qaddis' or saint. They then quoted the proverb "Minghajr qaddisin ma titlax il - genna" ("You cannot get to heaven without the help of the saints").

An example will make this process clear. A Farrug woman whom we shall call Guza wished to secure the special ration of food given by the Department of Welfare to the very poor. She thought that she had a good chance because her husband had emigrated, her eighteen year-old son was unemployed, and she had five daughters of school age to take care of. To get the special allowance, she needed a favourable decision from Toni Damato, the regional welfare officer. She could have approached him directly in the village, for he was readily accessible. She could also have called on him formally in his office in Zurrieq. She did neither. She made an approach to him through the husband of her sister whom she asked via her sister, to intervene on her behalf with Toni. Her sister's husband was an ardent partisan of Saint Martin (one of the two rival religious confraternities in the village) and spent a good deal of his time in the club, where he frequently met Toni. Guza knew this. Guza's sister's husband thus agreed to approach Toni on behalf of his sister-in-law. He foresaw few difficulties because he regarded Toni as a friend. He was consequently furious when Toni told him that he could not consider the request. Toni told him that he had every reason

to believe that the woman's husband was sending money home regularly from Canada. Moreover, he knew that her son, though supposedly unemployed, was actually working in a quarry. Guza's sister's husband angry at being thus rebuffed, broke relations with Toni. In fact since that day he has not set foot in the Saint Martin club. He says this because he is a Malta Labour Party supporter and does not believe in 'Festas'. The interest of this example lies in the appeal that Guza made to an intermediary to help her obtain a favourable decision. She was unsuccessful for neither her 'Qaddis' nor her own case were strong enough." <sup>1</sup>

The resemblance between the religious intermediary and the political intermediary is obvious. In a Catholic society, I would suggest, the one works as a model for the other. I do not wish to imply that such patronage relations exist only in Catholic societies. This is certainly not so. It is striking, however, that in Catholic societies such relations in the political field are particularly pronounced. In the political field people tend to pattern their action upon their behaviour in the religious field. The terms of the bargain are similar. The relation between the two forms of patronage is made explicit in the proverb quoted previously which stressed the necessity of the assistance of 'saints'.

Most families have access either directly or via third parties to such influential figures usually important landowners, Church officials, notaries, lawyers, doctors, architects, contractors and so on, to whom they and their close kinfolk submit their problems and ask for advice. Each professional politician has a clientele of followers in every village in his/her district.

<sup>1</sup>Jeremy Boissevain Hal Farrug - a Village in Malta 1969

Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology. Stanford University.  
Holt, Rinehart and Winston. p,p, 78.79.



Boissevain emphasises the importance of the personal network of contacts which individuals have in linking communities and groups together; a feature which is often overlooked. He illustrates the point by giving an example of a case where the social distance over which a person sends a message for help or information is much larger than the circle of immediate personal acquaintances. It also illustrates, once again, the use of political intermediaries in rural Maltese politics.

"Nina, Pietru Cardona's married sister, wanted a bathroom in her house. Now the government of Malta has a scheme whereby it makes a contribution of about £50 towards the cost of a bathroom for poor families without bathrooms. Nina's mother had recently had a bathroom installed under the scheme, but she had had to give a £5 "present" to a government officer connected with the scheme to have the plans approved. Nina knew all this, but she thought there was another possibility. This was to see if she could not arrange something through one of the links in her personal network. Although she did not know the officer in charge of the scheme personally, she decided to work through her family physician. This doctor is an important politician for whom she had voted in the past. She went to see him about the matter, and he agreed to help. The officer in charge of the bathroom scheme was, in fact, part of the official network of the family doctor in his role as government official. The Doctor asked him, as a favour, to approve the bathroom for Nina without delay. He did so. Nina got her bathroom and it cost her nothing. She would give her vote to the family doctor again in the next election, as would other members of her family. Nina avoided having to give the usual £5 bribe because, unlike her mother, she has an impressive network of contacts. Her beautiful new bathroom is evidence of her ability



to use them astutely."<sup>1</sup>

Religion has been so important in the everyday life of the Maltese for so long that for centuries they made in their own minds little separation between the religious field and the secular, between Church and State.<sup>2</sup> It is on this issue that the battles between the Stricklands and the Mintoffs on the one hand and the insular Catholic hierarchy on the other have been fought. Who rules Malta, Church or State? Religion in Malta is not a specialised activity, as it is in some societies, a voluntary activity for a few in private on a Sunday. As a priest remarked to me in an interview in the co-Cathedral at Mdina, life in Malta is not like 'Time' magazine, where the sections dealing with politics, education, religion, and so on are neatly separated. I would suggest that this is as much the result of the size of the Maltese community as it is of traditional Catholic social theory. In small communities one deals with the whole person not the partial person in one segregated capacity.

<sup>1</sup>Jeremy Boissevain Saints and Fireworks: Religion and Politics in Rural Malta London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology No 30. London Athlone Press. Page 114.

<sup>2</sup>e.g. in 1870 a referendum was held on the question "are ecclesiastics to be eligible to the Council of Government?" 59.8% of the electorate voted. The result of the 1,473 votes cast was "Yes" votes 1,409: "No" votes 58: Invalid votes 6.

Nonetheless there is in Malta, particularly since independence, a pronounced trend towards a compartmentalisation of religious activity through its removal from other spheres of social life. This trend is part of the general process of specialisation. As Maltese society becomes more complex, social activities become more specialised. In this respect the Malta Labour Party is, and is seen as, a force for increased secularisation and change. Its programmes of social reform and separation of religion and civic life seek to confine the activities of the Church to the purely ecclesiastical sphere. These efforts are bringing about a separation of the two areas which is still far from complete.

To an extent the conflict between the Malta Labour Party and the Church in Malta is itself a product of a more general tendency towards specialisation which can be detected elsewhere. The parallel between the religious and political patronage has already been noted. If the efforts of the political patron are successful the petitioner will be beholden to him and can be called upon for assistance at some future time. This has been the traditional way of handling relations with authority. In recent years the M.L.P. has built up a powerful political organisation. It has a number of paid and voluntary employees, party workers who perform the intermediary functions of the more traditional patron. That is, they intervene on the behalf of party members with higher decision makers. During periods of the M.L.P. government in particular their supporters do not need to resort to the aid of 'saints'. The contrast is between the bureaucratic efficiency of the M.L.P. and the traditional patronage based Nationalist Party and its notables.



There is an important point to be noted here. This development points to the replacement of a system of interaction based on mutually advantageous personal relations by a system of impersonal relations based on cash or bureaucratic duty. It is the process of transition from the system of 'particularistic' norms and values to 'universalistic' ones. The personal relation between patron and client is being replaced by the relatively impersonal specialised relation between paid employee and party member (or citizen), who has the right to have his request forwarded through channels to the appropriate authorities. Indeed the modernisation process has gone so far in parts of Malta now that some people no longer feel the necessity to work through intermediaries of any kind, whether the traditional patron, new party bureaucrat, or lower grade civil servant. Far more people are now literate, and increasingly well educated. They can, therefore, present their cases directly to the appropriate decision makers and thus there is not the same need to be beholden to anyone.

In a later study on the same subject Jeremy Boissevain was able to up-date his assessment of the analogy between patronage relationships in this world and the next within the Maltese context. Commenting on the sort of changes brought about by Vatican II in the ecclesiastical domain and by socio-economic change in the secular domain he concludes that,

"Conditions have changed in most Western European countries. There is a decrease in power differentials, there is political



stability and, until the recent (oil) crisis, there was relative prosperity. In Malta, as elsewhere in Europe, the saints are marching out. Are they leaving for good? Only the future will tell. Perhaps, one day, should conditions recur which in the past favoured them, saints will again be called upon to help men reach paradise. Until then, it seems, increasingly impersonal collective brokers will continue to gain influence."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Jeremy Boissevain 'When the saints go marching out: Reflections on the decline of patronage in Malta.' (based on a discussion paper presented to a Conference on Patronage held in Rome, 1974, by the Center for Mediterranean Studies of the American Universities Field Staff.

Published in Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies

ed. Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury. London, Duckworth & Co Ltd.

1977.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ISLE OF MAN

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## CHAPTER FIVE

## THE ISLE OF MAN

## 5:1 INTRODUCTION

The Isle of Man lies geographically at the centre of the British Isles, in the Irish Sea, approximately equidistant from the other countries of the group. The Manx are basically a Gaelic people but their island has experienced several changes of political control over the centuries.

A Viking kingdom was established in Man (sometimes spelt Mann) in 1077 A.D. following a victory by Norse invaders over the native Manx. During the period of the later Norse kings the Isle of Man formed the centre of a maritime kingdom which included the western isles of Scotland, the Kingdom of Man and the Sudreys. The memory of this lives on today in the title of the Manx Bishop (of Sodor and Man). Manx Scandinavian rule came to an end in the C13th following defeat by the Scots. Sovereignty then alternated between the Kings of Scotland and England until Edward III of England finally recaptured the island in 1333 and appointed as 'King of Mann' William De Montacute. In 1403 the island was given to the Stanley family to rule. In 1504 Thomas Stanley adopted the title 'Lord of Mann' - the title which has been used down to the present day. In 1765 the Revestment Act<sup>1</sup> of the British Parliament, passed mainly to end the lucrative Manx smuggling trade<sup>2</sup> to the mainland, transferred the Lordship of Mann back to the British Crown.

<sup>1</sup>Isle of Man Purchase Act 1765 (Revestment Act)

<sup>2</sup>The centre of this illegal trade then became Torshavn in the Faroes.



## 5:2 CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

The Isle of Man is not a part of the United Kingdom although it is included in the British Isles and the British monarch is the Lord of Mann. It is not a foreign dominion of the Crown but it is a British possession dealt with by the Home Office and the writ of Habeas Corpus can be issued from the English law courts and have effect in the island. The Isle of Man has no representation in the Westminster Parliament but has its own bicameral assembly - the Tynwald, consisting of the Legislative Council and the House of Keys.

The Isle of Man is a Crown dependency which has a special relationship with the United Kingdom. This relationship assumed its modern constitutional form in the 1860s with the appointment by the Home Office in 1863 of H.B. Loch as Lieutenant-Governor and the subsequent passage by the U.K. Parliament of the Isle of Man Customs, Harbours, and Public Purposes Act of 1866. This Act separated Manx revenues from those of the United Kingdom and gave to Tynwald a limited measure of control over insular expenditure. In the years since 1866 the constitutional relationship between the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom has changed very gradually, the general trend being the progressive handing over to Tynwald not only of control of insular revenues but also of more general aspects of executive government.<sup>1</sup> The transfer of legislative and financial powers was effected by U.K. legislation in 1887, 1955, and 1958,<sup>2</sup> and that of executive power by Manx legislation in 1919, 1961, 1962, 1965, 1968, and 1969,<sup>3</sup> although in both areas less formal developments have been of great importance. In neither case, however, has the transfer been total. Generally, Westminster Acts only apply to the Isle of Man if

<sup>1</sup>Royal Commission on the Constitution - Isle of Man 1970. Para.6 page 4.

<sup>2</sup>The Isle of Man (Customs) Act 1887 and 1955, and the Isle of Man Act, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>The Isle of Man Constitution Acts of 1919, 1961, 1965, 1968, and 1969, the Finance Board Act 1961, the Police Act 1962, & the I.O.M. Civil Service Act 1962.

requested and passed by Tynwald. Acts of the Westminster Parliament may contain provisions that may be applied to the Isle of Man by Order in Council.<sup>1</sup>

The Crown, on the advice of the Home Secretary, appoints the Lieutenant-Governor who usually holds office for seven years and is in control of the Executive. During this term, he is subject to the directions of the Home Office. In practice, however, there is very little interference from Whitehall and whilst seventy years ago it could be said with some accuracy that the Lieutenant-Governor was the Government of the Isle of Man, he now acts increasingly on the advice of the Executive Council, the Finance Board and the other bodies responsible to Tynwald. Over the last hundred years the House of Keys have continually attempted, with varying degrees of intensity, to transfer the most important executive functions to Tynwald and themselves as the elected representatives of the people. The majority of islanders, however, would appear to desire that this process should not occur too rapidly. The present situation remains much as described by W.B. Kennaugh in 1965.

"Formally the Governor still has a large amount of power but it is true to say that this is being exercised increasingly on the advice of the Executive Council and the Finance Board. The Governor is still ultimately responsible for policy and finance, but it would be a brave Governor who acted against the wishes of his Executive Council."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In 1959 the McDermott Commission found that the island was not technically a part of the United Kingdom but stressed that "the power of the Imperial Parliament to legislate for the Isle of Man is supreme".

<sup>2</sup>'Legislative-Executive Relationships in the Isle of Man'. Political Studies



On finance, although formal U.K. Treasury control was removed in 1958, informal links are maintained and Manx financial policy is still in large part determined by U.K. policy. There is a customs union, known as the 'Common Purse' arrangement between the Isle of Man and the U.K. under which the island receives a share of net customs and V.A.T. revenue on a population proportion basis which includes a generous allowance in respect of summer visitors. Through this arrangement the island obtains some two-thirds of its total revenue and is able to maintain extremely low levels of direct taxation. Control of the insular finances is now virtually in the hands of Tynwald, through the Finance Board, although the Governor is still the insular Chancellor of the Exchequer (as he is indeed the equivalent of all Whitehall ministers) and his concurrence in any proposal for expenditure is required. The Isle of Man does not receive any financial subsidy from the U.K. Government.

In matters of foreign or international relations the Isle of Man is represented by the United Kingdom. This can lead to tension between the two administrations as witnessed in the case of the conflict over radio broadcasting in 1967 and more recently the 'birching' issue which was taken to the Court of Human Rights at Strasbourg. In both cases the Manx government had been violating undertakings given by the United Kingdom government on both its own behalf and for such dependencies as the Isle of Man.

In the case of the European Community, however, a satisfactory compromise appears to have been reached which gives the Isle of Man 'the best of both worlds' and places it in a similar category to the Faroes. Under the terms agreed between the U.K. and the Community negotiators the Isle of Man (and the Channel Islands) are included within the E.E.C. only for the purpose of free movement of industrial and agricultural products and to that end are required to apply the



common external tariff, the agricultural levies on imports from third countries and certain parts of the common agricultural policy. Other provisions of the Treaty of Rome do not apply to the islands.

A major change in the island's constitutional and economic relationship with the U.K. was thus avoided.

### 5:3 GOVERNMENT IN THE ISLE OF MAN

#### a) Origins and development of Tynwald

Tynwald, the Manx parliament, is reputed to be the oldest continuous parliament in the world (the Icelandic Althing having a longer, though interrupted duration). Its existence in Norse times (and certainly in the 9th Century) is undisputed though the exact date of its inception is uncertain<sup>1</sup>. The legal system introduced to Mann by the Vikings was based on a society of freemen and serfs, the former having great power in the 'ting' or district assembly. These men came together once or twice a year as a deliberative and executive assembly, being both a parliament and a high court of justice.

The very name 'Tynwald' is claimed to be derived from the Old Norse 'Ting' (an assembly) and 'vollr' (a field). This may be

<sup>1</sup>During 1979 the Manx are celebrating their Millenium - commemorating a thousand years of supposedly 'parliamentary' government in the island. The name Tynwald first occurs in written Manx records in 1228 A.D.

compared to the 'Folketing' of Denmark, the 'Storting' of Norway, the 'Althing' of Iceland, and the 'Løgting' of the Faroes.

The word Tynwald is used in two senses;-

1. for the assembled 'Parliament' of Lieutenant-Governor and the Upper and Lower chambers, and
2. for the outdoor ceremony held on Midsummer's day (Old calendar) (5th July) every year on the Tynwald hill at St. Johns.

### The Ceremony

The Tynwald site has the essential features of the Old Norse 'Tingvollr' - a Law Hill joined by a pathway on the east to a Court house, all enclosed and surrounded by a green; and a place of worship. The hill is a four tiered conical mound of earth and during the ceremony the Lieutenant-Governor and the Bishop (of Sodor and Man) occupy the top tier, the Legislative Council members the second tier, the members of the House of Keys the third tier, and the clergy, chief magistrates, and captains of the parishes the lowest tier. The public stand around at ground level and Acts of Tynwald are promulgated formally, by being read out in Manx and English. This consists of a short summary of the object of the law and of the royal assent by the Monarch in (Privy) Council.

### The Parliament

The Manx Legislature consists of a Lieutenant-Governor sitting with a Legislative Council and a House of Keys, the whole assembly being known as Tynwald or the Tynwald Court.



The preamble to Acts of Tynwald reads as follows:-

"We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lieutenant-Governor, Council, Deemster, and Keys of the said Isle, do humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it enacted, by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lieutenant-Governor, Council, Deemster, and Keys in Tynwald assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows (that is to say):- .....".

The House of Keys is the lower chamber of the Manx Parliament. The title of the Keys, or the 'Kiare-as-Feed' (the twenty-four) and their number come from the Viking period. During the Middle Ages the Lord of Mann kept a keen eye on the personnel of the Keys and nobody was allowed to be elected other than his nominees. Indeed it was the method of the Stanleys to make the Manx people believe that the Government was representative when in fact it was autocratic. Bishop Meyrick in 1580 protested that the island was in fact ruled by a caucus made up of Bishop, Deemsters and Keys all selected by the Lord and he felt that in common fairness the twenty four ought to be elected by the whole nation. This was to become a recurring theme in later Manx politics. The Act of Revestment of 1765 found the Keys a self-elected body strictly controlled in the matter of 'election' by the Lord with life membership and sitting in camera. The Act left unaltered the matter of election but demanded that the sessions should be held in public. Until 1862 the Tynwald Court was at Castletown meeting in the Castle Rushen but later a new house was built in Parliament Square, Castletown for meetings of the Keys. Today the Keys and the full Tynwald Court meet in the Legislative Buildings in Douglas, the modern Manx capital.

The Legislative Council is the Upper Chamber of the Manx Parliament. The relationship of the Keys to the Council is often thought at first glance to be that of the Commons to the Lords in the Westminster Parliament. This is not so, either historically or in practice. The House of Lords is, in the main, a Norman institution. In the Old Norse model inherited by the Stanleys the 'upper set' consisted of the chieftain, the archpriest and the law men. The Legislative Council is not as ancient as the House of Keys but is mentioned in



the Statute Book at least as early as 1422. Over the years it seems to have combined the roles of legislature (with the Keys) executive, and judiciary. Under the Stanley regime the Lord had complete control of the legislature. He appointed the Council and picked his Keys. The composition of the Legislative Council was changed considerably by reforms of the Manx constitution which were introduced after 1918 by the British Government.

Prior to 1919 all the members of the Legislative Council were ex-officio - namely, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Attorney General, the two Deemsters, Archdeacon, the Vicar-General (who advised the clergy on legal matters) and the Receiver-General. These members sat, along with the Governor, a senior judge and certain other representatives of the Anglican Church (who attained their positions at a time when the Anglican Church was the only recognised religious group in the Island).

In 1919 the Isle of Man Constitution Amendment Act removed the Archdeacon, the Vicar-General and the Receiver-General from the Council and brought in an entirely new element of four members elected by the Keys and two appointed by the Governor. In 1960 the Second Deemster's position was lost and the two appointed members were replaced by three more elected members. The Attorney-General was allowed to remain but lost his voting power. Finally the First Deemster was replaced in 1975 by an eighth elected member.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>R.H. Kinvig The Isle of Man: A Social, Cultural and Political History. Liverpool University Press. 1975. Page 64.

At present the Legislative Council consists of the Lieutenant Governor, the Bishop, the Attorney-General (who has no vote) and eight members elected by the Keys for a term of office of four years (since 1978) retiring in rotation. The Council functions as an upper, revising chamber and sits both alone and with the Keys when the two houses form Tynwald.

The process of reform is continuing and controversy abounds. As the Council is not a universally elected body many feel its powers ought to be severely curtailed and that the remaining ex-officio member, the Bishop, ought to be removed or deprived of his vote. However, many respect the Bishop as presumably a "responsible intelligent person with a social conscience" rather than as a representative of one branch of the Christian church in the Island.

#### Tynwald Reform

Just prior to the Revestment Act of 1765 the position with respect to House of Keys membership was that when a vacancy occurred the Keys would themselves elect two persons to be presented to the Governor by their Speaker. The Governor chose one of them, but as he "almost invariably nominated the candidate who had received the greater number of votes, the Keys practically filled the post as they wished."<sup>1</sup> The Revestment Act itself did very little towards making the Keys a democratic body and by 1770 the system of self-election was firmly established and members practically held their office for life. Moore states that

"they were in fact gradually becoming a close corporation, recruited solely from a few of the principal insular families, and though they called themselves the representatives of the people, they really represented no-one but themselves."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A.W. Moore. A History of the Isle of Man. Vol. III 1900. Page 84

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



Therefore, in 1791 a Commission of Enquiry was set up in which many took the opportunity to protest against the system of self-election and to demand election by popular suffrage. However, this had no effect in terms of practical reform and agitation grew, exacerbated between 1792 and 1833 by many allegations of corrupt practices in the Keys. Petitions were sent to William IV in 1834 to the Manx Government and to Queen Victoria in 1838, and to the House of Commons in 1844. In 1845 the Keys answered, admitting to the principle of popular election, but denying that it would be beneficial as

"it would necessarily entail a considerable expense upon the people and from the isolated position and very limited extent of the Island, would engender a degree of bitter animosity among neighbours, highly prejudicial and strongly contrasted to the hitherto peaceful state of society."<sup>1</sup>

The protest movement was, in the main, a result of the Reform Bill of 1832 passed by the Westminster Parliament, which went a long way towards making the choice of Government the genuine privilege of the mass of the people in England. A reform party newspaper, the 'Mona's Herald', was established in the Island in the following year and the battle for popular government became increasingly keen. The first reaction to this by the British Government was that if any change were to take place it would take the form of giving the Manx one elected representative in the House of Commons, so bringing the Island's separate government to an end (and this was unacceptable to the agitators as nationalist feeling at the time was high).

<sup>1</sup>A.W. Moore A History of the Isle of Man Vol III 1900 Page 87.



The Keys agreed to the principle of popular election in 1853 when the Secretary to the Treasury, in discussing proposed fiscal changes with a deputation from the Keys, hinted that, if the Keys were elected by the people, the Treasury might make financial concessions to the Island, but that otherwise it could not do so.

Henry Brougham Loch became Lt. Governor in 1863 and he decided that the Island's future prosperity depended upon developing trade and the holiday traffic, and that the Manx Government must obtain power to raise and spend money on harbours. In 1865 there were discussions with the British Treasury which resulted in an agreement being reached whereby, provided it consented to a large increase in customs duties, Tynwald would have the control of surplus revenue. It was a condition for these fiscal concessions to be granted that the House of Keys must become a popularly elected body. Thus in 1866 the Isle of Man Customs and Harbours Act was passed by Tynwald, which besides rendering the House elective, abolished its judicial powers.

On 20th December the Bill "to provide for the election by people of property and intelligence in this Isle of members to serve in such House (of Keys)....." became law. This Act came about through the initiative of Lieutenant Governor Loch. The question of the reform of the Keys had for much of the nineteenth century been interwoven with the problem of the financial arrangements existing between the Island and the British Government. It is clear that the acceptance of reform was due more to the consideration of financial advantage than to any belief in the virtues of democratic government. Indeed one member of the existing Keys

indicated that they had accepted the proposals only because "they felt they could not take upon themselves the responsibility of rejecting them."<sup>1</sup> The original bill was amended in the face of vociferous opposition from reformers many of whom still remained unsatisfied.

"This .....Bill..... is at best a narrow piece of class legislation, providing the vote for a possee of grub worms and leaving a far more intelligent class of the community disenfranchised...".<sup>2</sup>

Amongst the main electoral provisions of the bill was the division of the island into what have become its ten traditional electoral divisions made up by the four towns (Douglas, Peel, Ramsey, and Castletown) and the six sheadings (Ayre, Michael, Garff, Middle, Glenfaba, and Rushen). In the election of the 24 members (for this election Peel, Ramsey, and Castletown were represented by one each, Douglas by three, and the six sheadings by three each) fifteen had been former members of the House at some time. Clearly the first elected House would differ little in character from the old one. This result was largely predictable in view of the restricted franchise and the absence of a secret ballot. Of the candidates who stood for election none claimed to represent any particular party line similar to those existing on the mainland 'across'. This has remained, some would claim unfortunately, a characteristic feature of Manx political life.

The first election, in 1867 was a hugely enjoyable event although its restricted franchise was at first the cause of much apathy. The Manx Temperance Movement was the first to declare its intention to put up candidates: Dumbell, Goldie-Taubman and Moore, but most candidates were not affiliated to any particular grouping.

<sup>1</sup> Journal of the Manx Museum - 'The First Election of the House of Keys 1867. R.E.C. Forster

<sup>2</sup> Ibid



However the attitudes of each candidate upon the questions of temperance, the town versus the country argument, sympathies for the Non-Conformist or Anglican groups and a generally radical or conservative attitude, were sought with interest.

The election of 1867 and the preceding Act of 1866 must be viewed in their proper perspective. They were not the result of an overwhelming demand for democratic government by the island population but the forcing of the old House by the Governor to acquiesce in its own demise. Nevertheless the first step in liberalising the constitution had been made.

The struggle for Manx Constitutional Reform intensified after the turn of the century. A Manx National Reform League was formed in 1903 and managed to attain most of its main objectives in 1919. Samuel Norris, the founder of the Norris Modern Press, who was the Honorary Secretary of the Reform League writes in his autobiography

"The story of the Manx Reform Movement must be told not merely as a record of our times but because it will serve as an inspiration to present and coming generations of Manx men and women to preserve and develop their enlarged political institutions and to strive for the attainment of those larger measures of liberty and opportunity which are enjoyed by the people who inhabit other parts of the British Isles under a system of government which despite admitted defects is the envy and hope of the rest of the civilised world."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>S Norris. Manx Memories and Movements Norris Modern Press.

Douglas, I.O.M. 1939.



The Lieutenant Governor from 1902 to 1918 was Lord Raglan, a resolute opponent of both the British Liberal Government and the Manx Reform League. Finally, after many appeals to Lord Raglan and over his head to the Home Office, the Reform League secured the establishment by the then Home Secretary, Herbert Gladstone, of an investigation.

The MacDonnell Committee<sup>1</sup> of 1911 recommended certain reforms but their implementation was delayed by the 1914-18 war. The Committee decided against recommending an Advisory Council but suggested reform of the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council became, with the Isle of Man Constitution Amendment Act of 1919, a body of 11 members composed of the Bishop, the two Deemsters, Attorney-General, two members to be nominated by the Lieutenant Governor, and four by the Keys (these six to hold office for eight years) and with the Lieutenant Governor, as before, presiding but not voting.

Following the General Election of 1919, 17 new members took their seats in the House of Keys. Norris was elected MHK for North Douglas. There were 4 members of the newly founded Manx Labour Party present and for the first time there was a clear progressive majority. In 1919 Old Age Pensions were introduced for the over 70's. The Lieutenant Governor, Lord Raglan, was replaced by Major-General Sir William Fry. A 'strike' of the Keys and an interview with the Home Office in 1920 led to an increase of rights of financial control by the popularly elected House. Another reform was the passing of the Married Women's Property Act and the prohibition of the Attorney-General from operating in private practice. Samuel Norris sums up

<sup>1</sup>Report of the Home Office Departmental Committee (MacDonnell Committee) dated 31st August 1911.

the problem facing any movement for change as follows:

"It is not customary for the official mind to move rapidly in carrying out reforms - this seems to be especially true in the Isle of Man."<sup>1</sup>

The next major landmark in the constitutional development of Tynwald and Manx government in general came after the Second World War.

On 18th March 1958 a Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Lord MacDermott - "to enquire into and report on the Constitution of the Isle of Man and its working, and to make recommendations for any changes that they may consider desirable and practicable." The MacDermott Commission studied evidence relating to not just the constitutional situation in the Island but also the political system.

The MacDermott Commission which reported in 1959 noted the growing demand for more power to be given to the elected Keys and for an advisory or executive council. The MacDonnell Committee of 1911 had decided against what it termed an Advisory Council. The demand, however, was renewed from time to time and eventually by letter dated 20 February 1946 the Home Secretary authorised the appointment by the Lieutenant Governor of an Executive Council of seven members of Tynwald, the majority being the Chairmen of the principal spending Boards. "There can be no doubt that this step was intended to promote a form of Cabinet Government, and that that purpose has not been achieved."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>S. Norris Manx Memories and Movements. Norris Modern Press Douglas I.O.M. 1939

<sup>2</sup>Report of the (MacDermott) Commission on the Isle of Man Constitution 1959



"We have endeavoured throughout to focus our attention on two broad considerations which in their conjoint effect seem to us to make our present task both timely and important.

The first of these considerations lies in the fact that the movement towards a more representative form of government in the Island has been gathering momentum. There is an understandable desire that the elected representatives of the people should enjoy a greater share in the functions of government .... But too great haste in this direction could imperil future stability, arrest what ought to be an evolutionary process and impair the value of the Island's ancient traditions in matters of government. ....We have also kept in mind that democratic government in a small community, particularly one with limited resources, has its own special problems.\*

To attain success in that setting does not mean a state of affairs in which everyone tries to do everything, but rather the building up of a spirit of mutual trust and interdependence between bodies and persons to whom specific duties have been assigned.

The second consideration flows from the concurrence of two recent developments..... the arrangements and legislation of 1957 and 1958..... and happening at a time when the Island has to reappraise its future economic position.....

....In short, it is not enough to establish a more representative form of government. It must also be efficient in its working and capable of meeting bad times as well as good." <sup>1</sup>

The MacDermott Report agreed with the MacDonnell Report in

\*The underlining is mine.

<sup>1</sup>

Ibid.



not having members of the Legislative Council directly elected; this would be different if a party system had clearly developed in the Keys.

"The Manx Labour Party now holds five seats (1959) in the House of Keys, but a scrutiny of the voting on divisions since November 1956 reveals no sustained cleavage on party lines. We are satisfied that nothing in the nature of a party system obtains at present and we think that the likelihood of such a system developing in the foreseeable future is remote."<sup>1</sup> \*

Certainly developments since 1959 seem to testify to the accuracy of this view.

The reforms recommended by the Commission were put into effect in the early 1960's. In 1961 the Royal Assent was given to Manx Legislation<sup>2</sup> which removed the blocking powers of the Legislative Council and set up a new confidential Executive Council whose duty it is to consider and to advise the Lieutenant-Governor upon all matters of principle and policy and legislation. In 1965, 1968 and 1969 further Manx legislation was approved, removing the Second Deemster from the legislature and ending the Lieutenant-Governor's powers of nominating members of the Legislative Council and the Executive Council. The establishment of the Finance Board of Tynwald in 1961<sup>3</sup>, the creation of the Police Board in 1962 and the formation of a unified Manx Civil Service still left the Lieutenant Governor

<sup>1</sup>Report of the (MacDermott) Commission on the Isle of Man Constitution 1959.

\*The underlining is mine.

<sup>2</sup>Isle of Man Constitution Act 1961 (Isle of Man)

<sup>3</sup>Finance Board Act 1961 (Isle of Man)

with the right of final direction. In respect of public service and social welfare matters the effective implementation of policy has been transferred to a growing complex of Boards of Tynwald.

b) The workings of the Manx Executive and Legislature.

According to a P.E.P. publication of 1960

"The Isle of Man is a system of government 'sui generis'; there is no separation of powers and some individuals combine several functions.

The House of Keys is still the weaker branch - most government legislation is introduced in the Legislative Council. It is thought by the Keys that as the elected branch they should have the dominant position, but Manx opinion on this subject is very diverse.

It is said that there are twenty-four political parties in the House of Keys."<sup>1</sup>

One of the major characteristics of the Manx political system is the absence of a clearly marked party system in the legislature.

In election campaigns for seats in the House of Keys 'labels' are sometimes used but in the chamber itself there are no whips and every vote is a 'free' vote of the House. Of the present twenty four members of the Keys only four were elected on a party ticket. (The Manx political parties such as exist will be examined in section five of this chapter).

<sup>1</sup>Local Self-Government; the experience of the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands. P.E.P. publication Chatham House. 1960



There are no Government and Opposition benches in the House of Keys. Each member occupies the specific seat for his/her constituency and through the system of administration by Tynwald Boards all members of the legislature can be said to be members of the Government. This can have its disadvantages as a former Manx Labour Party MHK observed in evidence to the MacDermott Commission.

"There are too many people overloaded; there are so many people involved in administration that there is no room for constructive opposition, and I have always believed that a constructive opposition is a very important part of government. We are all mixed up in government and I think that anyone of us is almost afraid to challenge an issue in case another issue might be challenged in return."<sup>1</sup>

The Keys debate in their own chamber presided over by their Speaker who is elected by them and attired in a similar manner to his Westminster counterpart. He is the chairman of debates, an onerous task in a non-party House. He is the Leader of the House and responsible for the 'business' of the session. He is not politically neutral in the Westminster sense and may vote in all divisions. When 'divide' is called the members do not troop through lobbies to be counted but announce 'for' or 'against' as their names are read out and recorded by the Clerk of Tynwald.

Differing from Westminster the Keys also sit in company with the Legislative Council in the Tynwald Court. This is done

<sup>1</sup>Evidence to the (MacDermott) Commission on the Isle of Man Constitution



in the Tynwald Chamber where the Council under the Lieutenant-Governor occupy the 'Gallery' and the Keys the 'floor' of the Chamber. The Lieutenant-Governor presides over the debate and the Speaker sits immediately below him. In the Tynwald Court the Speaker may speak and vote as an ordinary member as well as to represent to the Council the views of the Keys. In case of any disagreement between the Keys and the Council any member of the Keys may move 'that the Keys retire to their own chamber'. Any measure may be introduced either into the Keys or the Council. The course which is followed is similar to that which is observed at Westminster. In the event of a disagreement between the two branches conferences are held between them.<sup>1</sup> These conferences are always held in the Council Chamber, and it usually provides an excellent contrivance for reconciling differences. On the passage of a bill it is signed at a meeting of the two branches of the legislature meeting in Tynwald under the presidency of the Lieutenant-Governor, and no bill can become law unless it receives the signatures, at this stage, of at least thirteen members of the Keys and a majority of the Council. The bill is then sent by the Lieutenant-Governor to the Home Office, for the Royal Assent. If, however, any bill is passed by the Keys and rejected by the Council in two successive sessions - a session is a legislative year - and is passed by the Keys in the next ensuing session and is not passed by the Council within two months of being sent up, it is placed on the agenda and whether or not signed by a quorum of the Council is signed by the Lieutenant-Governor and at least thirteen members of the Keys and passed on the Royal Assent. The exception is for bills to amend the Isle of Man Constitution which must have at least sixteen signatures in the Keys at the Third Reading in that session.

<sup>1</sup>Manx Constitution and Financial Aspects of I.O.M. Government. 1967

In 1946 it was felt by the United Kingdom Government that there should be a 'cabinet' or consultative body to assist the Lieutenant-Governor in all matters of legislation, and comprising the chairmen of each of the various 'Boards'. This was envisaged as an embryonic 'cabinet' and as it transpired, in the absence of a party system of government, it did not fulfil Whitehall's expectations.

The Executive Council also failed as a move towards more representative government because it is composed mainly of chairmen of Boards of Tynwald and Board loyalties in Tynwald are "too strong to accept the authority of a new body or to give its members a chance of generating a sense of collective responsibility."<sup>1</sup>

The Executive Council was then reconstituted under the Isle of Man Constitution Act 1961 as amended and its present membership consists of seven members of whom two are nominated by the Legislative Council and five nominated by the House of Keys, and subsequently elected by Tynwald. One of the seven members must be the Chairman of the Finance Board (who is thus one of the most influential people in the structure of Manx government). The Lieutenant-Governor presides over the meetings of the Executive Council on which is laid the statutory duty of considering and advising him on all matters of principle, policy, and legislation. The proceedings of the Council, which meets weekly or at such other intervals as the Lieutenant-Governor directs, are confidential. It is with this body that power in the constitutional sense may be said to lie. The Manx system relies very heavily on personality and individual contacts and interests.

<sup>1</sup> Extract from the findings of the MacDermott Commission 1959.



Although the Executive Council members do not have Executive powers (which remain with the Lieutenant-Governor) they can exercise considerable influence.

"There is no doubt that the power of the Executive Council, its increasing interest in administrative detail and the methods it can employ to impose its will on Tynwald can easily create a dangerous situation while Government policy is controlled by a junta of independent members rather than by a party in power."<sup>1</sup>

Government administration is being carried on by Boards of Tynwald, rather than by Ministers, each board prepares financial estimates before the annual budget is presented to Tynwald in May. These Estimates of Revenue and Capital Expenditure are submitted to the Finance Board<sup>2</sup> and alterations may be made. After the estimates have been tabulated and approved by Tynwald, the work of the Finance Board in the preparation of the overall Budget which it will recommend to the Lieutenant-Governor really begins. The Finance Board does not lay down policy for the Boards and it therefore attempts in its discussions with the Boards to ascertain each Board's order of priority for its proposals. The Finance Board has then to fit the proposals into the money available and to decide how much capital expenditure is justified. Members of the Finance Board are not members of any other Board.

"It will be readily understood that whereas years ago, there was a constant struggle between the Insular Legislature and the Treasury in London there is now in its place an internecine struggle between the Boards which spend the money and the Finance Board which has to provide it, and it must be constantly kept in mind that the

<sup>1</sup>Manx Democratic Party - Policy Statement 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Introduced by the Finance Board Act 1961 following the Report of the MacDermott Commission.



Governor is bound by law to budget for a surplus on Revenue Account."<sup>1</sup>

The functions of the Tynwald (both Houses sitting together) include the election of chairmen and members of Boards of Tynwald, the election of members of the Executive Council, the appointment of Commissions and Committees, the levying of taxes and the voting of monies to carry out the functions of government. These administrative functions are carried out by Boards of Tynwald and by Departments of Government the staff of which are provided by the Civil Service Commission, a body chosen by Tynwald.

"The distinction between the powerful Crown appointed Lieutenant-Governor and Tynwald with its Boards runs right through the Island's administration."<sup>2</sup>

#### 5:4 THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

##### The Electoral Districts

The House of Keys is first mentioned in the declaration of the Deemster (High Court Judge) to Sir John Stanley (Lord of Mann) in 1422. This speaks of Godred Crovan's time from 1079 to 1265, when the Keys were selected from the freeholding classes. The name Keys is thought to be a corruption of the scandinavian word Kjosa,

<sup>1</sup>Financial Aspects of Isle of Man Government J.B. Bolton, - Chairman I.O.M. Finance Board. Government Publications, Douglas. 1967. Page 14

<sup>2</sup>Local Self-Government; the experience of the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. P.E.P. Chatham House 1960

meaning 'to choose or to elect'.<sup>1</sup> It was contrary to the Scandinavian method to have any number of judges or legislators who did not compose 12 or multiples of 12, and 24 or 'kiare as feed' came to be established as the traditional number for the Keys of Mann. As Mr J.B. Bolton in Tynwald Court on 22nd March 1977 said, there is "some magic in the number 24" and "24 was traditional and should remain".

The 24 in Norse times were taken from constituencies very like the Icelandic logretta. Mann was divided into Northside and Southside, each with three Sheadings ( these probably originated from the units which provided ships for insular defence<sup>2</sup>) and each of these sheadings was divided into three except in one on the Northside. Although of the three Northern Sheadings, one had only two parishes, and consequently the Northside would only return eight Godar (a Godard is a parish) to Tynwald, to correct the inequality the Southside was deprived of one member and returned eight also and so we get a total number of sixteen. The other eight members in the Tynwald were from the Southern Hebrides, over which the Kingdom of Mann in Norse rule extended, and from which members travelled once or twice per year to attend the open air parliament.<sup>3</sup>

Since 1866 there have been many attempts to achieve redistribution of seats, but although gradual changes have been made, the matter has been difficult, partly due to the necessity of retaining the sacrosanct figure of 24 and partly due to the reluctance of successive strongly agricultural houses to change to a fairer representation (in population terms) for the towns.

<sup>1</sup>R.D. Farrant Mann, Its Land Tenure, Constitution, Lord's Rent and Deemsters

<sup>2</sup>T.A. Bawden, L.S. Gerrard, J.K. Qualtrough and J.W. Scatchard Industrial Archaeology of the Isle of Man. Douglas 1972

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix XIX : Page 273



The constituency boundaries were first changed in 1891 when a Redistribution Act was passed under which one member was taken from Michael and one from Garff, and Douglas was made into 2 electoral districts, of which the Northern returned 3 members and the Southern 2. Further changes were made in 1951, 1956 and 1971, resulting in the present distribution.

The constituencies at present are based on the six sheadings and the four towns, and seats are distributed as follows:-

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>No. of Members</u>	<u>No. of Voters on 1976 Register.</u>
Castletown	1	2011
North Douglas	1	2874
South Douglas	2	3710
East Douglas	2	2907
West Douglas	2	4465
Ramsey	2	4058
Peel	1	2426
Glenfaba	2	2330
Michael	1	1613
Ayre	2	2135
Garff	2	2577
Middle	3	6602
Rushen	3	6615
<u>Total</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>44323</u>

Great changes in the distribution of voters have occurred during the last ten years, partially as a result of the abolition of plural voting due to property holdings and partly due to an enormous increase in population in some areas as a result of the government's new resident policy. There has been a marked shift



of population away from the rural areas and, for example, the three member constituency of Middle has become imbalanced due to urban growth in Onchan on a scale which virtually disenfranchises more remote parts of the Sheading, such as Union Mills and other Braddan villages. Many feel that Douglas is now under-represented and, indeed, this can be quite an important election issue at times. A problem also occurs in that some constituencies are much larger than others e.g. Rushen and Middle have over 6000 voters each, whereas, for example, Michael has under 2000 and the ease with which it can be canvassed and kept in contact with, is much greater.

An article concerning the need for electoral reform, in a magazine produced just prior to the 1971 General Election, I feel still applies. This stated that:-

"the present division of the Island into 13 constituencies for electoral purposes is outdated, unfair, and not in the best interests of the Island Community as a whole, or of a true democracy".

"Election Special" 1971.

It suggested, therefore, that the Island ought to be re-divided into twenty-four single-member constituencies, each with an average of 1700 voters, and went on to detail how this should be done.

At present only four constituencies return a single member. In the others the members are elected from the constituency at large with the electors expressing their preferences for the two or three candidates of their choice as the case may be. The method used is that of the single ballot with the candidate or candidates polling the most votes first (or second and sometimes third) past the post being returned. Votes are non-transferable between candidates.

It appears to be unlikely that any reform in this area will occur in the near future, especially with the opposition to reform which is evident in the present Tynwald. Even members who were in favour up until the 1956 reforms now feel that representation for Douglas is adequate and the present system has advantages which may be removed by the introduction of a single-member system.

The 'first, and sometimes second and sometimes third past the post system' is really the only way the Manx method of counting the votes can be described. Voters do not number the choices in order of preference in the nine multi-seat constituencies and the votes of those lower down the poll are not transferred to those still 'in the running'.

Candidates lose their deposit if they obtain less than 8% of the total votes cast.

It is the Manx Labour Party's long term aim to see Proportional Representation introduced but most people feel this to be unworkable without the growth of strong, stable parties and drastic changes in constituencies, even to the level of creating one all-Island constituency, which would eradicate the local area contact between M.H.K. and constituent which exists at present. Many feel that Proportional Representation would be no great improvement upon the present system which provides more than one representative (although only in some areas).

#### Campaign Conduct

"Under some systems of voting candidates who have no serious chance of being elected may influence the poll adversely by splitting



the vote into fragments and so handing the seat to the best organised minority."<sup>1</sup>

The fear that this was occurring in the Island led to the introduction of £100 deposit for the 1976 General Election. It was thought that this would deter frivolous candidates, though many say it has failed to achieve that object.

Each candidate for the Keys pays his own expenses and provides his own organisation, but the number of bodies prepared to support candidates by supplying canvassers, paying printing costs, providing the deposit out of funds, etc. is rising. In the 1976 General Election fourteen candidates were supported by political parties (10 Mec Vannin and 4 Labour) and it is likely that this trend will continue. (Local bodies such as Douglas Ratepayers Association have actively supported candidates in Council elections.)

The Manx Voter expects to be wooed and personal canvassing is very important. The manifesto of the official Manx Labour Party candidates (and more recently those of the Nationalists) carry the Party endorsement and usually some words on general policy but the individual character and record of the candidate is paramount as it is with the Independents who form the vast majority of Manx politicians.

In the multi-member constituencies, in particular, where the elector has two or three votes to cast the result of the poll is not always easy to gauge. There are some 'safe' seats but not in the usual party sense and no M.H.K. can afford not to cultivate

<sup>1</sup>W.J.M. MacKenzie Free Elections Allen & Unwin, 1958.



his or her electors. The personal interview or pre-election 'open-house' (with refreshments both liquid and otherwise) is a means of re-establishing or maintaining the connection with ones constituents. It is almost a convention that any candidate for the Keys shall live in the constituency. Because of the size of the island travel to Douglas by car is relatively easy and the 'carpet-bagger' is frowned upon.

In the multi-member constituencies 'plumper' voting sometimes obtains. This means that an elector will vote for one candidate only and withhold his other vote(s). This will increase his candidate's chances of being elected. Hence the expression, seen on election manifestos and posters 'Plump for X'. Norris himself relates how he lost his seat on one occasion when Labour voters plumped for their candidate whilst his supporters did not 'plump', and the Labour candidate and a conservative Independent were returned.

The electorate now consists of all males and females over 18 resident in the Island on the date of authorisation of the Voters' Lists. Those disqualified include those under any legal incapacity or lunatics. There is no controversy now on this subject. The vote is not compulsory and is conducted through the ballot box, not by post (except in special circumstances).

#### The Social Composition of the Keys

In 1900 the House of Keys consisted almost entirely of "men of means and leisure, directors of local limited liability companies, landowners and one or two tenant farmers and a small representation of shopkeepers."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Norris Manx Memories and Movements Norris Modern Press

These members were concerned that this system should remain:-

"Gentlemen", said one speaker, "the dignity, the honour and the prestige of the oldest legislature in Europe is at stake.

What do we see? Men are springing up from all quarters. They spring up like mushrooms under our feet, but they will have to remain under our feet".

Surprisingly little has changed in terms of the composition of the legislature, as an M.L.P. newsletter said

"Our M.H.K's are still largely 'men of means and leisure', certainly not representative of the population as a whole".

They are business men, farmers and land-owners or retired government workers on government pensions. It is widely accepted that M.H.K.'s are too lowly paid to have the job of representing the electorate alone and it is generally known that M.L.P. member, Eddie Lowey, M.H.K. for Rushen is the only representative who exists solely on his House of Keys salary. Democracy can often be thwarted when government is in the hands of people of independent means.

Candidates are excluded if they are members of either the judiciary or the clergy or the administration (in accordance with the doctrine of the separation of powers); if they are suffering from any mental or legal incapacity; and if they have not been resident in the Island for at least three years. The locality rule does not apply in that a candidate need not be qualified as a voter in the constituency in which he stands. However the candidate will gain more credence in the constituency if he lives there and only in Douglas, where the town is divided up, are there any members who do not live in their own constituencies.



Women were not disqualified from standing from 1919 onwards.

In 1866 candidates had to be 'males of full age, and owners of real estate to the value of £100 or of real estate to the annual value of £50, together with personal property of £100.<sup>1</sup> In 1881 this was altered to apply to owners of real estate to the annual value of £50 and in 1892 the property qualification for candidates was finally abolished so that any male of full age, not being a clergyman, could be a member. In 1919 an Act stated that "A woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from being elected or sitting or voting as a member of the House of Keys",<sup>2</sup> and from then on small amendments continued to be made, such as exclusion of government officials and of members of local councils, and later the introduction of a limited salary and expenses.

### Conclusion

Enid Lakeman classifies electoral systems as either first past the post; another majority system; a semi-proportional system; a list system of proportional representation; or a single-transferable vote system.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps we can only fit the Manx system of election for the Keys into the second of these, as it involves the election by a relative majority in single and multi-member constituencies.

<sup>1</sup>A.W. Moore A History of the Isle of Man Vol IV Douglas I.O.M. 1900

<sup>2</sup>Isle of Man Statutes Vol VII Government Offices, Douglas I.O.M.

<sup>3</sup>E. Lakeman How Democracies Vote: A study of Electoral Systems.

London, Faber. 1974



The Manx system is unique in its type of ballot structure. Douglas Rae in "The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws" divides systems into 'categorical' ballot structures in which voters choose a single party or candidate, and 'ordinal' in which there is rank-ordering of preferences as in systems employing one of the many forms of proportional representation. Only in the single-member constituencies of the Manx system does the first of these apply, but the rank-ordering of preferences does not apply in the multi-member constituencies, so it is difficult to fit the Manx system into any of the pigeon-holes provided by the political theorists.

Most of the controversies over political representation in democratic countries have revolved around the choice and functions of elected members of a representative assembly. In the Isle of Man the member's relationship with the electors is to some extent at least to act as their spokesman, but the nature of the proper relationship between elected persons and their constituents has been a matter of dispute in many democracies for several centuries, and it is wrong to assume that elected representatives are essentially agents for those who elected them. In the Manx case they are elected for their personal qualities and then must act as they see fit at the time, frequently advocating what they feel to be best for the whole Island, not just for the constituency which they (supposedly) represent.

Constituencies can be seen only as a mechanism to reassure the voter that the special circumstances prevailing in his area will be considered.

The recent development (since approximately 1800) of the Manx electoral system for the House of Keys to a great extent mirrors that of the British parliamentary system, with a few reforms preceding the British (e.g. franchise extension to women) and most following them. The Manx electoral system is based upon the constituency member as in the Westminster model practiced in many countries, but as yet single-member constituencies have not been incorporated. The early Viking history of the assembly and its use during the Stanley period and later, do not provide a concrete basis for the Keys as we know them today, and it is certainly not until the late 17th Century that they began to acquire any considerable power.

Taking a very broad look now at the Manx electoral system's advantages and disadvantages, we can see that it tends to produce weakness out of strength. It is basically a good system, founded upon consensus (though admittedly this is a vague, theoretical term) and intimate personal knowledge of representatives, but its weakness is in the members it produces. This may not be the result of any major faults or omissions in the system, such as the lack and mistrust of parties, or the basically undemocratic voting mechanism (if it is studied in terms of current day thinking). It may rather be due to the need for smaller adjustments such as higher pay for members and considerable pension rights, (although it has been argued that it is almost impossible to find an upper limit to this); a more effective register of members' interests and the preclusion of certain activities which may affect a member's work as a M.H.K.; the ability to return to positions in Government



Service after serving as a Keys member and the abolition of the requirement to relinquish a Civil Service position before announcing candidacy for Keys election and so on. Other small improvements, such as the improvement of administration, e.g. provision of more returning officers, and a greater emphasis on political education for Islanders too would add to the quality of the electoral system.

## 5:5 THE POLITICAL CLEAVAGE SYSTEM

### a) MANX SOCIETY - MAIN LINES OF CLEAVAGE

One of the characteristic features of the Manx political system is the marked absence of strong political parties and the related absence of a conventional cabinet system of government which relies upon majority support in the legislature for the continuation of the administration. In this respect the Isle of Man is unlike either Malta or the Faroes.

It seems that both the workings of the political structures and the nature of the Manx political climate work against the formation of organised political parties. The reasons for these pressures, both institutional and informal, will be examined.

The antipathy to party politics seems deep-rooted in the Island. In 1894 A.N. Laughton, High Baliff of Peel, issued a publication entitled "Government by Party" in which the whole idea was deplored as anathema to the highly-prized individualism of the Manx. It is interesting to note that he was defeated in the Keys election for the Peel seat in 1903 by a blacksmith, T.H. Cormode, a forerunner of the first Labour Party M.H.K.s.



T.E. Brown (1830-1897) one of the best known of Manx authors and poets, asserted that "the Manxman is not a political animal". His view carries some weight as Canon Stenning refers to "his innate Manxness"<sup>1</sup> and that he was "body and soul part of the Island".<sup>2</sup>

Some commentators explain the apparent lack of politically expressed partisan feeling largely by reference to the economic and political history of the Island during the medieval period.

"There were never any divisions of the people into aristocracy, freemen, and serfs, as in the Norman areas of Britain. The Lords and their retinues were English, but there were no 'titled folk' among the Lord's followers and no Lord ever conceived the idea of creating a local insular roll of honour. The high officials were English and returned to England at the end of their term of office. The Insular officials, deemsters, attorney-generals, captains of parishes, were all Manx and were on the whole from the families of the landowners although it must be remembered that there were no big estates comparable to those in Britain. In general terms the largest farms were little larger than 'small holdings' so that society has always been mainly plebian".<sup>3</sup>

The small scale aspect of Manx life, however, is also seen as playing a part in the maintenance of a relatively class-conscious free society. The Manx tell the very popular story of the Manx

<sup>1</sup>E.H. Stenning Portrait of the Isle of Man. R.Hale & Co. London 1975 edition. Page 168.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Page 168

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. Page 106

crabs to illustrate this point. If some captured crabs in a fisherman's bucket would allow some of their number to climb onto the backs of the others they could escape but being 'Manx' crabs no one crab is allowed to climb higher than any other. Or so the Manx say. This is not to say that there are not huge discrepancies of wealth in the island, a feature exacerbated by the tax-haven policies of post-war Manx government and the attraction of several foreign millionaires, but rather that the Manx do not care greatly for distinctions of social status especially amongst themselves. As Stenning puts it "... in such a small island as this, everybody knows everybody's family antecedents and ancestry, so that snobbery is impossible and the whole atmosphere is only of friendly bonhomie".<sup>1</sup>

It was statements of this sort, echoing the apparently naive notion that 'there are no politics in the Isle of Man' which first motivated me to undertake this research.

The Manx community, whatever the nature and implications of its historic social structure, has, like others, always found issues over which opinions have differed and which have resulted in struggles for power and influence .

The first popular election to the House of Keys in 1867, which has already been described, saw the development of several factions competing for the support of a very restricted number of votes. One of these was the Manx Temperance Movement, influential right up to the early 1960's, which held meetings for the purpose of 'securing the return of gentlemen likely to advocate, befriend and advance the temperance reformation". Other factions formed around local

<sup>1</sup> E.H. Stenning Portrait of the Isle of Man. R.Hale & Co. London 1975 edition Page 107.



newspapers. The 'Mona's Herald' supported the 'radicals' whilst the 'Manx Sun' supported the 'conservatives'. Other rivalries which had political undercurrents were those between the non-conformist and Anglican groups, and the town and country interests.

The Keys election of 1895 provides another interesting example. The main issue in this election was over the permit for boarding houses to retail liquor to their guests as part of the tourist trade. The 'Holiday Trade' interest was strong, as was the Manx Union for the Promotion of Temperance backed by the 'chapel' vote. The struggle was fought out between the Permitists and the Anti-Permitists. The former were mainly the Douglas licencees and some members of the Temperance Party, who preferred a controlled and legalised system to the anarchy of illegal liquor sales. The Anti-Permitists were the bulk of the temperance bodies and the country areas. The difference in outlook between town and country, particularly between Douglas and the rest of the Island, has been another feature of Manx politics. After the election of 1895 there was a deadlock in the Keys 12:12 over the renewal of the Permit. The Speaker could throw his casting vote on the clauses but not on the final passing of the measure. This particular renewal thus failed to pass but the victory of the Anti-Permitists was short-lived as the Douglas Licensing Court over-rode the Legislature by judicial action through the issue of short term individual licenses.

The real significance of the 'Permit Election' lies in the fact that even as late as 1895 no political parties in the accepted sense of the term had emerged onto the Manx political scene and had certainly won no seats in the legislature. As we shall see a Manx



Labour Party was founded in 1918 and began to contest seats.

Abortive attempts to establish parties were made by Samuel Norris with the Manx National Party in 1919 and the Manx Democratic Party in 1945 but these met with no success. Mec Vannin, the Manx Nationalist Organisation, sponsored candidates in the last Keys election but with only one success. Of the 24 members of the Keys at present only 4 were elected on a party ticket. The Nationalist, Peter Craine, has now left Mec Vannin and founded his own Manx National Party. Even the three Labour M.H.K's accept no party whip.

The over-riding characteristics of Manx politics would appear to be independence and individualism. If a common enemy is required in order for the Manx to close ranks in support of the local establishment it can be conveniently identified as Westminster, Whitehall, Strasbourg, Brussels, or 'foreign' reformers either in the island ('come-overs') or 'across'. This deflection of antipathy from those in power in the island is a traditional device of Manx government.

Below the surface of Manx political homogeneity lurk the issues of rural versus urban interests, the forces of the Manx-Gaelic cultural revival versus the demands of the modern commercial world, the nationalist versus the 'new resident', the interests of emigre capital versus nativist feelings, the suspicion of 'foreign' ideas versus those who have returned from education or work abroad, and the concern over growing inequalities of income as articulated by the less than respectable political parties.

## b) THE POLITICAL PARTIES

### i) Manx Labour Party (M.L.P.)

The only political party which has remained in any form over a considerable time period is the Manx Labour Party. The newly-formed Independent Labour Party had its first candidate for the Keys in 1908

(although candidates basing their campaign upon socialist principles had stood before). Their first four members (out of 11 candidates) were elected at the General Election in 1919 and the first female representative in the Keys was a Labour Party member. The Labour Party (officially formed by the amalgamation of the Independent Labour Party, the trade union movement, and local branches of the Progressive Association ) held their first annual conference in 1918 at which they pledged themselves to implement "a deliberate thought-out, systematic and comprehensive plan of social rebuilding, which Tynwald would be driven to undertake".<sup>1</sup>

Despite the fact that the Labour Party has continued to succeed at the polls and at present has three members in the Keys, its real heyday was in the first 10-20 years of its life. It pioneered the trade union movement and implemented many urgently needed reforms.

The story of the early years of the Manx Labour Party is told in 'Reminiscences of the Manx Labour Party' by Alderman Alfred J. Teare, printed in October 1962. In the election of 1924 Labour raised its representation in the Keys to six. References are made during this period to some of those active in trade union and Labour circles who were 'victimised' and had to leave the Island to find employment. This had two important consequences. Firstly, those that returned often came back later with a feeling of resentment and an 'English socialist' attitude. Secondly it goes part of the way to explain why many prominent Labour Party members have been and are self-employed, businessmen, or hold important positions with British concerns which have branches in the Island.

<sup>1</sup> A.J. Teare Reminiscences of the Manx Labour Party. 1962. Page 26.



As for so long the only established and self-confessed political party in the 'non-party' atmosphere of Manx politics the Manx Labour Party is considered by some to be less than respectable and not to be 'playing the game'. One is reassured, however, that Manx Labour Party members are 'pale' pink and not real socialists' unlike those 'across' in the United Kingdom. The history of the Manx Labour Party is marked by the contributions made by trade unionists and nonconformists, particularly Methodist lay-preachers. In this it is not unlike the British Labour Party. The latter does co-operate by allowing M.P.'s to raise questions concerning the Isle of Man in the House of Commons.

The Manx Labour Party has had to struggle against the Manx reluctance to organise and combine. Added to this is the absence of the traditional urban working class (in terms of relative significance) which forms the usual power base of a Labour Party. Hence, in a community where standing for a political 'label' is not particularly reckoned a virtue, the approach of the M.L.P. has to be suitably geared. In its official electoral addresses in 1971 for the November General Election the Party introduced itself to new voters in the following manner:-

"The party system of government which functions in the United Kingdom does not apply in the Isle of Man. The majority of candidates travel under the banner of Independence. The..... (constituency) Labour Party is a branch of a Manx organisation not affiliated to any political body outside the Island. It represents a cross-section of people of various callings, interested in the achievement of social justice".

Although the Manx Labour Party cannot constitutionally affiliate to the British Labour Party - because they can have no representation in the House of Commons - they tend to be blamed for any mistakes made by the British party and to receive no kudos at all for any achievements. This is due in turn to the similarity in name on the one hand and to the constitutional separation on the other. This would seem to apply to any political party in the Isle of Man which had a connection, however tenuous, with a mainland party.

The structure of the M.L.P. is based upon local parties which are entirely independent in financial and policy terms and which are located in the areas of greatest support. These seem to be centred around the three Keys members in North Douglas, South Douglas and Rushen. A national executive does meet at intervals, but its main activity is the preparation of the overall Labour Party manifesto shortly before each General Election and virtually all other business is conducted in the branches.

## ii) The Nationalists -

### Mec Vannin and the Manx National Party

In recent years a new dimension has emerged onto the Manx political scene - that of Manx nationalism.

There is a sense in which all Manx people are nationalists. They are proud of their institutions and traditions and ready to defend their island against criticism, asserting its status as a self-governing nation.



The Manx nationalist movement, like most, has its roots in a cultural revival sparked off by a process of rapid social and economic change. The Manx Gaelic Society (Yn Cheshaght Gailchagh) was founded in 1899 and is still in existence. Its objects are the preservation and promotion of Manx Gaelic, the study and publication of existing Gaelic language and the cultivation of a modern literature in Manx. Its motto 'Gyn chengey, gyn cheer' means 'without tongue, without country'. Membership of the Society has risen sharply over the last two decades with many young people in particular learning the Manx language. Other cultural bodies include 'Ellynyn ny Gael' (Arts of the Gael) and the Isle of Man Branch of the Celtic Congress (Banglane Manninagh ny Cohaglyn Celtiagh). Prominent members of these societies have been and are members of the legislature. Another group - Aeglagh Vannin (Manx Youth Movement) was founded by the Manx writer Mona Douglas to foster the Manx language and folk-lore amongst the young. Interest in Manx culture seems to adopt political overtones when the question of the relationship with Britain or 'new resident' settlers is considered.

In 1961 a Manx speaking political group was formed at the Martin Baker aeroplane parts factory at Ronaldsway Airport. On Saturday 11th January 1964 leaders of this group together with others formed a new national political organisation called Mec Vannin (Sons of Mann) claiming that the insular government was killing Manx national morale. They decided to become a pressure group supporting a number of independent nationalist-minded members of the Keys who sympathised with Mec Vannin policy. Significantly at this stage Mec Vannin spurned the term 'party' preferring to

describe themselves in their literature as 'the Nationalist Organisation'. Their principle aim was not to win elections, but to

"assert and emphasise the fact that Mann is a nation, and acting on this belief it hopes to initiate a nationalist patriotic revival. Essentially it is a resistance movement.....against a serious threat of national extinction and collapse".<sup>1</sup>

The revival and preservation of Manx Gaelic was one of its major policies as was opposition to the Common Purse arrangement. the long term objective of Mec Vannin was stated to be full political independence for the Isle of Man within the Commonwealth.

From the time of its formation up to the end of the sixties Mec Vannin worked within the system in an appropriately Manx way. They had no members in the legislature but were an articulate pressure group commanding some sympathy with individual members of Tynwald and mobilising much Manx sentiment by astute use of the local press. In the early 1970's however, there were signs that Mec Vannin might be moving to join the Labour Party in flying a party flag in elections. In the November 1971 elections Leo Quayle narrowly missed election for Middle Sheading by only 24 votes. He was known to be a founder member of 'the Nationalist Organisation'. This heralded the beginning of a move from the tactics of just being a pressure group to adopting a political party 'label'.

<sup>1</sup>Mec Vannin Manifesto to the Manx People, 1965.



Mec Vannin was perhaps at its most electorally active in the 1976 Keys General Election when they put up ten candidates, only however to see one, Mr Peter Craine, elected.

The Keys elections of November 1976 were of considerable significance in terms of development of Manx politics. Firstly only half of the sitting members were returned, an almost unprecedented event in Manx history and according to the Manx Star "a clear indication if one were needed that the Manx public has not been satisfied with the past five years management of our public affairs".<sup>1</sup> Secondly the Manx Labour Party increased their representation from two to three seats. Thirdly, one of the candidates of Mec Vannin, who had contested the election for the first time as a fully fledged political party, was returned. This was described by the Manx Star in the following terms:-

"So far only one Mec Vannin candidate, Mr. Peter Craine in South Douglas, has gained a seat, but it is a historical moment, he will be the first member of an organised nationalist party ever to win a place in the Keys".<sup>2</sup> Some idea of the peculiarities of the Manx political system may be gauged from the sentence which followed. ".....and after their years in the political wilderness it will be interesting to see how they acquit themselves in Government. Criticism from outside is always easier than working within the system".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Manx Star 20th November 1976. (Election Results Issue)

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

<sup>3</sup>Ibid

Perhaps significantly, early in 1978, a split occurred in Mec Vannin. The reasons for this were a combination of disagreements over policies, tactics, personalities and the behaviour of the party's M.H.K. The result has been the retention of the name Mec Vannin by the younger and more radical element and the establishment of a new political party, the Manx National Party, by the majority of the former leadership and the M.H.K. with a considerable proportion of the membership,

Since the schism Mec Vannin has reverted largely to its former role of protest and pressure through the press and personal contacts. They feel that there is still a place for their style of nationalism and they intend to contest local and national elections in the future. Mec Vannin still feels that it should be the sole representative of Manx Nationalist opinion, but not at the expense of becoming a 'catch-all party' which is prepared to sway with the wind, a description of the M.N.P. as they see it. It feels its role to be one of standing firm on strong nationalist principles and stirring the conscience of the people. The party has changed dramatically in membership and in attitude since the split. It has retained the left-wing element, many of whom are regarded as being more socialist than the M.L.P. but has lost much of its middle class support to the new party. It now has pockets of very strong support in the west and north of the Island, but little elsewhere. It does not have the decentralised structure of the Manx Labour Party and although branches are in existence, most meetings are attended by members from all branches and its national executive is also a general meeting of all members who wish to attend.

The aim of the Manx Nationalist Party is "to secure complete internal self-government for the Isle of Man"<sup>1</sup> and it claims not

<sup>1</sup>Manx National Party. Tynwald Day Bulletin. 1978.



to be left or right wing as it believes that "political dogmata are of secondary consideration as compared to what is in the best interests of the Isle of Man and its people".<sup>1</sup> (The claim of nationalist parties the world over). It takes a basically centrist and pragmatic approach to politics. The difference in tactics which foreshadowed the Mec Vannin split is revealed by the claim that

"M.N.P. is NOT a protest movement, but a party which will fight elections and try to gain representation at all levels of government in the Island".<sup>2</sup>

The Party has a very centralised structure and a strong executive committee consisting of the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer P.R.O., the M.H.K., a party member on Ramsey Town Commissioners, and two other members. It appears, to date, to be a well organised party and has tried to involve more people by having speakers from outside the Party at meetings. M.N.P. are projecting an image of themselves as a respectable moderate nationalist party.

### Conclusion

To summarize, party growth in the Island has not been marked and the inadequacy of the present system in making M.H.K's responsible to the electorate is very evident. While M.H.K's continue to value the freedom that being an Independent brings, the system is unlikely

<sup>1</sup>Manx National Party. Tynwald Day Bulletin. 1978

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

to change much. Even the three M.L.P members in the Keys do not act as a coherent force and in effect act as Independents too. An Independent can so easily conceal his true motives behind his apparent consideration of what is best for his constituency or for the Island, that he is unlikely to surrender to the party line for no return. Parties may develop but only to provide a supportive role to members, mobilising opinion, assisting with canvassing, and providing a forum for political debate with the members, they are unlikely as yet to develop further into the policy makers for the member and many in the Isle of Man would regard this as undesirable anyway.

#### c) THE NATURE OF POLITICS IN MANN

Something remains to be said concerning the dominance of 'independents' in Manx politics leading to the lack of both a strong political party system and a cabinet system of government.

In Manx elections there are "safe" seats but not in the sense that a particular party will always get in (except perhaps in certain parts of Douglas, where a recent tradition of Labour Party representation has been established). The "safe" seats are those in which one particular person is expected to win for reasons of personality and experience. This, therefore, is what Manx voting behaviour is based upon - the personality of the candidate.

In the Isle of Man techniques of voter persuasion are still to a large extent confined to the use of the election address and other postal devices; the offer of transportation to the polling booth;



door-step canvassing by candidates with his or her family and friends; and platform speeches at local meetings. These are not necessarily listed in order of importance and in many of my interviews with members, the hard work of door-to-door canvassing was mentioned as a vital contributing factor in their success. Voters like to meet the candidates, (this is part of the 'personality politics argument' in effect) and this is often given as one argument for single-seat constituencies as it is seen as unfair that some candidates, e.g. in Rushen and Middle, have thousands more people to see than those in single-seat constituencies. The use of symbolism deserves some special mention in the Manx case. The M.L.P. has always presented literature in a light red colour (though white was used in the 1976 election), Independents are usually white or blue and the Nationalists' colours (even before nationalist parties contested elections) were yellow and black. The latter is illustrated in the Mec Vannin party manifesto motif for 1976 which also shows the rising sun, a symbol of the dawning of new ideas and hope, and the sail of a Viking ship showing respect for the ancient Manx kingdom. The absence of television as a medium for the use of candidates has, of course, precluded this as a means of campaign, but perhaps, with the increasing interest of Manx Radio in current affairs, the next election will see this used as a new medium for political persuasion.

When analysing the voting patterns in the Island the subject of whether or not there is even general comprehension of the system has arisen. One reason for 'plump' voting where a voter uses only

one of his two or three votes may be because he does not realise that he has more than one. With the advent of television and the major influence of the British media upon the Island, it is likely that some voters in the Isle of Man understand the British electoral system better than their own. This problem is exacerbated in that the electorate now includes a large number of new residents, who are voting for the first time in a system which is in many ways different to the one they are used to.

In certain specific cases particular issues may override all other factors when voters go to the poll. For example, in the 1976 General Election Mr. John Clucas stood in the constituency of Ayre in the North of the Island, and although he was the retiring member and a very popular candidate, he lost votes at the polls because he disagreed with the proposal to re-open the northern section of the Manx Electric Railway, and this was a burning issue at the time. The Permit Election in 1895 is a classic example of one issue (legislating to allow boarding houses to retail liquor to the guests as part of the tourist trade) dominating an election. This case also shows the split (which is still occasionally evident in the question of greater representation for Douglas) between town and country. Rural/urban conflict however is not currently a major factor in voting behaviour.

The principal considerations which the voter in the Isle of Man will usually take into account are the personality of the candidate, his previous experience and, to some limited extent, his attitudes on certain issues. Sir J.B. Bolton, in a statement to the MacDermott Commission in 1959 put it this way



"I feel that the election of the M.H.K.'s depends to a very great extent on the following factors:

- (i) Personal popularity
- (ii) Occupational interests
- (iii) Their attitude to immediate questions of general interest at the time of an election.
- (iv) Their ability to appeal to voters, whose votes may be influenced by emotion or by purely local questions."

The importance of the first of these factors is almost universally recognised;

"The electorate of the constituencies for the House of Keys pay regard to the personality of the candidate rather than his political beliefs and attachment to a group".<sup>1</sup>

All of the political parties feel that this situation ought to change, but most people feel that it will not as long as the community remains as small and close-knit as it now is:

"It is sheer stupidity to elect anyone to the House of Keys simply because he, or she, is your friend, or a nice person, or belongs to your district or your society. Or because he, or she, will try to protect your personal or business interests."<sup>2</sup>

The parties believe that the voters should sink all personal advantage and demand that the candidates for whom they vote produce a policy and unite with others to secure its practical fulfilment.

<sup>1</sup>Report of the Commission on the Isle of Man Constitution. Vol.II Appendices, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>M.L.P. Review, 1961.

Personality considerations often override party even in the minds of committed socialists and nationalists. In 1976 John Wright and Alan Bell both stood in Ramsey for the Keys and both stood on the Mec Vannin ticket and did all their electioneering together. Alan Bell obtained 812 votes and John Wright 292. Apart from proving that the party was not strong enough to elect both candidates ( and should therefore only have put up one) it is likely that those who voted for Wright because of his nationalism also voted for Bell, but those who voted for Bell did not vote for Wright because he was not Manx. So here personality was bigger than party or even policy.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, a letter to the Manx Labour Party Newsletter in July, 1976, stated that although the writer was a socialist, "I have sometimes voted for Labour candidates, not because of the Party label, but because I judged them to be genuine characters who were sincerely trying to do their level best, and surely this ought to count for something in selecting our representatives."

This emphasis on personality often results in the election of the 'self-made man' and the so-called 'financial wizards'. Many people feel that a person who can handle money well must be able to work equally effectively in public affairs, (the result has been under-provision caused by the transfer of private enterprise ethics into public expenditure). Wildly unpopular mistakes have been made on the basis of financial convenience, which have caused serious loss to the Manx nation, e.g. the sale of the Nunnery and Bishopscourt, the closing of the North western line of the Steam Railway, and still the same people are re-elected because of the admiration and respect the voters in this highly capitalistic society have for the money-makers.

<sup>1</sup> David Keggin - Interview. (M.N.P. Public Relations Officer )



Previous experience of public affairs fortunately is an important factor, often supplementing the personality considerations. In the survey on M.H.K.'s many felt that experience on parish and town commissioners, Board of Education and local committee work had been an important influence upon voters. Mr. T.E. Kermeen, elected in 1976 shortly after retiring from his position in the Civil Service as Clerk of Tynwald, felt this was the single most important factor in his election.

In conclusion it is obvious that personality politics is the major factor in the field of voting behaviour. This is borne out by questionnaire results, in which the majority of M.H.K.'s wrote that they felt personality, previous experience and specific issues were the three most important considerations for the voters. Certain issues will always come up in the election battle, including how to promote tourism, (it seems that the extension of the season into May and September and the reduction of fares to the Island have always been important issues) how to retain corporal punishment, how to improve the economy, etc. There is very little difference between areas except a higher propensity to vote labour in Willaston and Pulrose (council estates in Douglas). There is a marginally more radical outlook in Peel (some claim), combined with a strong nationalist feeling which also exists to some extent in Ramsey. Apart from this Mec Vannin is likely to do well in areas with a higher proportion of Manx people, M.N.P. in areas with a mixture of Manx and new residents, and M.L.P. in the few 'working-class' areas in the Island.

Turnout in general elections in the Island is generally very

high in comparison with those in the U.K., at an average of approximately 70%, and is higher in rural than in urban areas. This figure decreases at by-elections and in local elections. In the 1976 General Election the average percentage turnout was 75.1% This can be explained by the extremely personal nature of small scale politics, where it is more likely that every individual vote will be significant and the result may be decided on only a dozen votes. Also personal knowledge of candidates will prompt voters to make the effort to elect a friend or a relative. Apart from this, in the multi-seat constituencies there can be a large number of candidates of which the voter is likely to approve at least one, and will go and record that preference whereas with a single-seat constituency which may have a contest between only two people, the incentive to vote is low. The percentage poll drops in the multi-member constituencies to the low 60's, proving that a large number of the electorate just cast one vote.

There is a danger when one is examining Manx politics of thinking in terms of the degree of deviance from the norms of the general United Kingdom model. Some element of comparison, however is inevitable. Clearly Manx voting behaviour, for example, does not follow the pattern of the rest of the British Isles, as parties are not so well developed and the intimate nature of politics precludes an emphasis upon policy and places the voters' decisions firmly in the area of personality preference.

From the text it can be argued that the Manx system has many faults and inadequacies in terms of providing democratic and responsible government. This, to some extent, is due to the reluctance of M.H.K.'s to implement reform (as indeed they were reluctant in 1866) e.g. redistribution of seats, reduction of the powers of the Governor and Legislative Council, adequate salaries for full-time members, and the institution of some method of providing



responsible government. The present government, with its five year fixed term of office, cannot even be 'brought down' if found to be unpopular, and consideration ought, in future, to be given to providing some system for this, e.g. referendum, which, if containing enough names, would require the government (by statute) to call a General Election. Without strong party government any reform is unlikely. The incremental approach adopted by the Manx Parliament for centuries is unlikely to change to a fast moving, rational attitude in at least the next few decades.

The existence of a totally unrepresentative 'cabinet', in the form of the Governor's Executive Council, with no responsibility for its action and sitting in private, cannot be acceptable. This body, made up of Tynwald members (5 Keys and 2 Legislative Council) was created in 1946 and legislated for in 1961, to advise the governor on all matters of principal, policy and legislation. The Executive Council has failed as a move towards representative government because it is composed mainly of Chairmen of the Boards of Tynwald and Board loyalties in Tynwald are "too strong to accept the authority of the new body or to give its members a chance of generating a sense of collective responsibility."<sup>1</sup>

Without parties acting cohesively a certain amount of 'horse trading' has developed, whereby a member can secure votes for his own Bill by promising support for that of a colleague. This results in unnatural and dangerous loyalties in the House,

<sup>1</sup>(MacDermott) Commission on the Constitution of the Isle of Man, 1959

preventing the member from expressing his true opinion  
(hopefully in the interest of his constituency).

The general contentment in the Island with the Manx political system may be partly the result of apathy and partly of appreciation of the advantages of 'personality politics'. It must be said that it does, therefore, provide, in one sense of the word, democracy, though it does not fully accord with the usual meaning of the term in western parliamentary experience.



### PART THREE

MICRO-STATES - A SPECIFIC FORM OF POLITY?

## CHAPTER SIX

### COMMUNITY RATHER THAN SOCIETY?

6:1 INTRODUCTION

6:2 THE SIZE DIMENSION

6:3 A SENSE OF COMMUNITY: THE CASE STUDY AREAS CONSIDERED.

6:4 SUMMARY



## CHAPTER SIX

### COMMUNITY RATHER THAN SOCIETY?

#### 6:1 INTRODUCTION

Having considered some of the difficulties and issues involved in the study of small independent communities in Part One, and having briefly familiarised the reader with the basic historical and structural aspects of government and politics in the selected case study areas in Part Two, I now intend to consider the validity of the proposition that micro-states constitute a specific form of polity.

In the following chapter I propose to examine the influence of the size dimension and the nature of community itself within a small scale polity. This will include an attempt to account for such prominent societal characteristics as homogeneity by reference to basic factors and the relationship between state and society.

I am not setting out to idolise or to idealise these small independent communities, but to consider the salient political characteristics which seem to be common to them and to account for these as far as is possible.

## 6:2 THE SIZE DIMENSION

It may prove useful, at this stage, to examine briefly some of the effects of size on political systems.

It is often assumed, particularly in the advanced western world, that smaller state systems provide more opportunity for citizens to participate effectively in decisions. This is by no means always the case in practice. What is clear, however, is that it is often easier for the citizen of a small polity to perceive a relation between his own self-interest or understanding of 'the good' and that of the general or public interest. Conversely in larger states where there is likely to be a greater diversity of beliefs, values and goals, social and economic characteristics, occupations and so on, it is more likely that the link between the views of the individual and the policy of the general good will not be seen. The distances, literally and metaphorically, between the part and the whole are shorter in the small polity. In addition it is less likely in a larger state that the single interest of one section of the society will dominate the whole system. Thus larger states are more likely to generate multiple or pluralist loyalties to the various 'communities' within the wider society.

By contrast in the small state the pressures towards conformity and homogeneity are more likely to produce a feeling of loyalty to the idea of a single integrated community. This is no accidental occurrence. A condition of more homogeneity is almost an inevitable



concomitant of smallness. Smallness, to a large extent, means more homogeneity. It means less division of labour in the economy, a reduced variety of occupations, interests, and so on. This restricted economic span has important political implications. One major consequence of this can be seen in the perception of the relationship between State and Society. Society in large states is much more an autonomous aggregate of groups separate from the state, whereas in small polities society is still very closely enmeshed with the state and the state with society. This linkage takes place through individuals and personalities rather than through impersonal organizational bureaucracies representing the state. The result is a stronger feeling of community partly due to the relative absence of the sense of 'alienation' which is often said to characterise the relations between individuals and the state in large scale societies. In this way in the small scale polity the notion of the community equates almost exactly with that of the society to the extent that the whole broad society in general is regarded as constituting a community, with that term's connotations of 'togetherness', shared interests, and common identity. But the converse of this is that such differences that do occur are more personal, more intense and more emotionally charged.

A key development in modern western societies has been the depersonalisation of the state; in other words the changing nature of state power away from the personal authority of particular rulers towards the exercise of an abstract and 'rational-legal' power. Along with this development has gone the tendency in modern large-scale nation-states to divest civic relationships of strong degrees of emotional commitment, making them more impersonal

and emotionally neutral. In small-scale states, however, people are more likely to display some degree of emotional commitment towards civic relationships as these are represented through/by people and represent values with which they can feel an identity. This contrast of small-scale personal involvement with large-scale neutrality in respect of civic and public affairs in a general sense finds a further expression in the way in which individuals regard their fellow citizens. There is an apparent paradox in the contrast between the stress on conformity and compliance which reinforces the pressures for a homogeneity with respect to beliefs, values, and goals on the one hand, and the depth of factional feeling which can be found in small scale polities on occasions. In small states people are more likely to consider each other as friends or enemies according to whether they agree or disagree on politics. In larger states, where individuals are less concerned with the full range of interests and opinions of their fellow citizens they are less likely to judge others as friends or enemies according to their politics. The apparent paradox is explained by the depth of feeling involved over divisions in small scale communities; it is the other side of the same coin. Just as friendships run deeper then so do enmities, involving many aspects of life.

On balance then, smaller states produce stronger pressures for conformity to the collective norms of society than do larger states. Interestingly, however, feelings of alienation and loss of the sense of community or 'belonging' appear to be much more likely in larger states. In the light of these tentative observations we may raise the question of whether micro-states retain the general characteristics of a community rather more than does the more pluralist society of the relatively larger state. The question is how are the



relationships between state and society affected by the size dimension? I have already indicated that this is largely a question of perception and distance; state and society being, and seen to be, more interlinked in small scale polities. To examine this theme further it will be useful to consider the implications as far as political participation by citizens is concerned.

It is often assumed that small-scale is more democratic, but is this necessarily true? In their examination of the relationship between size and democracy Dahl and Tufte<sup>1</sup> raise some general questions which I consider to be of some relevance here. What size should a political system be in order to ensure rational control by its citizens? What are the comparative advantages and disadvantages characterising political systems of different sizes? The answer given by them to the question of whether there is an optimal size for a political system is an unequivocal "no". They argue that almost every modern state recognizes this fact in practice and meets the need for variation in the size of political units whenever existing boundaries are too large or too small by a variety of strategies including decentralisation, devolution, federalism, confederation, or in extreme cases, separatism and the creation of a new independent polity.

<sup>1</sup>Robert A Dahl and Edward R. Tufte Size and Democracy. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California. London: Oxford University Press 1974.

"In the representative democracies, however, theory has lagged behind practice. For about two thousand years the dominant view was that the small city-state was optimal for democracy; for about two hundred years the dominant view has been that the nation-state is optimal for democracy. Yet the plain facts of life are that neither is optimal for democracy".<sup>1</sup>

It could be argued, however, that the micro-state bridges this gap between the city-state and the nation-state by providing a political unit which is still close enough to the individual citizen for him to be conscious of his membership of it in a very real sense, and to meet the needs of the general search for community which modern mass society seems to generate by its alienation of traditional values and life-styles. The micro-states as the new "Gemeinschaft" would appear to be a possibility if one is persuaded by the words of Dr. Batliner (on Liechtenstein) and Mr. West (on Faroe) in Part One.

The introduction of the concept of Gemeinschaft inevitably leads one to consider the relevance of Ferdinand Tonnies' conceptual distinction between Gemeinschaft (essentially small scale communal society based on family and traditional ties) and Gesellschaft (modernised non-communal society based on contractual ties, in large scale impersonal relationships) to considerations of the influence of the size dimension.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Page 135.



If we examine Tonnies' work we find it contains three main themes: firstly, the transition of western polity from the corporate and communal to the individualistic and rational; secondly, the shift in western social organisation from one of ascribed status to one of contractual status; and thirdly, the development of western ideas from the sacred-communal to the secular-associational. Tonnies gave these three main themes, which are also found in the work of later sociologists such as Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, theoretical articulation.

Tonnies argued that a basic distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft was that in the former individuals remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors, whereas in the latter they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors. Gemeinschaft, he maintained, was the home of all morality and the seat of virtue. Typical of the modernizing developments which led to the growth of Gesellschaft was urbanisation. The rural village community loses its kinship characteristics as more alien elements are taken in. With the increase in the urban mode of life the attachment to tradition is diminished.

"By means of political and other intellectual organisation promoted by town and, to a greater extent, by city life, the consciousness of the Gesellschaft gradually becomes the consciousness of an increasing mass of the people."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>F. Tonnies. Extract from the final page of an article entitled Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft, in Handwörterbuch der Soziologie, Ferdinand Enke Verlag, Stuttgart, 1931.

The city, argued Tonnies, is typical of Gesellschaft in general; indeed it is the home of Gesellschaft.

"The exterior forms of community life as represented by natural will and Gemeinschaft were distinguished as house, village, and town. These are the lasting types of real and historical life. In a developed Gesellschaft, as in the earlier and middle stages, people live together in these different ways. The town is the highest, viz., the most complex, form of social life. Its local character, in common with that of the village, contrasts with the family character of the house. Both village and town retain many characteristics of the family; the village retains more, the town less. Only when the town develops into the city are these characteristics almost entirely lost. Individuals or families are separate identities, and their common locale is only an accidental or deliberately chosen place in which to live. But as the town lives on within the city, elements of life in the Gemeinschaft, as the only real form of life, persist within the Gesellschaft, although lingering and decaying. On the other hand, the more general the condition of Gesellschaft becomes in the nation or a group of nations, the more this entire "country" or the entire "world" begins to resemble one large city."<sup>1</sup>

This is a crucial element with regard to the examination of the nature of politics in small independent communities. It reappears throughout the study and in particular is discussed in this chapter in the following paragraph and under the heading of 'the Urban Factor' in the next section.

<sup>1</sup>Ferdinand Tonnies Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft. (First Edition 1887)  
Translated by Charles P. Loomis . Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London  
1955. Page 265.



The case study areas, whilst all undergoing the modernization process, are in a real sense still 'village' communities (or communities of villages) and traditional or rural virtues are still much in evidence. Yet each also has an urban centre where values are regarded as being in a different category. It is therefore wrong to think of micro-states as purely Gemeinschaft in nature; they have often within them precisely the dichotomy of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft as Tonnies described. This is certainly true of the three national communities covered in the case studies. They have within them elements of the Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft dichotomy and it presents certain key problems for the societies concerned. These problems do not arise by accident - they originate out of the economic situation which generally faces small independent communities and confronts them with a basic dilemma. Small size means by necessity, trade with the outside world which thus admits exposure to 'alien' elements. As a perhaps extreme example of a small independent community which has become almost wholly Gesellschaft in nature due to its dependence on world trade and commerce one could cite Singapore. The British Crown Colony of Hong Kong, whilst not independent, is another example of a small community which exists almost solely as an entreport. As we noted in Chapter Two the small independent community has by its very nature a consequent relative lack of division of labour, a small internal market, and suchlike economic characteristics which render economic self-sufficiency an impossibility and some commercial accommodation with the outside world a necessity. This presents a paradox of major importance for these polities and those who govern them. The economic challenges and problems created by the desire for political and cultural independence increase the very

danger of the incursion of 'outside' values and weaken traditional ways. Paradoxically the outside world looms larger to the micro-state than it does to a larger state. External factors can pose greater dangers - economic, social, political and cultural - to a small society vis à vis larger polities. In these ways the juxtaposition of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft elements in small independent communities is of crucial significance.

### 6:3 A SENSE OF COMMUNITY: THE CASE STUDY AREAS CONSIDERED

#### a) Insularity

The selected case study areas are all islands or groups of islands so that the homogeneity of the community, which we have seen tends to be stronger in small societies, is further compounded by a degree of geographical isolation. To an extent which varies between each of our case study examples, the physical boundaries of the area inhabited by the national community are reinforced by the consciousness of the cultural identity of the islanders and the differences between them and 'outsiders'.

The insularity of the Manx and the Faroese is marked. This is not to say that they are hostile to outsiders; indeed it is almost a common feature of such islanders that they display a marked hospitality to visitors. Cherished local values, however, are not for visitors to question. The Maltese, probably because of their past history and their geographic-strategic importance



are far less 'insular' but still tend to be suspicious of the motives of outsiders. Perhaps the experience of being used as an island fortress base by a variety of succeeding foreigners has taught them to be wary as well as the ability of seeking a profitable return in their economic dealings with visitors.

"Praise but do not criticise us" is often the attitude in all three cases. The Manx are particularly hostile to advice from the rest of the world, especially from England, on how to conduct their affairs and to modernise. The issue of the 'birching' case which went to the European Court of Human Rights at Strasbourg in 1978 is a good example. Typically it united virtually all Manx opinion; not so much because of the issue itself, although there is only a small minority opposed to birching in the island, but rather because the community as a whole felt itself to be under attack from foreign interference.

"Following the condemnation of birching by the European Court of Human Rights, Mrs Rita Garside and Mrs Peggy Irving petitioned Tynwald for an Island referendum on the issue. Strong feelings have been aroused against so-called "external" interference" in the Isle of Man. The petition was handed to Robert Quayle, Clerk of Tynwald at the foot of Tynwald Hill on 5th July (1978)".<sup>1</sup>

Salvador de Madariaga has commented on the general British attitude of insularity and suspicion of "continentals" and has described it as the Channel complex. In comparison the average Manxman's view of the British 'come-over' and those in power 'across' seems to constitute an 'Irish Sea complex'. This tends to take the

<sup>1</sup>The Manxman (bi-monthly magazine) Summer/Sourey 1978 issue. Published by the Shearwater Press. Page 26. plus photographs.

form that no outsider can possibly understand the Manx situation and is therefore not qualified to comment critically on features of Manx life, particularly social and political activities. Very often the most adamant advocates of this viewpoint are themselves 'new Manx' - tax exiles from Britain or 'When I's' (ex-colonials).

In a review of John West's book on the Faroes<sup>1</sup>, to give another example, a Faroese nationalist wondered whether any foreigner could really understand the true significance of the language struggle of the period 1906-1938.

One tends to get the same sort of reaction in South Africa where the Afrikaners who, by law, never come into real contact with blacks claim a kind of instinctive understanding of "the Bantu" which they will deny to trained anthropologists who have studied the situation on the ground. It is probably a type of defence mechanism on the part of people who do not wish to have their cherished prejudices and values questioned.

#### b) Identity

Questions about degree of sovereignty apart, there is no doubt that the Faroese, Maltese and Manx, all constitute independent nations with their own self-conscious identity.

In each case there is a particular national language and culture which has survived or been revived and in the process has generated considerable political nationalism. Pride in their national

<sup>1</sup>

John F. West Faroe - the emergence of a nation

Published by C. Hurst & Co. London 1972.



community is a trait of almost all the people with whom I came into contact during these studies. Dominance by a larger state in each case has bequeathed a legacy of both facility with a more widely used tongue (English for Malta and Mann, and Danish for the Faroes) and also the need to safeguard the insular heritage and to build it up. This is a common theme throughout the case study areas but its degree of importance varies.

The association between national culture, identity and politics is strongest in the Faroes. Even though the question of the link with Denmark is one of the major cleavage issues it is concerned nowadays rather more with constitutional and economic questions than with differences over culture or language. All Faroese speak their own language and Danish, many also speak English and/or German. National pride is so strong that there is no one Faroese nationalist party. The battle on this issue has been fought and won. The Faroese national identity is clearly established although there are occasional problems at international meetings when the Danes have objected to the Faroese flag being displayed along with those of sovereign states. Something of the passion aroused by the language and the folk traditions in Faroe may be conveyed by the following passage.

"In the ballad and the Faroese dance, the Faroese people possess a folk tradition hardly to be equalled in this part of the globe. The ballads, among our most valuable national treasures and passed on from mouth to mouth over the centuries, have borne our language 'through smoke and perilous flames' and placed her in the high-seat where, after her long struggle, she rests".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faroe Isles Review Vol 2. No 2. 1977.

By comparison with the Faroes where nationalism is a cornerstone of the political system Manx nationalism is a pale shadow. As we have seen in Chapter Five there is a sense in which all Manx people are nationalists. They are generally proud of their institutions and traditions and ready to defend them from either internal or external criticism. In recent years there has been a marked revival of interest in traditional Manx culture. The Manx nationalist movement has, like many others, its roots in a cultural revival (elements of which were outlined in the previous chapter) but it is encouraged by economic factors such as the large-scale settlement of 'new residents' or 'stop-overs' (mostly rich and elderly) over the last two decades.

It is important to get a balanced view of Manx culture. There are, in a sense, two Isles of Man. The one bears the image of a quaint little rural idyll where time has stood still, peopled by Gaelic speaking rustics, with a tradition of semi-independence, isolation, tailless cats, open-air 'Viking' assemblies, motor bike races (T.T. and M.G.P) a penchant for judicial corporal punishment, and a three legs emblem thrown in for good measure. The other side is of a floating casino and a base for international finance capital, fringe banking, and tax haven facilities for individuals and private corporations alike which is right up-to-date.

Interest in Manx culture often adopts political overtones when the question of the relationship with Britain is considered. This distinguishes the Manx nationalists from their compatriots who also take an interest in traditional Manx culture. There are other people in the Isle of Man, of course, who take little interest in the cultural



side but are anxious to be free of controls from Britain. Certainly there is a numerous element in the Isle of Man who wish to be 'British' when it suits them and 'independent' when it suits them. Prominent amongst these are the tax exiles or 'pseudo-Manx' who, without a drop of Manx blood in their veins, will loudly proclaim the rights of 'we Manx to run our affairs' without interference from Britain. Quite often these people will explain that they like living in the island because it is like England was some fifty years ago.

Manx nationalism became politically organised when Mec Vannin (Sons of Mann) decided to 'come out' from its shadowy folk-organisation interest group image and to contest elections as a political party. It was a very wide coalition of Manx cultural zealots and political activists of various types, many of whom were themselves either 'comeovers' or married to 'comeovers' or returners. Even in its early days as a political movement a split in Mec Vannin seemed likely as on economic issues they ranged from the usual Manx conservatives, through liberals, to what are socialists and republicans who would stand to the left of the rather moderate Manx Labour Party, and people who sympathised with, and saw similarities with, Sinn Fein in Ulster. Having secured the election of their first member, Peter Craine, to the House of Keys Mec Vannin split over a combination of policy and personal issues with the conservative or 'moderate' wing generally leaving with the Chairman and the M.H.K. to form the Manx National Party.

In contrast to the Faroes where there is no one Nationalist Party because of the general strength of nationalist feeling, in the Isle of Man there is no need for a 'Conservative Party' as such given the dominance of conservative (qua 'independent') values and attitudes in the island.

As citizens of a sovereign Republic the Maltese can afford to be rather more relaxed internally about their nationalism whilst still stressing their independence from foreign powers. In the past, as we have seen, language and culture were major issues in Maltese politics. One of the two present political parties, the Nationalist Party, originates from groups who combined to resist the encroachment of English language and culture. Interestingly though they were defending the Italian rather than the Maltese language, as has been pointed out. With the rehabilitation of the Maltese language in its own right after the struggles between the Nationalists and Lord Strickland the economic issues replaced cultural ones as the major concern of Maltese politics. The arguments between the Nationalists and the Malta Labour Party now centre on which direction Maltese society should take in its future development and which direction the Maltese state should take in the world.

"The central issue of the (September 1976) election campaign has been Malta's relationship to Europe and the rest of the world, and the effect of this on the economy now and after the final departure of the British services personnel in April, 1979, under the mutually agreed phased withdrawal.

"Mr. Mintoff sees Malta, which lies 58 miles from Sicily and 180 from Libya, as a political bridge between Europe and the Arab world. He professes his desire for friendship with all, but has a preference for other non-aligned countries and for those ready to help him economically - like the Chinese, who in 1972 gave a loan of Maltese £17m and have some 400 workers here building a dry dock, and like the Libyans, who have invested in Maltese industry and tourism, and sell their oil to Malta at a cut price. He hopes to promote Malta's economic development and secure its defence through a series of bilateral agreements with friendly



countries, especially those in the Mediterranean zone.

"

If to a policy of non-alignment you add the (not unsuccessful) introduction of a mixed economy, a three-fold increase in social security benefits in five years, and relentless exhortations to work hard so that Malta can achieve economic independence by 1980, it is not surprising that a number of islanders especially among the middle classes, regard Mr. Mintoff's approach as alien to the old Maltese way of life.

"The appeal of the Nationalists is to those who hanker for a

reaffirmation of what they call Malta's European vocation.

As Dr. Borg Olivier put it in an interview: "We want to be friendly to all countries, but we want partnership and close association with those which have the same ideology as we do". Prominent among these, of course, are the British whom the Nationalists would ask - almost certainly in vain - to slow down withdrawal. The military base would be kept under Maltese control, its facilities made available upon Maltese requests to countries who signed mutual defence agreements.

"

For economic and sentimental reasons, the Nationalists would also like to increase the number of British residents from the present level of 3,000 - 4,000 to 10,000, which would bring in an estimated £10m. Other enticements include the offer of one Maltese pound for every sterling pound's worth of investment repatriated from Britain and reinvested in Malta.

"

There is also a striking Nationalist undertaking progressively to abolish income tax, which the party say bears unduly heavily on

salary and wage earners, as opposed to the self-employed. Possible alternative sources of revenue include a plan to make Malta a tax haven for offshore funds.

"In Mr. Mintoff's view, this entire attitude smacks of the past, and would reduce the Maltese once again to servants dependent on pickings from the rich man's table. He is a proud man, and cherishes the ideal of economic independence. He has managed to keep inflation down to single figures and, with the help of a voluntary pioneer corps of 8,000, unemployment too has been contained. Altogether, Malta has been shielded from recession.

"To the voter the alternatives as he goes to the polls today must seem stark. Everyone expects the result to be very close".<sup>1</sup>

This illustrates the nature of the basic problems which face small independent communities such as Malta in the modern world. The need for foreign trade, investment, capital, sometimes tourism, and the correct balance of these factors without the loss of economic and political independence and of a separate social and cultural identity is a common dilemma. In the case of Malta there is the added dimension of its strategic importance.

<sup>1</sup>Roger Berthoud. Article in 'The Times'. (London, 17 September, 1976)

'Old adversaries and new issues as Malta goes to the polls'.

c) Foreigners and 'returners' as agents for change.

The influence of the foreign settler or the native who has had foreign experience is an important factor in these small communities especially in the rather more 'closed' worlds of Mann and the Faroes.

In Faroe, for example, in earlier times there was the influence of the priests who came from Denmark and left numerous and influential families in the islands; and in more recent times the returned student or resident (usually professional) in Denmark. The returners from Denmark have contributed heavily over the years to the growth and strength of Faroese cultural and political nationalism. They are very often separatist in political attitude, far more Faroese than the Faroese who have never resided outside the islands; particularly, it seems, if they have Danish wives. Of course, reform needs will be more readily perceived by persons who have acquired the ability and experience to allow them to compare.

In the same way we have noticed in the case study treatments of Mann and Malta a succession of outsiders or returners who have made significant contributions to the political development of those communities. The danger in selecting a few names lies in the possible omission of others who are equally deserving of mention. Particularly worthy of note in my opinion, nonetheless, in the Manx case are Lt. Governor Loch (as a good example of reforms introduced by some 'progressive' governors or through



them by the British Home Office), Sammuel Norris (a 'come-over' settler and journalist who played a prominent role in the Manx Reform Movement), and Edward Callister (a Manx socialist, known as 'Ed the Red', who for many years was 'blackened' from employment in the island because of his views and activities and later returned to serve as a Labour Party member of the House of Keys and the Douglas Corporation and continued to criticise the undemocratic nature of Manx government). In the case of Malta the names of Lord Strickland (part Maltese and part British, part official and part politician) and Dom Mintoff (a former Rhodes scholar with British connections who transformed and is transforming first the Malta Labour Party and then Malta under his leadership) spring immediately to mind.

#### d) The Urban factor

There is a sense in which even in the larger countries in the western political world we associate 'grass roots' democracy with the small or local community level. The three case study areas, whilst undergoing the modernisation process, are still very much village communities, or communities of villages. The real 'feel' or 'spirit' of the island in each case is felt to reside in the 'typical' settlement in the hinterland. This is similar to the sense in which the 'real' England is associated with the 'green and pleasant land' rather than with the 'dark satanic mills'.

In the case study areas, however, we have observed an increasing

population drift to, and the rapid growth of, the urban centres in each case; these urban centres being the local capitals.

Whilst looking briefly at the contribution to typologies of society made by Ferdinand Tonnies we noted that he identified the city as the home of Gesellschaft. It is associated with commerce, contractual relationships, and a less 'homely' way of life. In all three of the case study areas the urban capital stands out as a bridgehead of foreign influences, mostly perceived by islanders as bad, and a disseminator of universalistic norms and values.

Torshavn in the Faroes is known to the islanders simply as 'Havn'. Its traditional nickname is 'Beggars Town' which refers to its attraction for landless and jobless men in the past as the source of 'dole' and charity payments. Under the trade monopoly all goods imported to the islands had to pass through 'Havn', another factor which has associated it with foreign influences.

In Malta the villages are in reality small townships usually within a mile of each other. The major conurbation though, is that around Valletta and the Grand Harbour area. Valletta is known to Maltese as 'Il-Belt' (the City). For centuries it was the symbol of alien dominance of the island; first with the Knights of St. John, then briefly with the French, and finally with the British. The differing values which prevail in rural and urban Malta were more fully described in Chapter Four.

It is a fairly common complaint of the Manx that day-trip visitors mistakenly assume that Douglas is typical of the island. It is the main holiday resort and as such has something of the image of a mini-Blackpool, catering very much for what used to be called

'the visiting trade'. To the more traditional Manx Douglas is something of an embarrassment, albeit a lucrative one. It is regarded as a stepping-stone for the permissive and alien values to be found across the water - notably in England.

This urban/rural dichotomy is important to the extent that it tends to reinforce the perceived connection between 'change' and 'foreign' influence. The urban centres attract both more foreigners and more young people from the more rural areas through the greater availability of employment and the attraction of wider entertainment possibilities. With the urban areas the size dimension comes into operation again. Anonymity becomes more of a possibility and the whole range of universalistic norms becomes more prevalent.

This makes Tonnies' analysis all the more relevant as the consideration of the 'urban' aspects highlights the internal paradox within the micro-states of the relationship between the capital town and the country areas with its echoes of Gesellschaft and Gemeinschaft.

#### 6:4 SUMMARY

In this chapter I have argued that in general terms smallness means more homogeneity in society and that this is not accidental; it follows on from the economic circumstances of small independent communities and is then accentuated by their social characteristics. From this initial point two main factors have been considered, both of which suggest a paradox of sorts.



Firstly, there is the question of the nature of the relationship between the state and the society in particular and the strength of the feeling of 'community' in general. In larger states society is much more an autonomous aggregate of groups separate from the state, whereas in small polities society is still closely enmeshed with the state and the state with society. This creates less feeling of alienation than is usual for citizens of the average sized polity. Smallness facilitates greater comprehension of the political structure by citizens but it does not necessarily assure greater participation. The gap between the public and private sphere is smaller in the micro-state in the sense that the citizen can more easily perceive the relationship between his own good and the public good. This is essentially a question of perception and distance, both social and geographic. The feelings of community are thus strengthened and when divisions do arise they are correspondingly deeper because of the pervasive and more emotional nature of relationships in the small scale society. This presents the paradox of deep enmities occurring in what is essentially the type of society where a premium is placed upon 'getting along well' with others. The pressures and imperatives for homogeneity or solidarity are both internal and external.

Secondly, we have noted that the outside world looms larger to the micro-state than it does to other larger forms of polity. The economic factors are of vital importance here (although in the case of Malta strategic considerations have been, and are, of major significance too). The economic challenges and problems

created by the desire for independence increase the danger of the incursion of 'alien' values which threaten traditional ways and the local identity. Key political questions are concerned in every case with the place of the country in the world economy and the degree of external penetration which may be desirable or inevitable and what forms it should take. I have presented the basic dilemma which confronts these polities. It is how to retain that distinctive self-conscious identity and political independence whilst at the same time making the necessary accommodation with the outside world. It is here that the contribution made by Ferdinand Tonnies to the typology of society seems particularly relevant. The question is, however, by no means as simple as community/society or small state/Gemeinschaft versus large state/Gesellschaft. There is the added existence of the internal paradox presented by the modernisation process and what I have termed the 'urban factor' within the small polities which I have examined.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### POLITICAL STYLE AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES.

7:1 INTRODUCTION

7:2 COMMON INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

7:3 CONSTITUTIONS AND REALITY

7:4 SUMMARY



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### POLITICAL STYLE AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

#### 7:1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned primarily with an examination of the nature and origins of the general administrative structures within which governmental activity takes place in the small independent communities chosen as the case study areas. If a full appreciation of the nature of these polities is to be achieved it is necessary to link the study of the style of small scale society and community which has gone before to the examination of the political forces and issues which will follow later by placing them in their correct institutional context and analysing this relationship.

The reason for this exercise is more than just a desire to add a historical perspective and the dimension of a relationship with a 'tutelary' power. Formal constitutional guidelines may well not operate always in practice in societies where great importance is placed upon informal relationships and traditional ties.

#### 7:2 COMMON INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A fairly common pattern of political development is visible in the small self-conscious political communities we have studied. It begins with a form of government which is quasi-colonial in structure - the Faroes being originally governed as a Danish county with the Amtmand representing the Crown in its dealings with the Løgting;

Malta and the Isle of Man being governed as Crown Colonies of the United Kingdom with the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor and his Council dealing with the local legislature .

There were two basic principles of Crown Colony government according to Martin Wight.<sup>1</sup> The first is that the legislature is subordinate to the executive; the second is that the colonial government is subordinate to the imperial government. The form of administration in existence in Faroe between 1709 and 1948, being based on a Danish style bureaucracy, was not markedly different in its operation.

Time has seen a gradual movement from Crown Colony type status to internal self-government, and in the case of Malta to independence and sovereign Republic status.

The usual pattern of development sees the Crown appointee as the nominal Head of the Executive ruling with the aid of a largely nominated Executive Council and consulting with a partly nominated - but increasingly elected Legislature (usually originally bi-cameral but often becoming unicameral). The Legislature often lays claim to being descended from an earlier assembly dating from a former time of independence (e.g. the 'consiglio popolare', the original Løgting, or the original Tynwald of the 'Viking' era) in order to emphasise native legitimacy against the hegemonic bureaucracy and administration of the tutelary state. Incidentally

<sup>1</sup> Martin Wight British Colonial Constitutions, Oxford. 1947

when dealing with the constitutional position and development of Faroe and Mann in particular we have to beware of the antiquarian cant of many books on the subject most of which are geared to providing historically colourful copy for the 'tourist reader' market. In the case of the Faroes, for example, this applies to references to the old Løgting which was abolished in 1816. This was in historical times an appeal court on the general Norwegian pattern, and the authority for it ever having been a legislative assembly, except in a very limited way, is slender indeed. The same point can be made in large measure about the Manx Tynwald. These historic 'open-air assemblies of freemen' were for most of their history used by the King or Lord as a platform for the promulgation of laws and decrees and as courts of appeal. This does not, of course, diminish the potency of the myth of a tradition of direct participatory democracy which is fostered in both the Faroes and the Isle of Man. The Manx are currently exploiting this myth to boost their finances and their constitutional status during 1979. It is not the first time during this century that they have celebrated the Millenium (of Tynwald) and, despite the Royal visit and opening of Tynwald on 5th July at St. John's, it may not be the last!

With the growth of political parties out of local groupings or as adjuncts of the emergent trade unions common to a modernising society a new class of elected politician begins to enter the legislature seeking to exercise first influence and then power in government. The tutelary officials are now faced with the problem



of working with these new leaders. In many instances they are openly contemptuous of these 'upstart' politicians as was the case with Sir Gaspard le Marchant (Malta), Lord Raglan (Isle of Man) and Amtmand Dahlerup (Faroes). On the other hand the elected politicians are so impressed with the titles and rituals of office with which they come into contact that they assume a natural progression to the exercise of the full executive power themselves.

The Executive, however, during this period is still dominated by officials and their appointees, the Legislative Council being used primarily to co-opt the new political elites into the established political system. This process in effect provides tutelage for self-government as increasingly it moves towards a Committee system whereby the elected members are given some executive responsibilities over various aspects of insular affairs.

From this point onwards the stage of development reached varies from case to case and is related to the development, or lack of it, of a strong political party system in the legislature.

As the stage of development advances tasks are increasingly transferred from the Executive to the Legislature and its committees under a system of dual legislative spheres. The Administrator (whether Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or Amtmand/Rigsombudsmand) becomes increasingly a figure-head. The ministerial system takes root though only when a majority party leader (or leader of an effective majority coalition) can become an effective Prime Minister (or in the Faroese case "lawman") and eclipse in practice the Chief Executive. This has not yet happened in the Isle of Man due to the lack of penetration of a party system into Tynwald. It has run its full

course in the Republic of Malta. It is at midway point in the Faroes.

Just as this development is assisted by the growth of a strong political party system it in turn encourages the establishment of such a system. The Administrator, for example, calls on the person most capable of gaining majority support in the legislature to be Chief Minister and on his advice appoints the rest of the 'Ministry'. This eventually leads to the consolidation of a party system, and since the area of policy disagreement is usually found to be small within such a group it encourages a system of 'in' and 'out' parties. In a sense this has the same effect as that of introducing party competition into local government (compare this with the case of some non-metropolitan counties in England and Wales after Local Government Reorganisation in 1974). In addition, it has been found that in many small countries there is a shortage of persons both willing and qualified to participate in public life either as politicians or officials with consequences that have been referred to previously in Chapter Two.

A feature which is often referred to in connection with some micro-states is the existence of a 'strongman' political personality - one who overshadows all other participants in the small domestic political scene. This person usually occupies the Chief of Ministry/Head of Government position in a parliamentary structure or that of President in a presidential system. He is by no means necessarily a military figure. Very often he is seen as a father figure. He may have emerged as a trade union leader, Church leader, or as a 'national rally' type political party leader in the pre-independence or immediate post-independence period. Whatever the

reasons for his rise or his origins his authority is seen to reside as much in his personality as in his office. I would suggest that such 'big personalities' are the products of emergent 'third world' micro-states in the main. The statelets of the Caribbean, for example, are rich in such characters. Turning to my three case study areas I would argue that only Malta with the ubiquitous Dom Mintoff might fit the bill. Mintoff himself would almost certainly place Malta in the category of a developing state in the non-aligned Third World bloc. Even his critics would agree that he is the 'Mr. Big' of Maltese politics - indeed much of their criticism is based on that fact. While his authority may owe much to his personality, his constitutional power is shared, under a titular President, with his Cabinet and is dependent upon a majority of votes in the House of Representatives. Whatever the situation in Malta might be the position in respect of the Faroes and the Isle of Man is very different. The Faroese 'Løgmadur' is very much the chairman of a collective cabinet (the Landsstyri) which is itself a coalition and is dependent on a coalition in the Løgting for support. The 'Løgmadur' is one of many political personalities in Faroe and the famous phrase "first among equals" seems rather appropriate here. In the Isle of Man the picture appears to be even further removed from the 'strongman' model. There is no Head of Ministry equivalent. The nearest to it are the posts of Chairman of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Finance Board. The latter is a very powerful position as the holder is also a member of the Executive Council. In the past the holders of both of these posts have exercised considerable power and influence - some of it overt and some of it covert. Some would argue that under the cloak of the Lieutenant-Governor's nominal authority these posts are respectively those of unofficial Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Much depends on the personality of the people



involved here in terms of how they use these positions. There is, however, so much emphasis on the importance of individual personality and personal dealings in Manx affairs that in the dark of Manx politics and government "all cats are grey".

### 7:3 CONSTITUTIONS AND REALITY

In the study of government and politics, as in so many areas of life, appearances can be deceptive. One needs to be aware of the difference between formal appearance and reality. When one considers, for example, the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a guide to the practical workings of the Russian state it is necessary to be aware of the divergence that exists between the written outline on paper and the reality of its practice.

The political systems in the small polities I have studied tend to encourage and nurture particularistic norms and values contrary to the hopes of the framers of the constitutions who have usually sought to implant universalistic customs. The framers of the constitutions were often following 'metropolitan' practice by making too rigid a distinction between policy and administration. Thus, for example, small polities can present real difficulties in the development of harmonious relations between the political executive and the civil service - a problem which was considered in Chapter Two. The constitutional order and the administrative machine usually require some commitment to universalistic values and structures but the society itself stresses particularism and the importance of individuals and personalities.

An example of this may be given by reference to a case outlined to me in an interview by the Clerk of the Maltese House of Representatives. He had previously explained to me that the conventions of Maltese parliamentary procedure were largely modelled on Westminster practice and showed me close at hand on his desk a much used copy of Erskine May's 'Parliamentary Practice'. Unfortunately he found himself caught up in a personal dilemma over constitutional practice at that moment. He had been summoned to appear in court by a government minister to show the minutes of a House session and to verify them. Why? The minister already had an official copy of the minutes and knew them to be an accurate record. The Clerk suspected that the real reason for this action was occasioned in part by personal animosity and was partly to demonstrate executive dominance over the legislature. But the Clerk cannot appear in court with the minutes without the Speaker's approval. He had not appeared in court in answer to the first summons and had been summoned again. If he did not appear he could be held in contempt of the court. The Speaker could not be contacted by the Clerk to get his authorisation to either attend or stay away from the court - this was a political issue and a clash of personalities and the Speaker was diplomatically 'not available'. I do not know how the matter was resolved but there was in the Clerk's situation an echo of Speaker Lenthall's answer to Charles I when he came to arrest the Five Members in the House of Commons just prior to the outbreak of the English Civil War - "I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am".

Another example of the hopes or ideas of the framers of governmental structures from the 'tutelary' state not being realised in practice due to the nature of the insular political scene may be found in the Isle of Man. In 1946 the British Home Secretary authorised the Lieutenant Governor by letter to appoint an Executive Council of seven members of Tynwald, the majority to be the chairmen of the principal spending Boards. As we noted earlier, in Chapter Five, the Report of the MacDermott Commission in 1959 observed that although there was no doubt that this step was intended to promote a form of Cabinet government, it had failed to achieve that purpose largely due to the absence of a viable political party system.

The 'metropolitan' connection can sometimes complicate the insular political scene by a confusion of responsibility. This point can be illustrated in the case of the Faroes by reference to the Klasvik hospital incident which occurred in 1958. The trouble arose when an attempt was made to replace the temporary doctor in charge of the small hospital at Klasvik on the northern island of Bordoy with another doctor appointed on a permanent basis. This appointment was made, not by a local hospital management board, but by a Torshavn based board responsible for all the hospitals in Faroe. They had decided that because the temporary doctor, Olaf Halvorsen, although Danish, was not a member of the Danish Medical Association he could not be given the permanent post - a decision greatly resisted by the people of Klasvik. With an irony that seems often to be a characteristic of Faroese politics, the Klasvik citizens, noted for their separatist tendencies in politics, were now supporting a Danish doctor against a Faroese replacement. The Faroese government was not, strictly speaking, responsible for either the hospital service, which was in question, or the police, who were responsible for enforcing a lawful decision. The Danish government did not, however, care to get involved in an issue so closely interwoven with island politics and rivalry between



Torshavn and Klasvik. So it was left to the Faroese government and the Danish state commissioner to do what they could. Eventually they found themselves unable to enforce their will against the violent resistance of the Klasvik people, and order was only restored with the help of 100 extra policemen brought in from Denmark. The affair may seem laughable in retrospect, but at the time it was thought to be serious enough and to a certain degree it affected politics, especially in the Klasvik area. The police had been sent by the Danish government, then Social Democratic; and the Social Democrats, who had previously been gaining strength in Klasvik lost support to the Republicans - despite the fact that the Faroese government at the time was a coalition of the Samband, the Sjalvstyri, and the People's Party.

#### 7:4 SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to consider briefly the pattern and influence of institutional development, largely imposed from outside, on the political systems of the small independent communities principally involved in this study.

Although the findings will not apply 'across the board' in all cases they are nonetheless sufficiently important to take note of. As we have seen some of the internal stresses and strains in these polities are caused by the divergence between the universalistic norms employed by the constitution builders on the one hand and the particularistic values produced by the local political culture on the other. Constitutional theory is no guide to the confused tangle of informal arrangements and conventions which characterise governmental

activity in micro-states, and the emotional needs of communities which are asserting their identities against larger and more powerful neighbours.

Structures, practices, and principles all need to be constantly examined and redefined, and this is no easy task. It involves, in addition to the study of governmental institutions themselves, firstly a complex of interconnected questions about the behaviour, standards, ethics, perceptions and morale of the 'actors' on the political stage, secondly the community's perception of these 'actors', and thirdly the direct interactions between the 'actors' and the public. The consideration of the institutional dimension, is one which, like the size dimension, we should bear in mind when we turn next to this rather lengthier examination of the 'Dramatis Personae' in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE FORMS AND LIMITS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

8:1 INTRODUCTION

8:2 CLEAVAGE, CONFLICT AND CONSENSUS IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

8:3 THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY POLITICS: THE CASE STUDY AREAS  
CONSIDERED.

8:4 THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND OPPOSITION: THE CASE  
STUDY AREAS CONSIDERED

8:5 SUMMARY .



## CHAPTER EIGHT

THE FORMS AND LIMITS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY  
IN SMALL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

## 8:1 INTRODUCTION

Group conflict is present in every society and manifests itself to varying extents in all political systems, totalitarian or democratic, large or small scale. This is an inescapable consequence of social and political life. Social differences based on, for example, sex, age, nationality, religion, or occupation are likely to produce some degree of political activity through 'interest groups', each of which expresses demands common to its group. Similarly, diversity of values or attitudes toward public policy also produces politically active groups of like-minded people.

Nonetheless, it would appear from what has emerged from this study so far that the size dimension can have an effect on the nature and degree of politically relevant divisions. Indeed small societies which are also small states have firstly greater societal homogeneity and secondly a re-emphasis of the overarching need to present a uniform front to outsiders through common institutions and practice.

The local political culture is a major determinant of the way in which a political system operates. Even within a large nation-state one can find a mixture of party conflict and community consensus at local and national level. In the following section

I shall examine more closely the nature of cleavage, conflict and consensus in small independent communities in general and the forms and limits of political divisions in the case study areas in particular. This will lead on to a discussion of the role of personality politics, political parties and opposition.

## 8:2 CLEAVAGE, CONFLICT AND CONSENSUS IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

In Chapter Two we noted how the lines of divergence of interest or opinion amongst groups and individuals within a society may come to be represented in a political cleavage pattern. The fifth section in each of the three case study areas looked at the main lines of cleavage in Faroese, Maltese and Manx society respectively and their relationship with the local political party system. I propose now to examine some of the common assumptions regarding conflict and cleavage patterns in small societies in the light of the case study material.

With the increasing size of a political system it is generally assumed that persistent and overt differences are more likely to appear. The small political system tends to be, as both Rousseau and Montesquieu assumed in their writings, more homogeneous and is thus more likely to be consensual; whereas the larger system being more heterogeneous, is, as they predicted, likely to contain more basic lines of conflict. Thus, it is argued, the style of political life changes with the change in size. The larger polity needs to develop more elaborate, more formal, more highly organised institutions for dealing with conflicts.

If a political system is both small and homogeneous, variations

in behaviour by members of that system are likely to be fewer, a higher percentage of the population adheres to a single code, the norms of the code are easily communicated by word and example, and violations of that common code are readily perceived. In such a situation sanctions are easy to apply by both overt and subtle means of social action and the avoidance of sanctions by dissenters is difficult. By contrast, in a large or more modernised system this communal solidarity is more likely to break down and a single code of behaviour becomes less applicable. With growing numbers and size of territory anonymity and avoidance of sanctions are easier, and more heterogeneous systems develop various and often conflicting codes of behaviour. Thus it becomes easier for a dissenter to find allies, reinforced by increasing diversity, and oppositions grow in relative size often achieving a new-found legitimacy. On the other hand, in the smaller system any conflict among organised groups is likely to entail personal conflicts among the individuals in the groups. Individuals find it hard to take refuge in anonymity as each locality knows its members's group affiliations. Hence a group conflict, especially a long-running one, is likely to reinforce and to be strengthened by personal antagonisms. In the larger systems, however, individuals in antagonistic groups are much less likely to confront each other face to face and may never meet at all. If individuals in the smaller systems foresee that when group conflict emerges it will heavily affect the personal relationships as well then they are likely to try to avoid it as far as possible and this is likely to make conflict less frequent than in larger systems. In addition it is likely that in a small homogeneous system group loyalties will tend to be relatively weaker whilst overall community solidarity is greater. Therefore if group conflict is to take place the reasons



for it, at both the personal and collective level, need to be important ones.

As group conflicts tend to be fairly infrequent and dangerous in small systems they are more likely to be ad hoc than institutionalised. Organisations spring up in response to a conflict and sometimes they disappear when it ends. In the larger system, where group conflicts are frequent and less costly to the individual participants, the advantages of permanent organised institutions are obvious; hence group conflicts are more likely to take on institutional forms. Thus when group conflicts do occur in smaller systems they are likely to be of major importance.

If the cost of conflict is high in the smaller system then the price of neutrality can be even higher. The neutral is quite easily seen and is likely to be perceived as an enemy by both sides in the sense that "those who are not for us must be against us". Hence the smaller system is likely to become polarised into two camps if the issue (or set of issues) is considered to be important enough to an extent that does not happen in larger systems where anonymity, disinterest, and lack of direct or indirect commitment may leave many people out of the issue and the conflict.

These, then, are some of the basic assumptions concerning the nature of conflict in smaller social systems compared with larger ones. We must now turn to testing these out in the light of the evidence from the case study areas.

The first point is that many of the characteristics noted in respect of conflict in small systems are thought by some writers to apply only to small areas within political systems, such as villages, small towns, or national sub-systems. They would argue that in all democratic countries conflict would tend to have the characteristics ascribed to 'larger systems'. Indeed, according to Dahl and Tufte, "the available qualitative and impressionistic evidence indicates that among the smaller European democracies, conflict does not have the characteristics ascribed in 'smaller systems', on the contrary, these countries seem to fit mainly the description of conflict in 'larger systems'".<sup>1</sup> This point will be examined in a moment.

The extent of diversity in a political system is a function of at least two different sets of factors; 1) unique historical influences and social-organisational factors such as size, especially of population; and 2) the extent of the modernisation process including specialisation of labour and industrialisation together with the density of population, particularly as marked by the degree of urbanisation. The social-organisational factors are highly inter-related and generally reflect the transition from the small-scale traditional forms of social organisation to the urban and modern forms which we have noted previously. That is to say, divergence grows with modernisation. Among the organisations characteristic of this 'modern' society are competitive political parties. It follows that even in a relatively small political unit,

<sup>1</sup>R.A. Dahl and E.R. Tufte Size and Democracy. Stanford University Press  
Stanford, California. U.S.A. 1974 Page 95

urbanisation, industrialisation, and increasing socio-economic complexity are likely to lead to more highly organised party competition, and to styles and forms of politics in general that are characteristic of larger units.

Another feature of modernising politics, whether large or small, is that as overt conflict becomes an every day feature of political life, institutionalised processes are found necessary to prevent controversy from escalating into the sort of conflict which could destroy the basic framework of the society and state. It is a major function of the institutions of a modern democratic state to help channel and resolve public conflict through formal and impersonal organisations rather than through informal, face-to-face negotiations by the antagonists themselves.

The most visible and in many ways the most important organisation involved in conflict articulation and management in representative democracies is the political party. Party is, in a sense, the registration of societal differentiation. From what has gone before we would expect that in larger systems political parties would not only be more deeply involved in the everyday management of group conflict but also that they would tend to be more balanced in their struggles as dissenters from the majority view would form a larger proportion of the total population. In this way the minority party or parties would be less overwhelmed by the majority party or coalition than is the case in many smaller systems. Such reasoning suggests that in the politics of homogeneity political parties scarcely exist. This seems to be borne out in practice by the Manx experience. Generally as political parties begin to appear in the small community, homogeneity initially tends to ensure the dominance



of a single party. As heterogeneity increases, however, encouraged by major cleavage issues and socio-economic change the one-party or 'non-party' dominance tends to decline and other political parties gain a foothold amongst those who dissent from the majority viewpoint. As partisan conflict and the notion of an opposition role gain legitimacy, and as heterogeneity increases further, the parties become more nearly equal competitors. To sum this point up; generally the larger the small polity in terms of population size and the more 'modernised' in terms of socio-economic diversification then the greater is the probability that the minority party or parties will be relatively large and that opposition will be seen as legitimate and have a constructive role to play. This proposition will be examined later in this chapter in the context of the case study areas.

### 8:3 THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY POLITICS: THE CASE STUDY AREAS CONSIDERED

We have noted that one of the features of political life in micro-states is the enhanced importance of the individual political personality. In a society where particularistic norms are stronger and where 'everyone knows everyone else' it is to be expected that the whole personality of a politician is of interest to the electors. The dividing line between private and public concerns and activities tends to become blurred in such a situation. Not only is the person important himself but other factors such as background and connections of family, locality, and sub-group affiliations become more important.

Where a political party system has still not taken a strong hold, as in the Manx case, the personality of the individual politician becomes even more important. The 'Independent' presents his whole self before the public in lieu of a party label which

more usually presents, or is perceived to present, a certain set of values and/or policies. This is evidenced by the nature of the relationship between politician and elector, the manner of electioneering, and the style of the highly personalised election manifestos as illustrated in the Manx case study. The brokerage role, the doing or promising of 'personal' favours, all reinforce the necessity of 'face-to-face' contact between individuals. The personal touch can mean such a lot in this context.

To illustrate this point let us examine briefly one of the findings of a survey into elections and voting behaviour carried out amongst the members of the Manx House of Keys in 1978.\* Questionnaires were sent to the home address of every M.H.K. serving in the House in April, 1978. By October 1978, 11 had been returned and reminders were sent to the remaining 13 resulting in a further 5 replies.

One of the questions (Question 4) asked "What would you say were the most important factors influencing the choice of the voters in your constituency? Please number in order of importance."

Out of the 16 respondents only 10 did number in order of importance. The most important factors emerged as certain issues topical at the time of the election, the personality of the candidates,

\*Questionnaire for Members of the House of Keys - Elections and Voting Behaviour for the House of Keys - carried out by J. Templeton. A copy of this questionnaire is to be found in Appendix XXIII Page 278

their careers and social backgrounds and their previous experience of council or committee work. Only one respondent placed the social background of the voter as of any importance (as the second most important factor). This M.H.K. was an 'Independent' who stated that his election campaign was based upon "common-sense" and "the importance of the individual". No-one placed the geographical location, religion, sex or occupation of the voters in the three most important factors influencing voters' behaviour.

Even where a party system has developed more fully than is the case in the Isle of Man the style remains personalised. In the Faroes we saw how most political parties were identified with prominent individuals as expressions of an interest around which others could group and perhaps later break away under new individuals to create new formations. Indeed one particular family has been responsible for the founding of half the political parties in Faroe which have representation in the Løgting; Joannes Paturrrson establishing first the Sjalvstyri and then leaving it to form the Peoples' Party whilst his son Erlendur Paturrrson became leader of the Republican Party which was created in the aftermath of the 1946 independence crisis. More recently we have had the example of Kjartan Mohr's personal political party which doubled its Løgting representation in the 1978 elections under the banner of the Progress and Fishermen's Party.

In Malta we have seen how both tradition and the nature of the electoral system reinforce a personalised political style. Each candidate for election to the Maltese Parliament appoints agents or canvassers in each important village in his electoral district. The competition is particularly tight when there are several



candidates from the same party seeking votes in the same village. Electors are urged to 'Vote No. 1' against the name of the particular favourite. At the village level it is thus very much every candidate for himself. In a real sense one is competing against one's own party's candidates as well as the opposition. Nearly 70% of the Maltese voters seem firmly committed to one or the other of the two main political parties. The floating voters tend to be the older ones whose loyalties are more easily swayed or bought or to whom the personality of the candidate is still of paramount importance over-ruling questions of party label. Usually the preferences are exchanged between the candidates of the same party with attention being paid to personalised factors within the political party camp or electoral district. Cross voting across party lines can and does happen but not in most cases and it may become less common as political polarisation increases with modernisation.

The importance of the variety of factors influencing voting behaviour in Malta was underlined to me by a Maltese M.P. in an interview at the beginning of the 1976 general election campaign. He was a M.L.P. member and worked as a journalist for the trade union press in Valletta but maintained that much more than the party endorsement was required to ensure a successful re-election. There were, he acknowledged, two hostile political camps in Malta, but only up to a point. Personality was still very important especially in view of the operation of a single transferable vote electoral system utilising multi-member constituencies. Village loyalty was a major factor with local identities being very strongly felt. Constituency relations were very important in themselves. Constituents expected to be visited personally and every year, for example, he held a dinner party for his village agents, canvassers and supporters. (This incidentally I found to be a very common occurrence in Malta, the Faroes, and the Isle of Man regardless of

the party, if any, of the politician). It was important to show that one had contacts with various groups in the community. Whilst it was no longer accurate to talk of Church-State conflict or Roman Catholic hierarchy versus M.L.P. conflict, some embers of the old enmity still remained and attempts had to be made to heal the wound. Thus his son, although a socialist and a M.L.P. member, would be taking part as a penitent in the traditional Good Friday procession in their home village to demonstrate that M.L.P. members could still be good Catholics. This son would also in the near future be marrying a girl from a prominent Nationalist family in the same electoral district and the M.P. calculated that this match should bring him an extra thirty or forty votes from Nationalist voters who would cast a preference in support of their newly acquired relative. Another interesting aspect was that of his relationship with Miss Mabel Strickland, owner of the Strickland Press and leader of the now defunct Progressive Constitutional Party. He had once worked for her and her father and although he differed strongly from her politically she still on occasions performed a patronage role for his family. For example she had paid the fees for his parents' funeral and had managed to get his sister accepted as a novice at a convent. It was these sort of connections, across the party divide, which held Maltese society together.

These sorts of comments were echoed by the majority of the Maltese politicians with whom I spoke and it underlines one of the points made earlier in this chapter about the social limits placed upon conflict in a small scale community. What prevents the

national political conflict in Malta from degenerating into widespread violence, destroying normal relations and making a shambles of the social order? It is the existence of the many ties and institutions that exert pressure on the opponents to reach a settlement, and so prevent the dispute from destroying the social system. The most important of the factors that inhibit the spread of conflict is the existence of persons whose loyalties are divided between the conflicting sides. Such persons have a vested interest in the maintenance of peace and limitation of the area of conflicts. Social relations in a small community are to a very considerable extent governed by the Maltese proverb "Taghmilx Ghadu lil garek" ("Don't make an enemy of your neighbour") - a sentiment which is probably of universal application in micro-states. Certainly at village level the politicians are anxious to maximise their electoral appeal on a variety of personal angles.

Personality politics are regarded as being still very important amongst all political parties although this is felt most strongly by Nationalist politicians. This may be due in part to the sort of people who become M.P.'s in Malta. We noted in Chapter Four the high incidence of doctors and lawyers in the House of Representatives in both parties but particularly amongst the P.N. members. Such people have an occupational clientele which can be advantageous when seeking favours for others. A young member of the M.L.P. complained to me that his party was placed at a relative disadvantage due to the access to all households enjoyed by priests, doctors and lawyers who tended to favour the P.N. By contrast he felt that many Maltese were disappointed that the M.L.P. which was sweeping away old and corrupt practices and was modernising and secularising Malta



did not carry out personal favours as much as the old style patron M.P.'s. Although the modernisation process is moving rapidly in Malta it still remains a Roman Catholic society and, whilst the importance of patronage politics is also waning, in a state as small as Malta personality politics will remain a major factor.

To use Dr. Batliner's phrase "Personal-politik is practised". It is difficult in a micro-state to explain to a candidate that whilst you have chosen not to vote for him it is 'nothing personal'. This may sound unconvincing enough in larger polities, but in a small political community where the public and private spheres are represented within the people rather than through organisations the distinction is even less meaningful and 'cuts no ice'. As a result of these pressures the 'good constituency member' must be the rule in the micro-state rather than the exception.

In these very small polities one can often detect an apparent paradox in relation to the degree of political and governmental activity in society. On the one hand the pressures for conformity which have been commented upon previously make for overall cohesion and consensus and the emphasis on inter-personal relationships of a particularistic nature reduce the impact of formal and impersonal organisations. On the other hand, and at the same time, because 'politics' is not seen as a full-time or distinct activity in its own right it pervades everything. This pervasiveness of politics and governmental authority through its diffusion via the individual politicians and office holders is one of the most marked features of the small independent community - even in those where formal activity is claimed to be at a low level.

In the Isle of Man, for example, where they are proud to claim a relative absence of 'politics' and the role of government in the economy is fairly well restricted it has been estimated that as many as 25% of the population are concerned with public administration on the island either as elected representatives or as employees. Apart from Tynwald itself there are an additional 26 independently constituted local authorities in the Island. The Faroe Islands also has an active system of representative local government.

Whether or not these islands can find enough people of sufficient calibre amongst their relatively small populations to fill all these posts is open to question. Interestingly enough Malta, which has a larger population but a smaller land area and few internal communication problems, has no system of insular local government.

The Maltese state is highly centralised and has no official representation in the villages apart from the customary local police station. The Roman Catholic Church in Malta is highly centralised also but has official agents in the parish priests or 'kapillans' in every village. Equally important in recent years has been the development of a Malta Labour Party organisation based on the villages and reaching up through the electoral district to the national level. Each village M.L.P. is run by a local committee elected by subscription paying members and based on the local Party Club. During periods of M.L.P. power the local committees act as more than propaganda and social centres; they become surrogate instruments of government. As the village branches of the party in power they represent government in the eyes of the people if not the civil servants. They transmit and explain the policy of the administration and channel requests to the appropriate authorities. Even government ministers make use of the local committees for conducting business at village level, since the committees generally provide their only direct contact with the villages.



#### 8:4 THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND OPPOSITION: THE CASE STUDY AREAS CONSIDERED.

Political parties in modern representative democracies are often seen by political scientists as links between the electorate and the key decision-makers in a political system.

"The need for linking the individual citizen to the state either by allowing him to participate in the selection of governmental personnel or by controlling him, is a greater need among modern and modernising nations than among traditional political systems, and it is parties which typically provide this linkage."<sup>1</sup>

By viewing the parties as linkage mechanisms in the system the voters can rationally exercise their franchise without being aware of the specific policy positions of individual incumbent politicians and their opponents. All voters have to know are the broad differences between the political parties, and with that general knowledge they can make a reasonably informed decision. The political parties mediate between the citizens and the decision-makers; by knowing the rough outline of the party positions voters can decide which party seems to best serve their interest and vote on that basis. Party voting, is then, usually seen not as detrimental to democracy and responsive government, but as a distinct aid. Yet does this apply necessarily in the case of micro-states where, as we have just seen in the previous section, specific policy positions and general background of individual candidates are far more important than is the case in larger nation-states?

<sup>1</sup>M. Weiner & J. LaPalombara Political Parties and Political Development Princeton University Press. Princeton. 1966. Pages 433, 434.



There is a view of political parties which sees them simply as vehicles for conflicts among politicians. In this sense individuals who support parties merely support their favourite politicians. This is a particularly American view for in the U.S.A. personality counts for much in party politics. The American Constitution does not mention political parties; nor do most others. Indeed, not so long ago, the term 'party' meant 'faction' and faction was generally regarded as harmful to the body politic, an attitude which has tended to linger in micro-states. Such experience, is not, however, confined to micro-states, on the one hand and the peculiarities of the large and dispersed American political community on the other hand. In states such as Britain and France early political party history is above all factional and personalistic until the organisation of the party institution itself becomes firmly established.

What are the primary functions of political parties in small independent communities? I propose to examine the roles played by the political parties in the case study areas to see if they can help to provide an answer to this question.

In the case of the Isle of Man political parties seemingly have no function. A political party system has not really developed, although nominally parties do exist, and government lies in the hands of a collection of 'independents'. This state of affairs prompts some interesting observations. According to Sigmund Neumann,

"the beginning of modern political parties is closely tied up with the rise of a parliament. When political representation broadens and a national forum of discussion develops providing a constant opportunity for political participation - wherever these

conditions are fulfilled political parties arise".<sup>1</sup>

Could Neumann be wrong in the light of the Manx case? The evidence here, from the case study areas, is ambivalent. Certainly political party systems are well established in the cases of Faroe and Malta. Or is it that the development of a real and effective party system has been retarded in the Isle of Man because, despite the myth of a centuries old parliamentary tradition, a parliamentary system in the usual sense of the term does not exist there? Certainly James Jupp's general view on the essential role played by political parties in modernised systems of government provides the opportunity for thoughtful reflection where the Isle of Man is concerned.

"My basic proposition is that parties are indispensable to modern politics and that the absence of parties suggests that a system is governed by a traditional elite which has yet to come to terms with the modern world. From this point of view parties are neither good nor bad but simply necessary. Without them it would be impossible to legitimise modern systems, to engage the loyalty and support of the citizens. The alternative to party rule is either aristocracy or violent repression."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sigmund Neumann Modern Political Parties: Approaches to Comparative Politics. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. 1955 (5th impr. 1965)

<sup>2</sup>James Jupp Political Parties London, Routledge & Kegan Paul 1968. (Reprinted edition 1970) Preface Page ix.

As we have seen in the relevant case study area chapter there is some disagreement as to the real nature of the executive and legislature and their relationship in the Manx case. Is the executive function exercised by the single nominee of an 'alien' (tutelary) power, by the Executive Council, or by a collegiate executive in the form of Boards of the Legislature? Is it a form of Crown Colony government which has developed a large degree of local autonomy on the one hand or is it, on the other hand a system of parliamentary government 'par excellence', in that the departments of government are headed by committees of members of the legislature? Whatever the interpretation or the fact of the situation it is one which has continued due to the lack of the development of a Cabinet system of government and the emergence of a 'prime ministerial' position and this has been caused by, and in turn perpetuates, the lack of a strong political party system.

The majority of the Manx electorate still apparently concur with the view of Jonathan Swift that "Party is the madness of many for the gain of the few". We can observe the consequences of this attitude, however, in the problems which confront the workings of Manx government. According to Mrs Elspeth Quayle (M.H.K. for Castletown) the disadvantage of having no meaningful party system is a lack of cohesion and focus when it comes to policymaking. The Manx experience seems to bear out the veracity of the view expressed by no less a Conservative than Benjamin Disraeli when he said,

"I believe that without party parliamentary government is impossible".

Although arguments against party politics in local communities



may sound very alluring I would suggest that the study shows just how important the emergence of political parties has been in ensuring accountability and direction in the fields of government policy.

"Parties are necessary because opinion must be organised if anything resembling representative government is to exist." <sup>1</sup>

At first sight the Faroese political party system, with its multiplicity of parties, might appear to be the very opposite of the Manx case. Yet the exigencies of coalition government and politics added to the recognised need for co-operation between people living in for what for centuries has been a fairly inhospitable environment and in constant battle against the elements has produced a very high level of basic consensus. The political parties are convenient labels for groups of differing opinions but coalition alliances are very flexible. In many ways there is a similar span of political parties as may be found in most Scandinavian countries with the additional dimension of the national independence issue to add further nuances. The Social Democrats are most easily identified with their Danish counterparts and Kjartan Mohr has been likened to Moegens Glistrup and his Danish Progress Party. The Samband, Sjalvstyri, and even the independence minded Peoples' Party and Republican Party have political allies in Copenhagen. According to John West the wielding of power has had a steadying effect on all the Faroese political groups. The Peoples' Party,

<sup>1</sup>Richard Rose The Problem of Party Government Penguin Books

once deriving its chief impetus from separation, is today broadly satisfied with the degree of autonomy allowed by the home rule ordinance. The Republicans, by far the most radical party in Faroese parliamentary politics, seem also to have come to terms with the realities of power. It is even rather cynically suggested that Republican Party politicians, who stand for complete independence from Denmark, are usually the most keen to greet members of the Danish Royal Family when they make a visit to the islands.

As we noted earlier the general democratic tradition sees political parties as acting as 'linkage mechanisms', 'transmission belts' or 'brokers' between the public and the government. A standard definition of a broker is an agent who conducts business for commission. Political parties are obviously less needed to carry out this function in a small community where people have other means of communication - often traditional and particularistic. During the process of political modernisation political parties tend to replace the more traditional agents as the transmitters of political messages in the society. In Malta, for example, we have seen how the rise of the Malta Labour Party in particular as a secular alternative (with its party clubs, trade union activities, etc.) to the traditional brokerage of the P.N. style 'patrons' and local grandees (landowners, lawyers, physicians, priests, etc.) in this world ( and also the saints as 'brokers' to God in the next world) has been of major significance in the development of Maltese society.

Writers in political science generally agree that in western democratic systems, particularly those of a parliamentary type, the key function of parties include the representation of interests

and recruitment to office in the state. They may well have different and/or additional functions in totalitarian systems. The role of the party in a one-party state, for example, may well include the inducing of solidarity or consensus in the community and its general direction through all levels of society. Some critics of the Malta Labour Party argue that under the Mintoff administrations the role of the party has expanded to include such functions. If this criticism were to be valid the M.L.P. would be carrying out a function similar to that traditionally fulfilled by the Roman Catholic Church and the patron-politicians in Malta. Recent developments, however, such as the proposed merger between the M.L.P. and the General Workers Union on the insistence of the government, the pressure on the former 'Royal' University and on groups of professional workers would suggest that this development is still continuing. Such pressures are not unique to Malta amongst micro-states but they do tend to be more overt, especially when compared to the other case study areas.

It is extremely difficult and also dangerous to attempt to generalise from one example, particularly as the Maltese political system is such a *mélange* of indigeneous tradition and development with elements of British, Sicilian, and southern Italian influences. Nonetheless, it may be possible to present a continuum to illustrate the degree of party politicization in the case study areas which ranges from Malta (a 'strong' party system in this sense) on the one hand to Mann (a 'weak' party system on the other) with Farce in between. This spectrum and the respective positions occupied on it are approximately matched by the degree of socio-economic diversity to be found within the national community.



The Faroes can boast most of the occupations found in larger nations but in the Isle of Man there is no significant industrial workforce - the island economy being heavily dependent on finance capital and service industries - hence the absence of any sizeable backing for a Labour or Socialist Party unlike the case in Faroe or Malta.

This absence of a left-wing party with a real chance of gaining legislative or executive power has led to<sup>the</sup> lack of any sustained desire to establish a counter-vailing conservative party, although one suspects that the fledgling Manx National Party, or something very similar to it, would step in to meet this need should such circumstances ever arrive. The developmental role of political parties is quite clearly stronger in Malta and almost totally absent in the Isle of Man whereas in Faroe by working together in a variety of coalitions the parties play a shared role in this respect. The three case study areas can also be located in the same order on the continuum, although Faroe is much closer to Mann, when one considers the degree of political independence enjoyed. The study of micro-states in general shows that political parties often become more aggressive when the state gains more independence. There are less restraints on the activity of the governing party and more powers accrue to it, as we have seen in the case of Malta. The association between the interests of party, state, and society at large are perceived by those in power to be identical. The same thing may be said of strongly ideologically committed political parties in large states but in the case of micro-states this tendency can build on the traditional pressures for conformity and homogeneity. This leads us on to consider the nature and forms of dissent in small independent communities and what, if any, the role of opposition is perceived to be.

Comment has been made earlier regarding the strong pressures which tend to encourage conformity, and in some cases a degree of

'apolitisme' in small homogeneous political communities. In such an atmosphere opposition is frequently seen as weakening, disruptive, undignified, and divisive. There would seem to be a threshold of dissent above which the percentage of people required to register opposition openly tails off. The creation of political parties reflects the organisation of, and registers the very existence of, factions in society.

To what extent is opposition viewed as legitimate in the case study areas? The notion of a legitimate and 'useful' opposition owes much to the operation of a parliamentary system. In the Manx case, due to the failure of a party system to establish itself firmly in the legislature and also due to the nature of the Manx executive, opposition is still not quite respectable. It generally manifests itself through criticisms of the Manx Establishment, of individual politicians in particular, and of the general structure of the governmental system from outside Tynwald itself by members of clandestine groups such as 'Fo Halloo' which used to issue virulent underground newspapers at regular intervals, or in the statements of those political parties which do exist, most particularly Mec Vannin and the Manx Labour Party. The 'Fo Halloo' group has been silent over the last couple of years and is believed to have consisted largely of Manx students based in mainland British universities. The style of their publications was a combination of 'Private Eye' and a satirical society column and their real purpose was to stimulate a local radical opposition to what they considered to be a corrupt and fraudulent establishment which was literally selling out the Isle of Man to international speculators and tax avoiders. Readers were urged to support Mec Vannin and the

Manx Labour Party and to

"fight to build a Manx Nation in control of its own affairs, with its commerce, land and natural resources owned by the Manx people for the Manx people; a compassionate Nation, respecting the rights and freedom for all, regardless of wealth; a Nation which recognises its own individual culture and language, and preserves its quality of life in preference to subordination to rapacious materialism."<sup>1</sup>

A fund raising appeal in the same issue of 'Fo Halloo' illustrates how the group saw its role.

"For more than three years we have attempted to provide an uncensored coverage of Manx affairs, but the costs of producing such a newspaper are soaring all the time. We are the only newspaper that is truly Manx owned and independent, so we have to rely on your donations to help us meet our costs. Most of you know how to get money to us, so we appeal to all our readers to do their best and pass on any contributions they can afford, and guarantee that the voice of opposition remains loud during the coming months."<sup>2</sup>

It would be wrong to suggest that the Manx Establishment is monolithic; it is composed of too many individuals with diverse personal interests for that to be the case. Support for the Executive Council is by no means certain within the legislature on every issue as we have seen; indeed leadership depends very much upon the personality of the chairman of the former body and that of the

1 & 2

Fo Halloo. (Newspaper) Free Manx Press July 1976 No 19.



chairman of the Finance Board. Yet given the present structure and composition of Manx government outright opposition in the usual sense is absent.

"There are too many people overloaded; there are so many people involved in administration that there is no room for constructive opposition, and I have always believed that a constructive opposition is a very important part of government. We are all mixed up in government and I think that any one of us is almost afraid to challenge an issue in case another issue might be challenged in return."<sup>1</sup>

Essentially the situation in the Isle of Man is that the opposition role consists of sniping at local 'bigwigs' by anti-establishment groups. The insular political culture and the institutional structure both militate against the development of a strong opposition.

In the Faroes, as we have seen, the party system itself originated out of the opposition to the establishment posed by Joannes Patursson. The Samband was formed by the establishment and conservative forces to counter his nationalist programme. In response the Sjalvstyri was formed as the Opposition and the two-party period in Faroese politics began. The subsequent rise of the so-called 'economic' parties further fragmented the political scene - the Social Democrats largely provoking the birth of the Peoples' Party. Following the Home Rule Act of 1948 the creation

<sup>1</sup>R.C. Stephen M.H.K. (Manx Labour Party) giving evidence to the MacDermott Commission on the Isle of Man Constitution 1959.

of the Republican Party as a left-wing separatist party virtually completed the line-up. Given the broad overall consensus in Faroese society one can only really speak of the Opposition role in respect of those parties who do not participate in or support the Landsstyri coalition administration in the Løgting, although there are in Faroe *outré* individuals and anti-establishment elements who add some local 'colour'.

In the Maltese situation opposition can be described as existing in two senses. The first is in the sense of the classic Westminster model of Parliament in that the major opposition party in the legislature is the Opposition (at present this being the Nationalist Party). In another sense opposition is dissent from the dominant values of the society. Here the themes of the traditional Maltese values, the norms of the Westminster system, and the style of the Mintoff administration can conflict to cause uncertainty and tension. On the face of it opposition is legitimate but for reasons both traditional and modernistic it tends to be regarded as unwelcome. As an old Maltese proverb argues "a ship with two captains can't sail."

In his study of life in Maltese villages Jeremy Boissevain makes an interesting observation which may be related to Maltese national politics.

"Village unity is an ideal, and all villages try to present a tightly united front to the outside world. In spite of all this, all are divided internally by cleavages which cut across the community

at various levels. The oldest permanent division that exists in the villages is between the supporters of the local band clubs. This division is related to the cult of rival saints and the Festa Partiti which adhere to them. Partiti are said to have PIKA between them (competition, ill feeling, hostility) and are thus considered to be a bad thing. They disrupt the harmony of the community and make it more difficult to project the ideal image of village unity to the outside world."<sup>1</sup>

At the level of national politics in modern Malta despite the operation of a parliamentary structure of government and the existence of an official opposition there is still a strong element of pressure to conform. As Steve Bradshaw puts it in his article,

"... there can be no doubt that something more than native caution keeps so many Maltese from speaking on the record to journalists. Although government officials say this is simply 'fear of making false, libellous charges', I was satisfied that fear of reprisals is often genuine." <sup>2</sup>

This statement bears out my own experiences when interviewing Maltese people about politics and government. In the main they were wary and suspicious. It would, again, be wrong to generalise from the Maltese experience but people in small relatively encapsulated societies do tend to shun controversy and are particularly loath to venture political opinions to strangers from 'outside', although I can think of exceptions in all three case study areas.

<sup>1</sup>Jeremy Boissevain Saints and Fireworks: Religion and Politics in Rural Malta. L.S.E. Monographs on Social Anthropology No.30. London Athlone Press. 1965.

<sup>2</sup>Steve Bradshaw "Island in the Setting Sun?" Article in The Listener 23 March 1978



Are there any general conclusions which we can draw concerning the role of opposition in small independent communities after this consideration of the case study areas? The Opposition should not be conceived of just as an alternative government in exile; in micro-states it is often not even that. In the classic Westminster style arrangement the Opposition is there to articulate to the Government of the day some of the concerns of the society at large; to keep it in touch with popular feelings and apprehensions, to keep it on its toes. In micro-states, however, the separate society at large is seen to be less visible in the small personalised world which, as we saw in Chapter Six, has a closer unity of state and society through the individual office holders. Therefore the perceived need for an opposition in this classic guise tends to be weaker. Very often it is even felt that an Opposition is not required at all in a formal sense. Certainly as far as external factors are concerned a community which can present a united front to the outside world is likely to be considered stronger. Here we have the 'communal myth' of the theoretical unity of the Maltese village writ large with its ideas of 'pika' and 'partiti' being disruptive and harmful. This can be applied to the national level in most micro-states and, as we have seen, is hardly weaker in the Isle of Man than in Malta. The role of political parties tends to be viewed likewise in the sense that as separate entities they are less important than the over-arching homogeneous community whether that be of myth or fact.

## 8:5 SUMMARY

In this rather lengthy chapter I have examined firstly the nature of cleavage, conflict and consensus in small independent communities in general and secondly the forms and limits of political activity in the case study areas in particular.

The factors which make for the extent of diversity of political affiliation in a small polity have been considered as has the degree to which divergence grows with modernisation. I have argued against the conventional view as expressed by Dahl and Tufte that in the smaller European democracies, if by that term they include the micro-states, conflict has the characteristics ascribed to larger rather than smaller states. The importance of the modernisation process and the key role in political development played by political parties have been noted. In particular the types of accommodation to overall societal norms required of political parties by the politics of smallness and homogeneity have been discussed. It was found that generally the incidence of partisan conflict increases along with the growth of heterogeneity and social and economic mobility. Another point which is proposed is that the larger the small polity is in terms of population size and the more modernised in terms of socio-economic diversification then the greater is the probability that the minority party or parties will be relatively large; also it is more likely that opposition will be seen as legitimate and having a constructive role to play.

The role and importance of personality politics in the case study areas was considered. Their role in holding the different

groups in society together through inter-related social networks is very important and not to be so easily found in large scale modernised polities. The social limits placed upon conflict in a small-scale society were discussed in this respect.

A paradox was highlighted which relates to the degree of political and governmental activity in small political communities. Because such activity is not compartmentalised it tends at first sight to be less visible than is the case in larger polities but in fact, operating as it does through individuals and informal relations as well as formal ones, it is all pervasive and is reinforced by societal pressures for conformity. This pervasiveness of politics and governmental authority through its diffusion via the individual politicians and office holders is one of the most marked features of the small independent community.

The functions of political parties and the role of opposition in small independent communities were also discussed and assessed in the light of the case study material. It would be wrong and also dangerous to attempt to force a pre-set pattern onto any of this material. There are oddities and ambiguities in the evidence. I have, however, suggested that a very basic continuum could be envisaged which would take note of such correlating factors as the degree of socio-economic diversity, the degree of political independence, and the developmental role of parties, all of which would enable us to regard Malta as standing at one end of the continuum as a 'strong' party system, the Isle of Man at the other, and the Faroes occupying a variety of relative positions between the other two.



The consideration of the role of opposition involved a reference to the concept of a threshold of dissent above which the percentage of people required to register opposition openly tails off. Finally the social legitimacy aspects of opposition were examined in the context of the case study areas, and in general I concluded that the perceived need for an opposition, in the sense in which we usually use the term, tends to be weak and may be regarded as detrimental to the myth of the homogeneous nature and interests of the small independent political community.

## CHAPTER NINE

## CONCLUSIONS

## CHAPTER NINE

## CONCLUSIONS

W.H. Auden, the poet, described man as "an analogy-drawing animal" but cautioned that the danger lay in treating analogies as identities. False analogy is the bane of comparative politics and I have attempted to guard against this danger throughout the writing of this thesis. I have also been conscious of the difficulty of achieving a balance in the study as a whole between overall factors and the case studies presented in Part Two. On the one hand there is the danger of adapting the case studies to fit in too neatly with the main themes, and on the other hand there is the danger of disintegrating the whole argument into a number of separate historical and descriptive accounts. Having acknowledged these dangers, however, I consider that certain common themes do present themselves from the evidence provided and from the analysis that has been carried out. These will be reviewed and summarised in this final chapter.

Clearly, in examining small independent political communities such as the Faroes, Malta, and the Isle of Man we can see many features that remind us of political life in even the biggest states. Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur applies here. Politics everywhere is in large part mutual backscratching, what is known in the U.S.A. as "log rolling", a delightful



and illustrative term. Other terms which commonly occur in American politics also appear appropriate in the context of the politics of the micro-state. References to such things as "horse-trading", "mending fences", and "sharing out from the pork barrel" spring to mind. There are similarities here. Another factor which larger polities often have in common with micro-states is the distinction in practice between the legal constitution and the real constitution. At the same time we can recognise certain similarities between politics in micro-states and political activity in the local subdivisions of larger states such as small town politics or local community politics.

The point I have tried to develop, however, in this thesis is that communities such as Malta, Faroe, and Mann can be differentiated from both the style of national and local politics in the larger polities and stand on their own in a specific category. They are more than mere hybrids or "half-way houses" between larger states proper and the local subdivisions within such states. The differences are qualitative as well as quantitative. It is the combination of the societal homogeneity and particularism associated with smallness; the strong self-conscious feeling of a collective identity asserted against the outside world; the intimate relationship of state and society; the difference between formal constitutional theory and political reality; the prominence of personality politics; the peculiar nature of the political parties and cleavage systems; the muted role of opposition - it is all

these factors located together within a discrete area which give the micro-state its separate and special character. In alternative terminology it may be said that micro-states have some features in common with the larger nation-states in terms of governmental institutions; have similarities with local communities within larger polities in a variety of social aspects; and, additionally, share some problems with the developing countries of the world in many political and economic respects.

In bringing out these characteristic features, which I argue combine to constitute small independent communities as a specific category of polity, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am not attempting to set up some inflexible model or framework. Nor am I seeking to idealise these small independent political communities or to say that they are necessarily more democratic than larger ones; they can also be introvertedly parochial as we have seen. I do maintain, however, that the small polity tends to be more commanding of our feeling of community and is easier to feel a part of whilst simultaneously being harder to hide in or to remain anonymous. The value or merit of the small community is at root a question of identity and this is one of the strongest common factors to emerge from the study.

Let us consider for a moment this question of identity a little more closely. In his classic work "Small is Beautiful" E.F. Schumacher argues that increased social and labour mobility creates what he terms 'footloose' people who have no roots and no sense of purpose or structure; this in turn increases the emphasis on materialism in a society. Such mobility can lead

to a lack of identity in a society and can threaten basic structures. This factor of 'footlooseness', he suggests, becomes more serious the bigger the country involved. As we have seen, structures in small independent communities have a tendency to remain more stable. They tend to be represented in the community by and through individuals rather than through impersonal organisations. Schumacher argues that,

"While many theoreticians - who may not be too closely in touch with real life - are still engaging in the idolatry of large size, with practical people in the actual world there is a tremendous longing and striving to profit, if at all possible, from the convenience, humanity and manageability of smallness".<sup>1</sup>

Having gone on to challenge the doctrine of 'bigger is better' he then lays great stress on the importance of the general environment within which economic activity takes place and sums this up in the following passage which seems particularly relevant to our considerations.

"All this presupposes a political and organisational structure that can provide intimate contact with people. (But) people can be themselves only in small comprehensible groups".<sup>2</sup>

1 & 2

E.F. Schumacher Small is Beautiful: a study of economics as if people mattered. Abacus Edition. 1974 London

Sphere Books 1973 Page 53.



Writers like Schumacher seem to feel that because identity is more readily perceived in a small community smallness is indeed ideal. The word "identity" is not, however, without ambiguity. It may be used to refer to the individual's awareness of belonging to a particular tightly knit community but equally it may refer to an individual's sense of being a specific person free from the social pressures to conform. A small political community is as likely to confine identity in the latter sense as it is to expand it in the former. It all depends on what one wants. There are advantages and disadvantages attached to either of the situations implied by the different meanings of the term.

Other paradoxes have emerged from this study, some of which I have tried to explain and some of which have remained unresolved. For example, the basic dilemma of retaining a specific character as a distinct community with its own ways of life and traditions whilst making the necessary economic accommodation to the outside world and the penetration of 'alien' values which this brings. Whatever the choice opted for the community has to pay some price. This basic issue is essentially the same as that of Gemeinschaft versus Gesellschaft, traditional versus modernised, rural versus urban, and character/communal identity versus level of economic prosperity which has echoed and re-echoed through this study.

These are not new problems. They arrested the attention of no less a writer than Jean-Jacques Rousseau when he worked on his projected Constitution for the island of Corsica at the

time when it had regained its independence from Genoa. He paid particular attention to the matter of the economy and suggested that it should remain basically agricultural as the 'benefits' of commerce and industry were, in his view, not beneficial at all. Commerce and vitiating influences went together, producing self-interest in the individual and discord in society. Here we find an echo again of the Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft dichotomy. Rousseau was not opposed to industry as a source of wealth but saw that wealth itself would not solve the problems which a small and independent community faced. New economic possibilities would not necessarily alter, and could easily damage, the essential human resources. Foreign trade, he argued, would have to be prohibited until the new constitution became firmly established and domestic production was supplying all that it could. At another point he touches upon what I have referred to in this thesis as "the urban factor" when he opposes the prejudice that favours town life over country life. He suggests as a capital for Corsica a town in the middle of the island, Corte, which is central but would not have such natural advantages that it would grow too large.

Rousseau brings us right back to the heart of this basic dilemma when he argues that,

"The first thing (the Corsican nation) has to do is to give itself, by its own efforts, all the stability of which it is capable. No-one who depends on others, and lacks resources of his own, can ever be free. Alliances, treaties, and trust in men may bind the weak to the strong, but never the strong

to the weak. Leave negotiations, then, to the powers, and depend on yourselves alone....."<sup>1</sup>

Few, however, are today prepared to make the immense puritanical sacrifices that Rousseau's alternative implies. What then are the choices and future prospects for these micro-states? Are they in danger of losing their specific identity and sense of community in the face of economic development and increasing technological innovation? What might the consequences of this be?

The fragmentation of life in small integrated societies within larger nation states which has accompanied the industrial and technological changes in the last one hundred and fifty years has also witnessed an increased search for a lost feeling of 'community' which has taken on many forms. The growth of new cults, religious and secular, in the advanced western world are evidence of this. This has been followed in recent years by the upsurge of interest in sociology, psychology, social anthropology, and psycho-analysis of individual and group 'co-relation' studies, etc. in the academic world. Are even the small independent communities

<sup>1</sup>

Jean-Jacques Rousseau Constitutional Project for Corsica  
(Projet de Constitution pour la Corse) circa 1765, from  
the Pléiade edition of the Oeuvres Complètes. Page 903



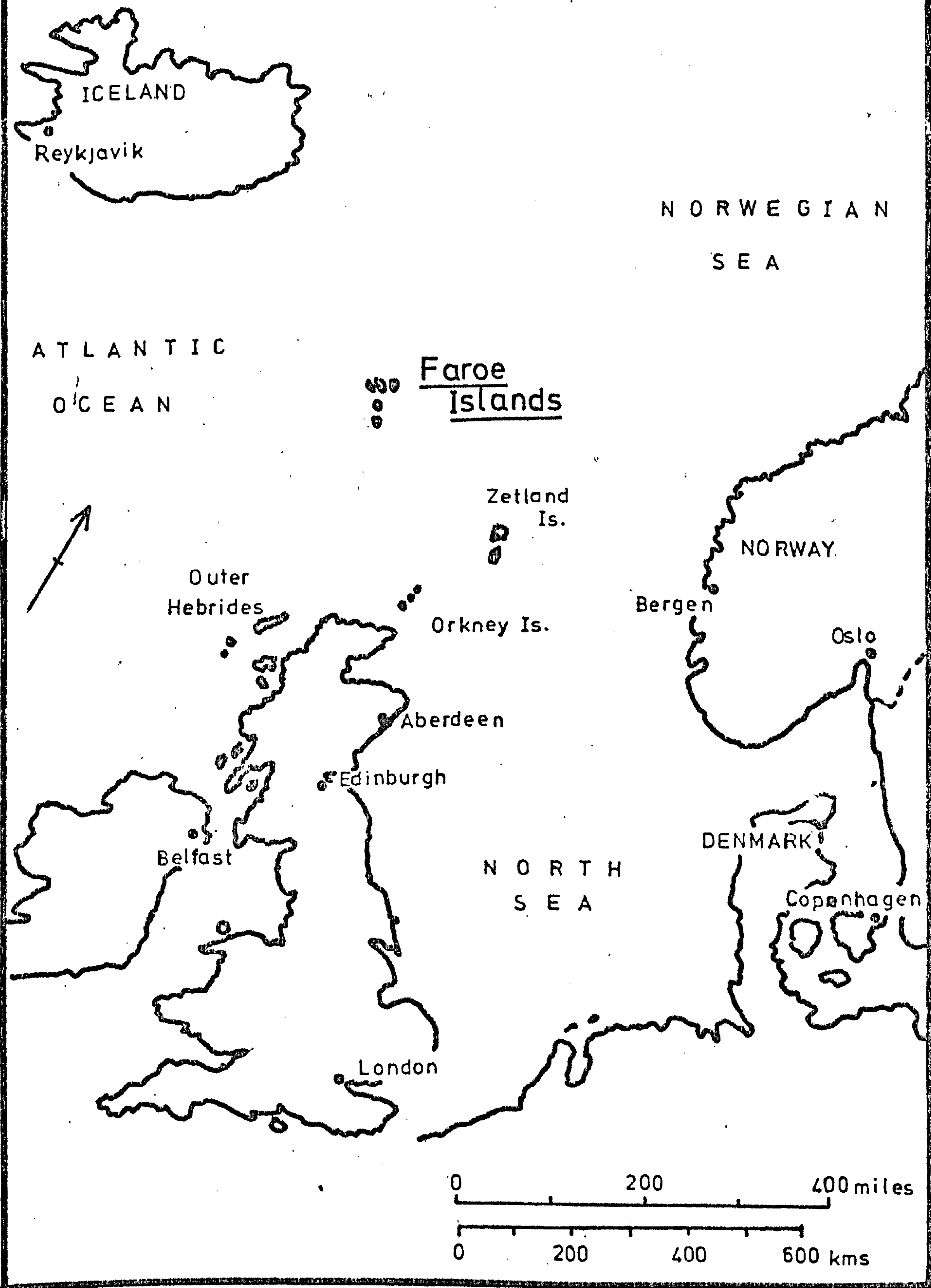
which have striven so hard to retain their sense of community and identity to suffer from the inevitable encroachment of the urban Gesellschaft? Perhaps the only answer to this question lies in the dogged words of the old Faroese proverb,

"It takes strong shoulders to bear good fortune".

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## APPENDICES

# Faroe Islands: Location.

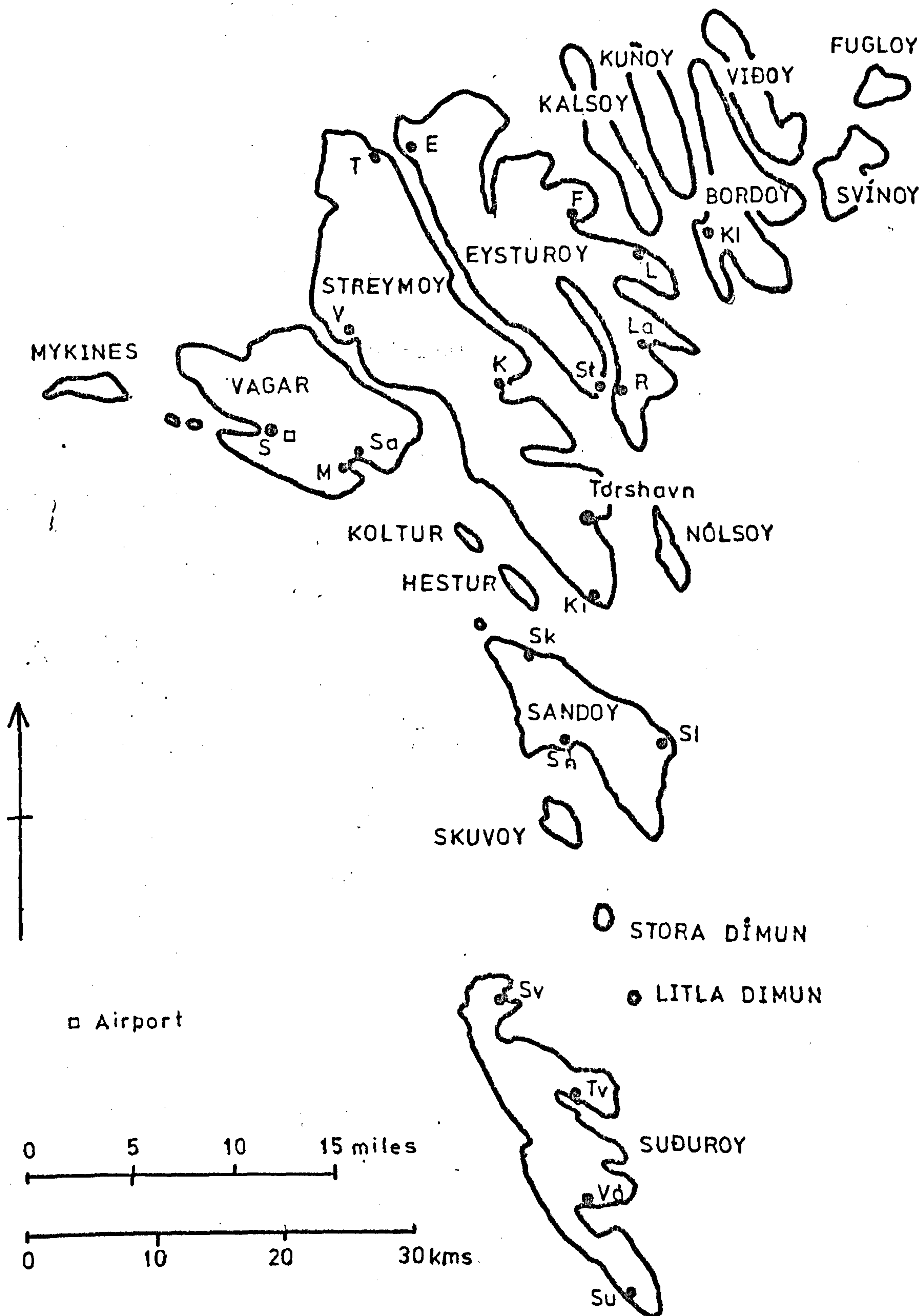






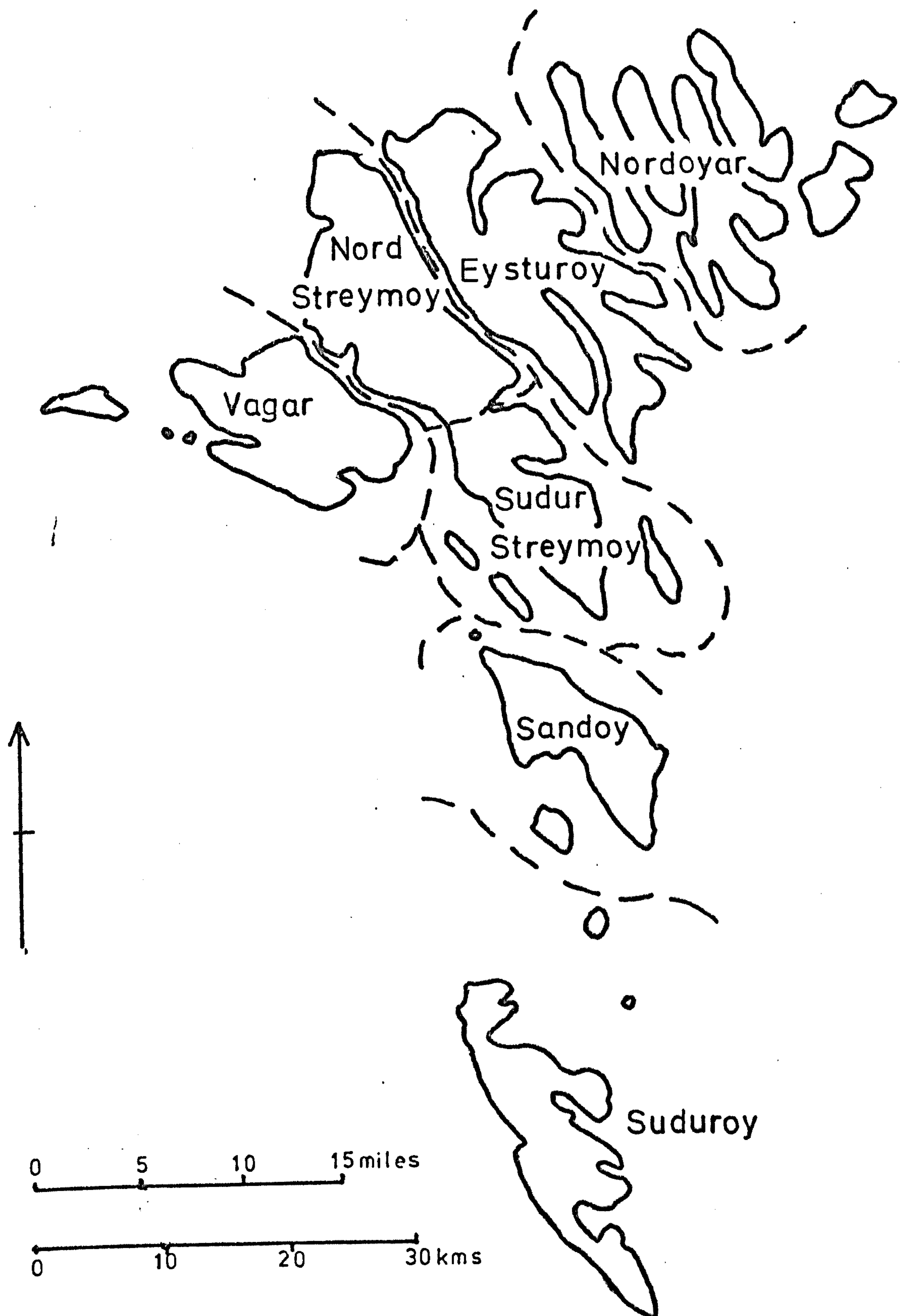
Key:-

E	Eiði
F	Fuglafjörður
K	Kollafjörður
Ki	Kirkjubæur
Kl	Klaksvík
L	Lorvík
La	Lamba
M	Miðvágur
R	Runavík
S	Servagur
Sa	Sandavágur
Sk	Skopun
Sl	Skálavík
Sn	Sandur
St	Strendur
Su	Sumba
Sv	Sandvík
T	Tjørnuvík
Tv	Tvøroyri
V	Vestmanna
Vá	Vágur



Faroe Islands: General.





Faroe Islands: Political units.

ELECTION RESULTS IN THE  
FAROE ISLANDS SINCE 1906

Election Date	Samband	Sjalvstyri	Social Democrat	People's Party	Total
18 July 1906	12	8	-	-	20
2 February, 1908	12	8	-	-	20
12 February, 1910	13	7	-	-	20
2 February, 1912	13	7	-	-	20
2 February, 1914	12	8	-	-	20
28 February, 1916	10	10	-	-	20
24 April, 1918	9	11	-	-	20
10 November, 1920	10	10	-	-	20
22 January, 1924	13	10	-	-	23
23 January, 1928	10	11	2	-	23
19 January, 1932	11	8	2	-	21
28 January, 1936	8	8	6	2 <sup>1</sup>	24
30 January, 1940	8	4	6	6	24
24 August, 1943	8	-	6	12	26
6 November, 1945	6	-	6	11	23
8 November, 1946	6	2	4	8	20

The elections that have given rise to home-rule governments are as follows. A figure with an asterisk indicates that the party in question was a supporter of a governing coalition.

Election Date	Sambd.	Sjal.	Soc. Dem.	Peop. Pty.	Repub. Pty.	Progress Party	Total
8 November, 1946	6*	2*	4*	8	-	-	20
8 November, 1950	7*	2	6	8*	2	-	25
8 November, 1954	7*	2*	5	6*	6	1 <sup>2</sup>	27
8 November, 1958	7*	2*	8*	5	7	1	30
8 November, 1962	6	2*	8	6*	6*	1*	29
8 November, 1966	6*	1*	7*	6	5	1	26
7 November, 1970	6*	1*	7*	5	6	1	26
7 November, 1974	5	2	7*	5*	6*	1	26
7 November, 1978	8	2	8*	6*	6*	2	32

<sup>1</sup>This figure applies to the Economic Party, which merged with the newly-founded People's Party in 1939.

<sup>2</sup>In this election Kjartan Mohr was elected as an independent; he founded the party two years later.

## APPENDIX V

## FAROE ISLANDS - HOME RULE REFERENDUM, 14 SEPTEMBER, 1946

The referendum concerned an offer of limited home rule for the Faroe Islands, made by the Danish government in 1946, after constitutional talks. The electorate was asked to choose between (i) Do you want the Danish government's proposal to be put into effect? and (ii) Do you want the Faroe Islands to secede from Denmark? Thorstein Petersen (the leader of the People's Party) suggested that those who wished Faroe to have dominion status should write "no" against both questions, spoiling the ballot paper.

For the Danish government proposal	5,499
For secession	5,660
Spoilt papers	481
Total	11,640

Regionally, the voting was highly variable. South Stremoy and the Northern Islands were respectively 2:1 and  $2\frac{1}{2}$ :1 in favour of secession. Suduroy (known in the Faroes as 'Little Denmark') was 3:1 in favour of the government proposal. Sandoy, Vagar, and North Streymoy were marginally in favour of secession; Eysturoy was marginally in favour of the government proposal.



LIST OF MEMBERS OF LØGTING  
ELECTED ON 7TH NOVEMBER 1978

<u>Member</u>	<u>Political Party</u>	<u>Place of Residence</u>
Hákun Djurhuus	Peoples' Party	Torshavn
Poul Jacob Olsen	Social Democrat	Klasvik
Asbjørn Joensen	Sjalvstyri (Old Home Rule)	Klasvik
Finnbogi Isaksen	Republican	Torshavn
Eli Nolsøe	Samband (Union)	Klasvik
Edmund i Gardi	Peoples' Party	Strendur
Jógvan Olsen	Samband(Union)	Toftir
Jóh. Martin Olsen	Samband (Union)	Runavik
Jørgen Thomsen	Social Democrat	Skáli
Signar Hansen	Republican	Fuglafjórður
Adolf Hansen	Prog. & Fishermen's Party	Torshavn
Agnar Nielsen	Samband (Union)	Vestmanna
Jógvan Durhus	Republican	Vestmanna
Øssur Dam Jacobsen	Peoples' Party	Vestmanna
Jógvan Sundstein	Peoples' Party	Torshavn
Oli Breckmann	Peoples' Party	Torshavn
Pauli Ellefsen	Samband (Union)	Torshavn
Jákup Lindenskov	Social Democrat	Torshavn
Jona Henriksen	Social Democrat	Torshavn
Erlendur Patursson	Republican	Torshavn
Karin Kjølbro	Republican	Torshavn
Kjartan Mohr	Prog. & Fishermen's Party	Torshavn
Hilmar Kass	Sjalvstyri (Old Home Rule)	Torshavn
Ivan Johannesen	Samband (Union)	Midvágur
Haldur Hensen	Social Democrat	Sórvágur
Hedin M. Klein	Republican	Sandur
Demmus Hentze	Peoples' Party	Torshavn
Flemming Mikkelsen	Samband (Union)	Vagur
Atli Dam (Lagmand)	Social Democrat	Torshavn
Sverri Midjord	Social Democrat	Tvøroyri
Hilmar Bech	Social Democrat	Porkeri

Source: (translated from) Arbog For Faerøerne 1978

p.p. 18,19.

## APPENDIX VII

## FAROE ISLANDS - ADDENDUM

i) Extract from Keesing's Contemporary Archives

April 27th, 1979. Page 29580

## FAROE ISLANDS - Parliamentary Elections.

## Continuation of Three-Party Coalition Government

In elections held on Nov. 7, 1978, for the Lagting (Parliament), in which the number of seats had been increased from 26 to 32, of the Faroe Islands (which enjoy internal self-government under the Danish Crown) the official results were as follows (with those obtained in the 1974 elections - see 26866 C - shown for comparison):

	1978			1974		
	Seats	Votes	Per- cent- age	Seats	Votes	Per- cent- age.
Sambandsflokken (Union Party)	8	5,966	26.2	5	3,797	19.1
Socialdemokratiet (Social Democratic Party)	8	5,062	22.3	7	5,118	25.8
Tjóðveldisflokkur (Republican Party)	6	4,614	20.3	6	4,463	22.5
Folkeflokkur (People's Party)	6	4,067	17.9	5	4,067	20.5
Gammel Selvstyre (Old Home Rule Party)	2	1,626	7.2	2	1,433	7.2
Fremskridts-og Fiskerflokkur (Progressive and Fishermen's Party)	2	1,389	6.1	1	489	2.5
Independents	-	-	-	0	487	2.4

The elections were contested by 284 candidates, the total of votes cast was 22,724 and the percentage poll was 85.5.

The Union Party, which registered the greatest gains in the elections, favoured the maintenance of close links between the islands and Denmark, whereas all other parties wished to see these links weakened or even severed.

After protracted negotiations Mr Atli Dam (Social Democrat), the previous Lagmand (Premier), was on Jan. 24, 1979 re-elected by 20 of the Lagting's 32 members and formed a new Landsstyre (Cabinet) based on the same three-party coalition as before (consisting of the Social Democrats, the People's Party and the Republican Party). In addition to the Premier the new Government contained two ministers from each of the other coalition partners, with those from the Republican Party being newcomers. (Royal Danish Embassy, London Times, - Le Monde - Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung - Neue Zürcher Zeitung)

## ii) Landsstyri Members

LANDSSTYRI MEMBERS

Atli Dam (Lagmand)	Social Democrat
Hedin Klein	Republican
Jákup Lindenskov	Social Democrat
Demmus Hentze	Peoples' Party
Dánjal P. Danielsen	Peoples' Party
Hergeir Nielsen	Republican



TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST FOR THE RESPECTIVE POLITICAL

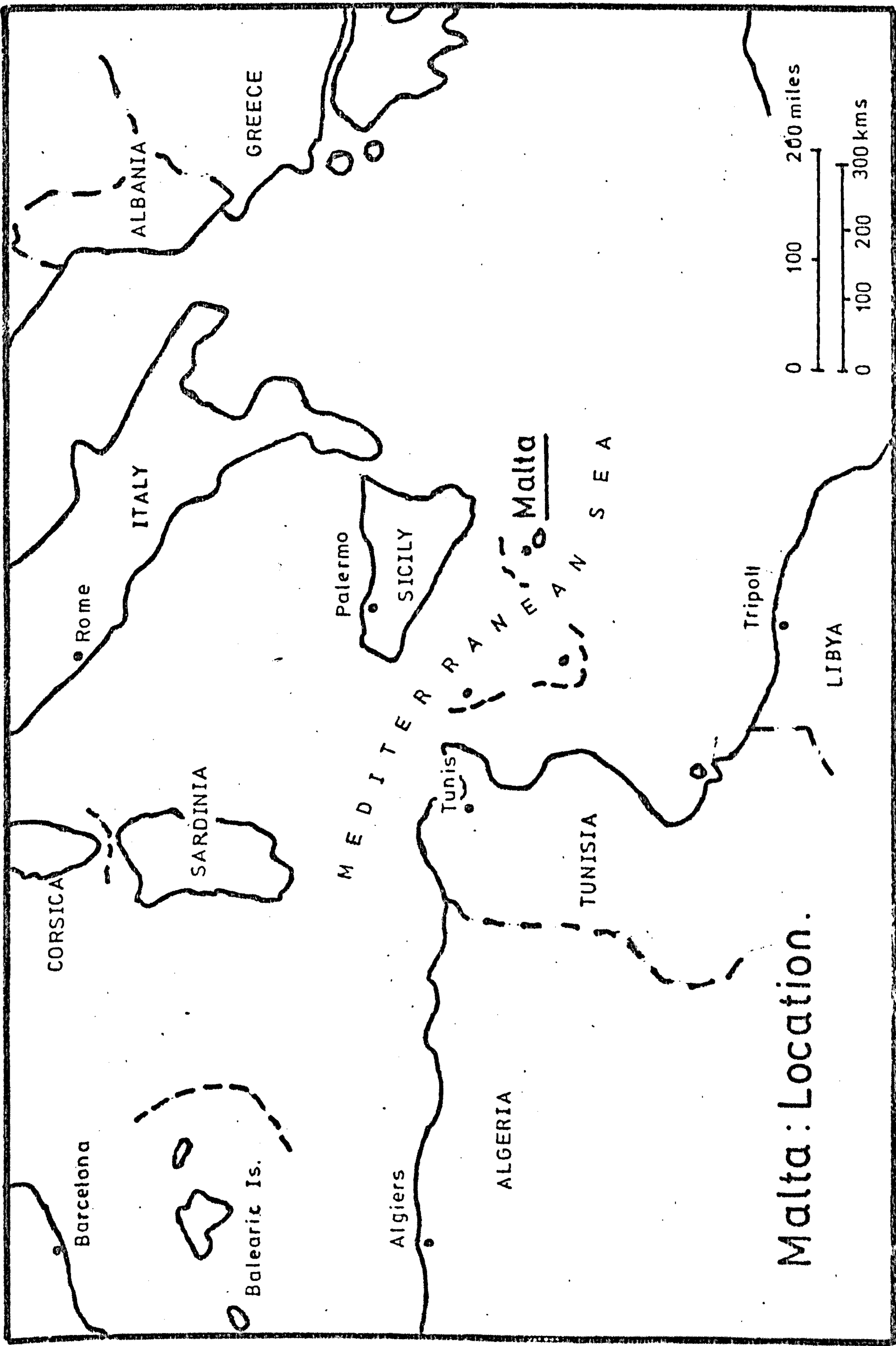
PARTIES IN THE ELECTORAL DISTRICTS IN THE LØGTING ELECTIONS OF

7TH NOVEMBER, 1978

District	Peoples' Party	Samband (Union)	Social Democrats	Sjalvstyri (Old Home Rule)	Republican Party	Progressive and Fishermen's Party	Total
Nordoyar (Northern Islands)	690	484	658	503	608	255	3,198
Eysturoy	692	1,578	617	446	994	361	4,688
Nord-Streymoy	339	544	250	62	443	74	1,712
Sudur-Streymor (includes Torshavn)	1,532	1,753	1,426	480	1,648	438	7,277
Vágar	263	666	336	41	167	48	1,521
Sandoy	227	169	224	48	239	50	957
Suduroy	324	772	1,551	46	515	163	3,371
Totals	4,067	5,966	5,062	1,626	4,614	1,389	22,724

Source: translated and adapted from Arbog For Faeroerne 1978 Page 39 and Valgbogen For Faeroerne

APPENDIX IX



Malta: Location.





Key:-

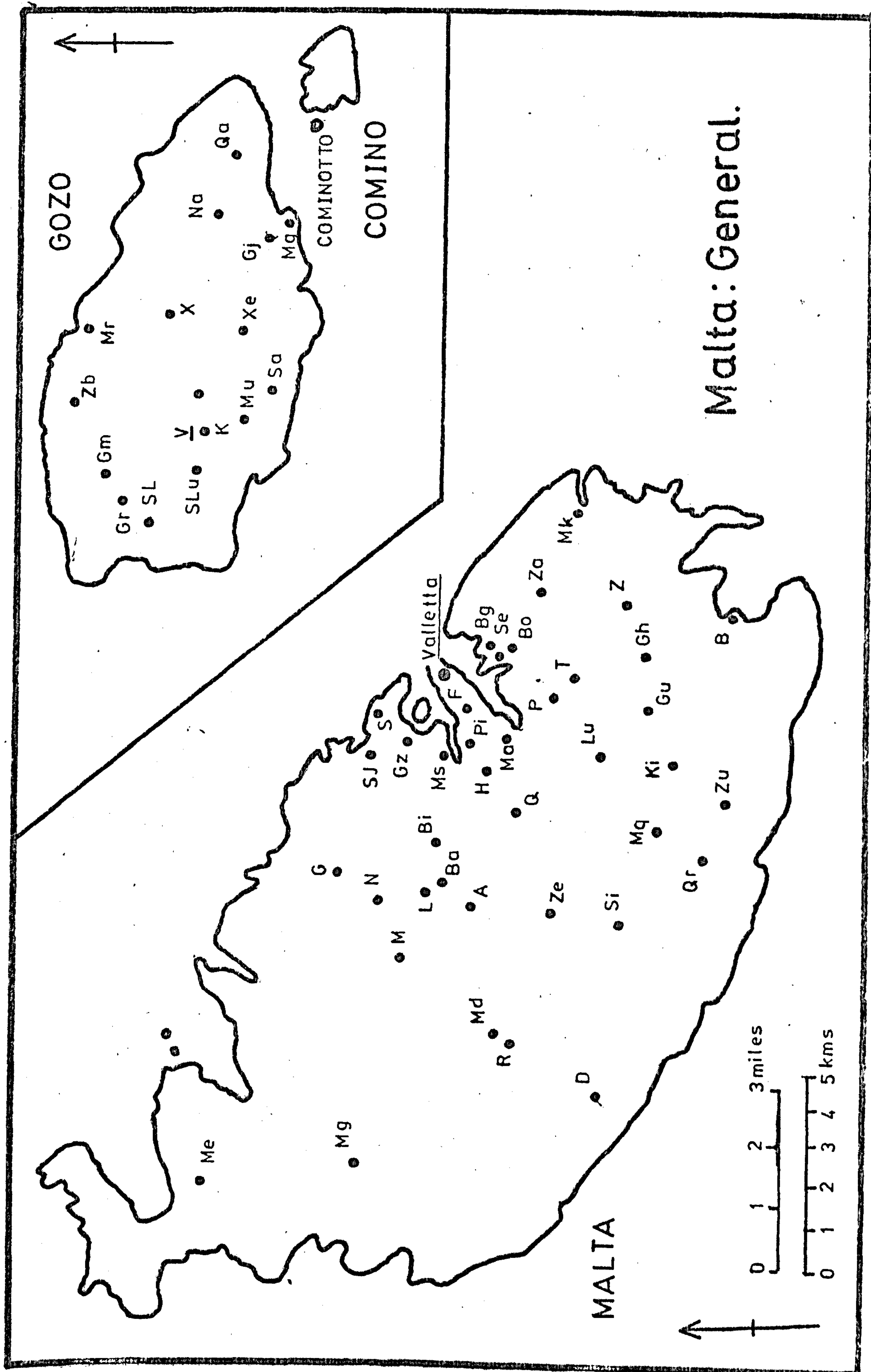
Malta

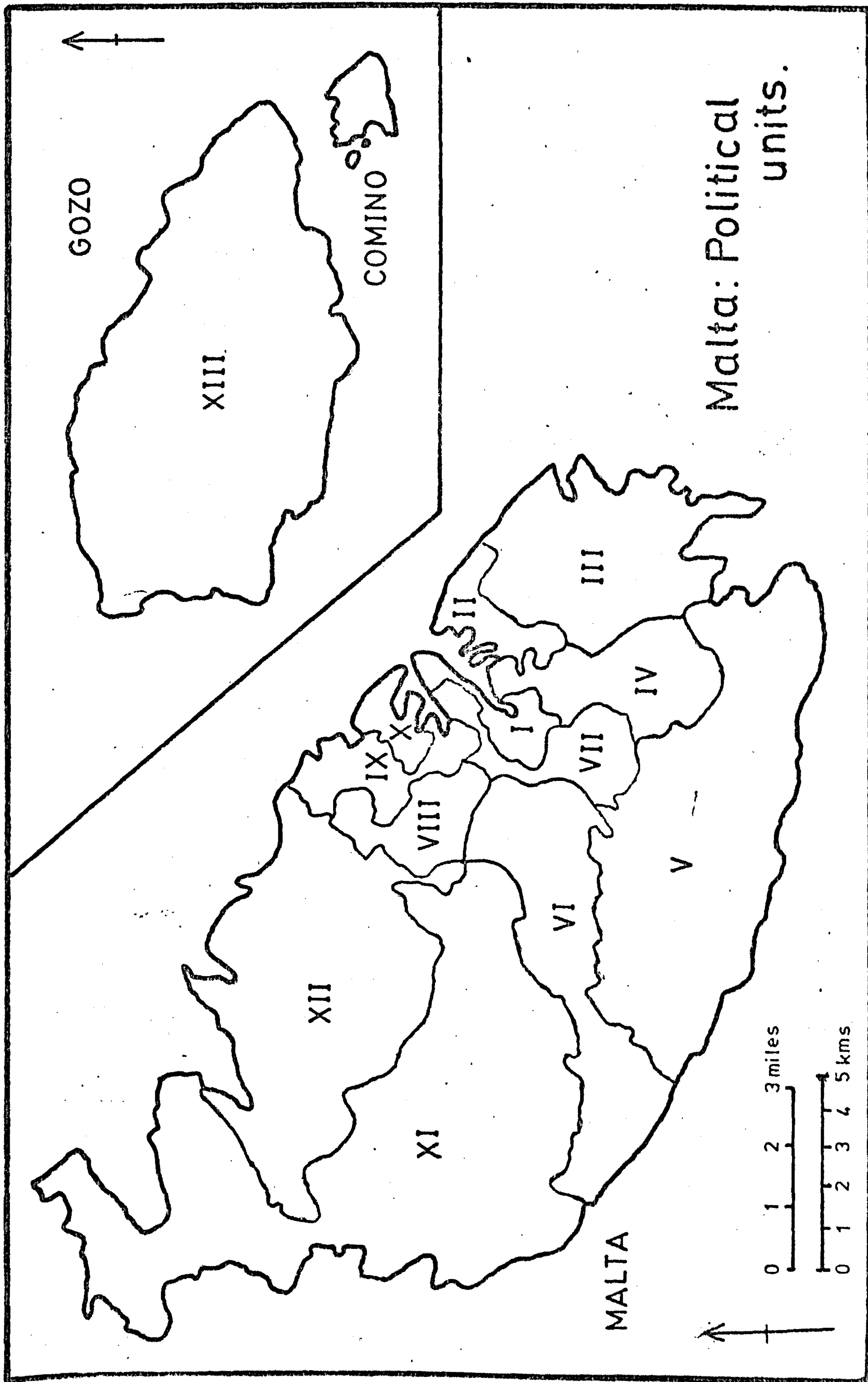
A Attard  
 B Birzebbuga  
 Ba Balzan  
 Bg Birgu  
 Bi Birkirkara  
 Bo Bormia  
 D Dingli  
 F Floriana  
 G Gharghur  
 Gh Ghaxaq  
 Gu Gudja  
 Gz Gzira  
 H Hamrun  
 Ki Kirkop  
 L Lija  
 Lu Luqa  
 M Mosta  
 Ma Marsa  
 Md Mdina

Me Mellieha  
 Mg Mgarr  
 Mk Marsaskala  
 Mq Mqabba  
 Ms Msida  
 N Naxxar  
 P Paola  
 Pi Pieta  
 Q Quormi  
 Qr Qrendi  
 R Rabat  
 S Sliema  
 Se Senglea  
 Si Siggiewi  
 SJ St. Julian's  
 T Tarxien  
 Z Zeitun  
 Za Zabbar  
 Ze Zebbug  
 Zu Zurrieq

Gozo

Gj Ghajnsielem  
 Gm Ghammar  
 Gr Gharb  
 K Kercem  
 Mg Mgarr  
 Mr Marsalforn  
 Mu Munxar  
 Na Nadur  
 Qa Qala  
 Sa Sannat  
 SL San Lawrenz  
 SLu Santa Lucija  
 V Victoria (Rabat)  
 X Xaghra  
 Xe Xewkija  
 Zb Zebbug







## APPENDIX XII

## MALTESE GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

SINCE 1921

1921	Unione Politica Maltese 14; Constitutional Party 7; Labour Party 7; Partito Democratico Nazionalista 4.
1924	Unione Politica Maltese 10; Constitutional Party 10; Labour Party 7; Partito Democratico Nazionalista 5.(*)
1927	Constitutional Party 15; Nationalist Party 14; Labour Party 3.
1932	Nationalist Party 21; Constitutional Party 10; Labour Party 1.
1939	Constitutional Party 6; Nationalist Party 3; Labour Party 1.
1945	Malta Labour Party 9; Jones's Party 1.
1947	Malta Labour Party 24; Nationalists 7; Democratic Action 4; Gozo Party 3; Jones's Party 2.
1950	Nationalists 12; Malta Workers' Party 11; Malta Labour Party 11; Constitutional Party 4; Democratic Action Party 1; Independent 1.
1951	Nationalists 15; Malta Workers' Party 7; Malta Labour Party 14; Constitutional Party 4.
1953	Nationalists 18; Malta Workers' Party 3; Malta Labour Party 19;
1955	Malta Labour Party 23; Nationalists 17.
1962	Nationalists 25; Malta Labour Party 16; Democratic Nationalist Party 4; Christian Workers Party 4; Progressive Constitutional Party 1.
1966	Nationalists 28; Malta Labour Party 22.
1971	Malta Labour Party 28; Nationalists 27. <sup>4</sup>
1976	Malta Labour Party 34; Nationalists 31.

\* A U.P.M./P.D.N. coalition government in 1924 resulted in the formation of the Nationalist Party

<sup>4</sup> The original state of the parties was altered early in 1973 when a Nationalist M.P. crossed the floor of the House; the numbers then read: Malta Labour Party 29; Nationalists 26.

Source - Malta Year Book 1977

## APPENDIX XIII

MALTESE INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION  
REFERENDUM, 1964

1964 Independence Constitution Referendum. A total electorate of 156,886 persons was entitled to vote and of these 129,649 or 83.4% actually voted. There were 65,714 "Yes" votes, 54,919 "No" votes and 9,016 Invalid votes.

Source Malta Year Book 1977

## APPENDIX XIV

LIST OF MEMBERS OF MALTESE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES

(as elected in September, 1976)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Place of Residence</u>
MINISTERS:		
( P.M.) Dom Mintoff	M.L.P.	Tarxien
(Speaker) Mr Nestu Laiviera	M.L.P.	Paola
Dr. Joseph Cassar	M.L.P.	Qrendi
Agatha Barbara	M.L.P.	Zabbar
Not. Dr. Joseph F Abela	M.L.P.	Zebbug
Dr. Daniel Piscopo	M.L.P.	Conspicua
Lorry Sant	M.L.P.	Fgura
Wistin Abela	M.L.P.	Zejtun
Freddie Micallef	M.L.P.	Mosta
Dr. Patrick J. Holland	M.L.P.	Sliema
Dr. Vincent Moran	M.L.P.	Paola
Danny Cremona	M.L.P.	Hamrun
Dr. Philip Muscat	M.L.P.	Zebbug
(Leader of Opposition)		
Dr. Giorgio Borg Olivier	N.P.	Sliema
(Deputy Speaker)		
Mr. Joseph M. Baldacchino	N.P.	Gzira
OTHER MEMBERS		
Dr. Sammy Abela	N.P.	Rabat
Mr. Coronato Attard	N.P.	Nadur, Gozo
Mr. Emmanuel Attard Bezzina	M.L.P.	Zejtun
Mrs. Evelyn Bonaci	M.L.P.	St. Venera
Not. Dr. George Bonello DuPuis	N.P.	Ta'Xbiex
Dr. Emmanuel Bonnici	N.P.	Valletta
Mr. John J. Borg	M.L.P.	G'Mangia
Dr. Pawlu Borg Olivier	N.P.	Birkakra
Dr. Albert Borg Olivier De Puget	N.P.	Balzan
Dr. Carmelo Brincat	M.L.P.	Qormi
Dr. Joseph Brincat	M.L.P.	Marsa
Mr. Carmelo Buttigieg	M.L.P.	Marsalforn, Gozo
Dr. John Buttigieg	M.L.P.	Hamrun
Dr. Alexander Cachia Zammit	N.P.	Zejtun
Mr. Reno Calleja	M.L.P.	Zurrieq
Mr. Anglu Camilleri	M.L.P.	Nadur, Gozo
Dr. Benny Camilleri	M.L.P.	Sliema
Dr. G.M. Camilleri	N.P.	Sliema
Dr. Carmelo Caruana	N.P.	Tarxien
Mr. Amabile Cauchi	N.P.	Ghajnsielem, Gozo
Dr. Paul Chetcuti Caruana	M.L.P.	Mosta
Mr. John Dalli	M.L.P.	Gudja

continued.....



.....continued

<u>Name</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Place of Residence</u>
Mr. Joe Debono Grech	M.L.P.	Birkakra
Dr. Guido De Marco	N.P.	Hamrun
Mr. Michael Falzon	N.P.	Gzira
Dr. Herman Farrugia	N.P.	Floriana
Dr. Jimmy Farrugia	N.P.	Tarxien
Dr. Mario Felice	N.P.	Sliema
Dr. Joe Fenech	N.P.	Birkakra
Dr. Eddie Fenech Adami	N.P.	Birkakra
Dr. Louis Galea	N.P.	Mqabba
Mr. Lawrence Gatt	N.P.	Mosta
Dr. Lino Gauci Borda	N.P.	Birkakara
Mr. Joseph Grima	M.L.P.	Attard
Dr. George Hyzler	N.P.	Qormi
Dr. Daniel Micallef	M.L.P.	Rabat
Dr. Antoine Mifsud Bonnici	N.P.	Hamrun
Dr. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici	N.P.	Conspicua
Dr. John Muscat	N.P.	Rabat
Dr. Joseph Muscat	N.P.	Zabbar
Dr. Robert Naudi	M.L.P.	Msida
Mr. Salvu Privitera	M.L.P.	Sliema
Dr. Michael A. Refalo	N.P.	Sliema
Dr. John Rizzo Naudi	N.P.	Msida
Dr. Joseph Saliba	M.L.P.	Vittoriosa
Mr. Joseph Sciberras	M.L.P.	Attard
Mr. Carmel Spiteri	N.P.	Msida
Mr. Anton Tabone	N.P.	Victoria, Gozo
Dr. Vincent Tabone	N.P.	St. Julians
Mr. Karmenu Vella	M.L.P.	Zurrieq
Mr Paul Xuereb	M.L.P.	Rabat

Source - Malta Year Book 1977

## APPENDIX XV

## MALTESE ELECTIONS - S.T.V. SYSTEM

DEVIATIONS IN THE PERCENTAGES RESPECTIVELY,  
OF FIRST PREFERENCE VOTES AND SEATS WON, BY  
PARTY, 1947-1976.

	1947	1950	1951	1953	1955	1962	1966	1971	1976
M.L.P.	+0.1	-1.1	-0.7	+3.0	+0.8	-1.9	+0.9	+0.1	+0.8
M.W.P.		+4.3	-1.3	-4.3					
N.P.	-0.5	+0.4	+2.3	+6.8	+2.3	+8.0	+8.1	+1.0	-0.8
C.P.		+0.1	+1.9	XXXX					
P.C.P.				XXXX	XXXX	-2.8	XXXX	XXXX	
D.A.P.	-3.3	-3.5							
D.N.P.						-1.3	XXXX		
C.W.P.						-1.5	XXXX		
G.P.	+2.3	XXXX							
Jns.P.	+1.5	XXXX	XXXX						
D.C.P.						XXXX			
Ind.	XXXX	-0.1	XXXX		XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX

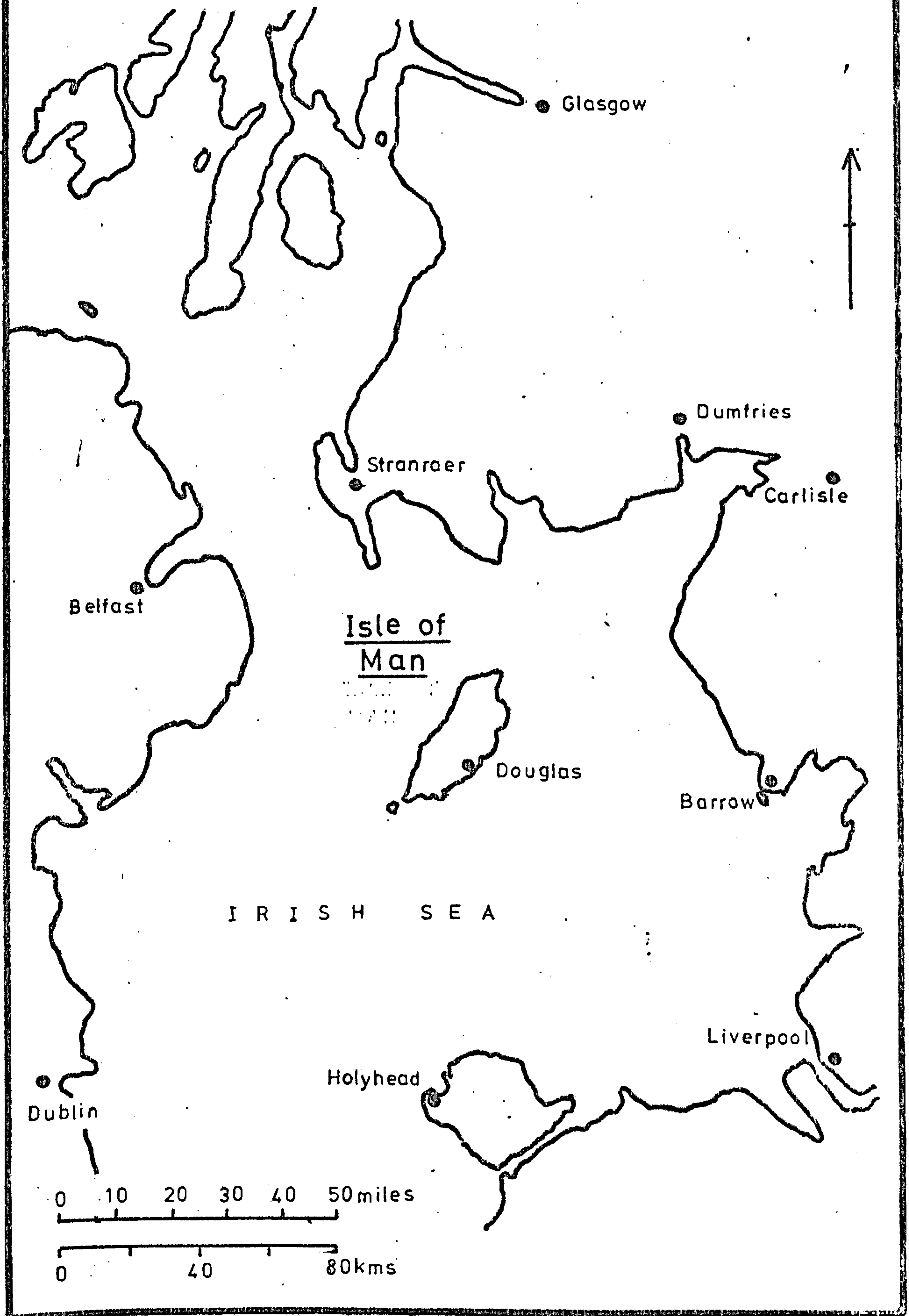
Note: a plus (+) value indicates that (and by how much) a party won a higher percentage of the seats than of the votes; a minus (-) value indicates the opposite kind of deviation. "XXXX" indicates that a political party, although presenting candidates who won some votes, did not win any seats, and no deviation from the percentage of seats can therefore be computed.

KEY.

M.L.P.	Malta Labour Party
M.W.P.	Malta Workers' Party
N.P.	Nationalist Party
C.P.	Constitutional Party
P.C.P.	Progressive Constitutional Party
D.A.P.	Democratic Action Party
D.N.P.	Democratic Nationalist Party
C.W.P.	Christian Workers' Party
G.P.	Gozo Party
JnsP.	Jones's Party
D.C.P.	Democratic Christian Party
Ind.	Independents.

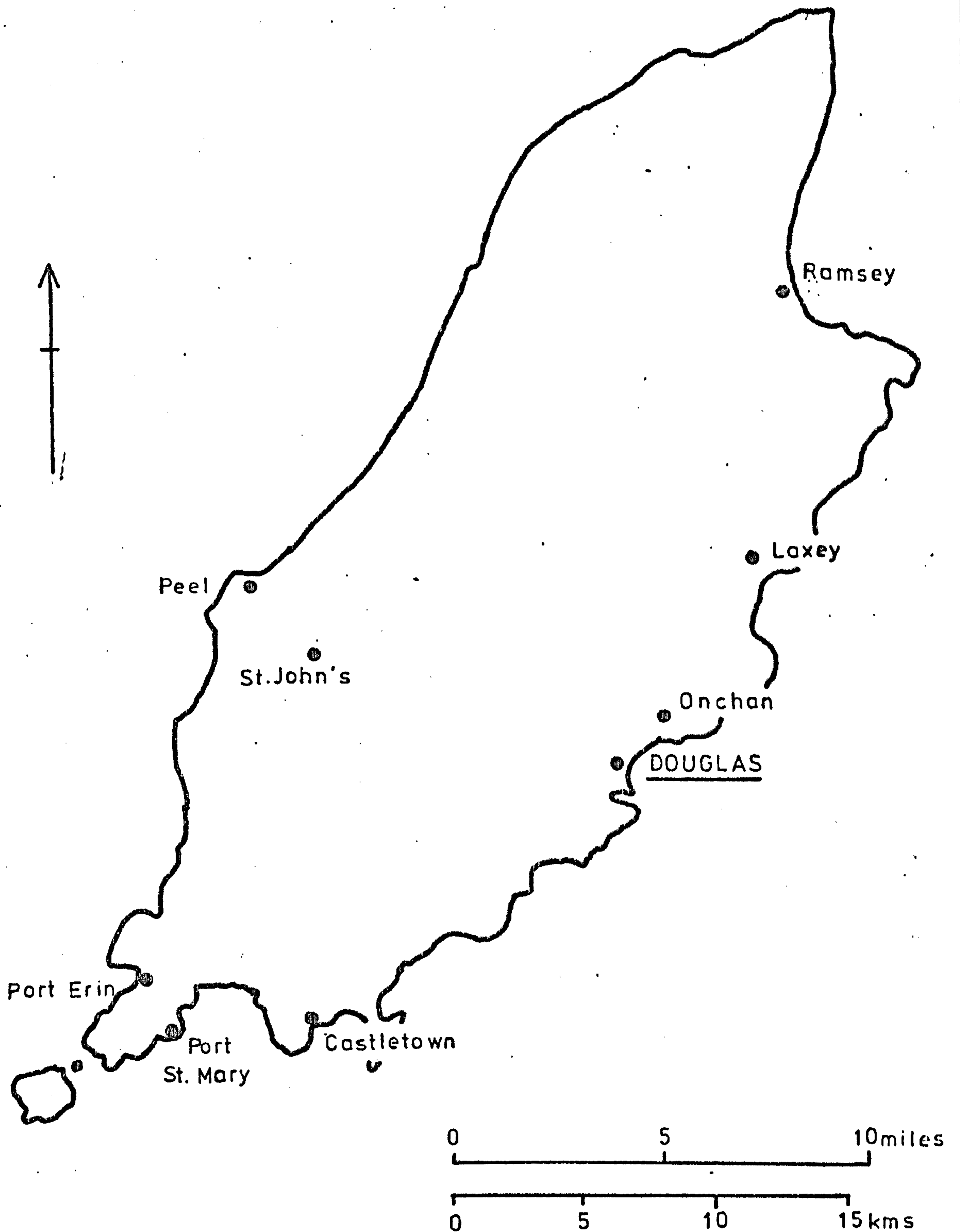
Source - Malta Year Book 1977

# Isle of Man: Location.

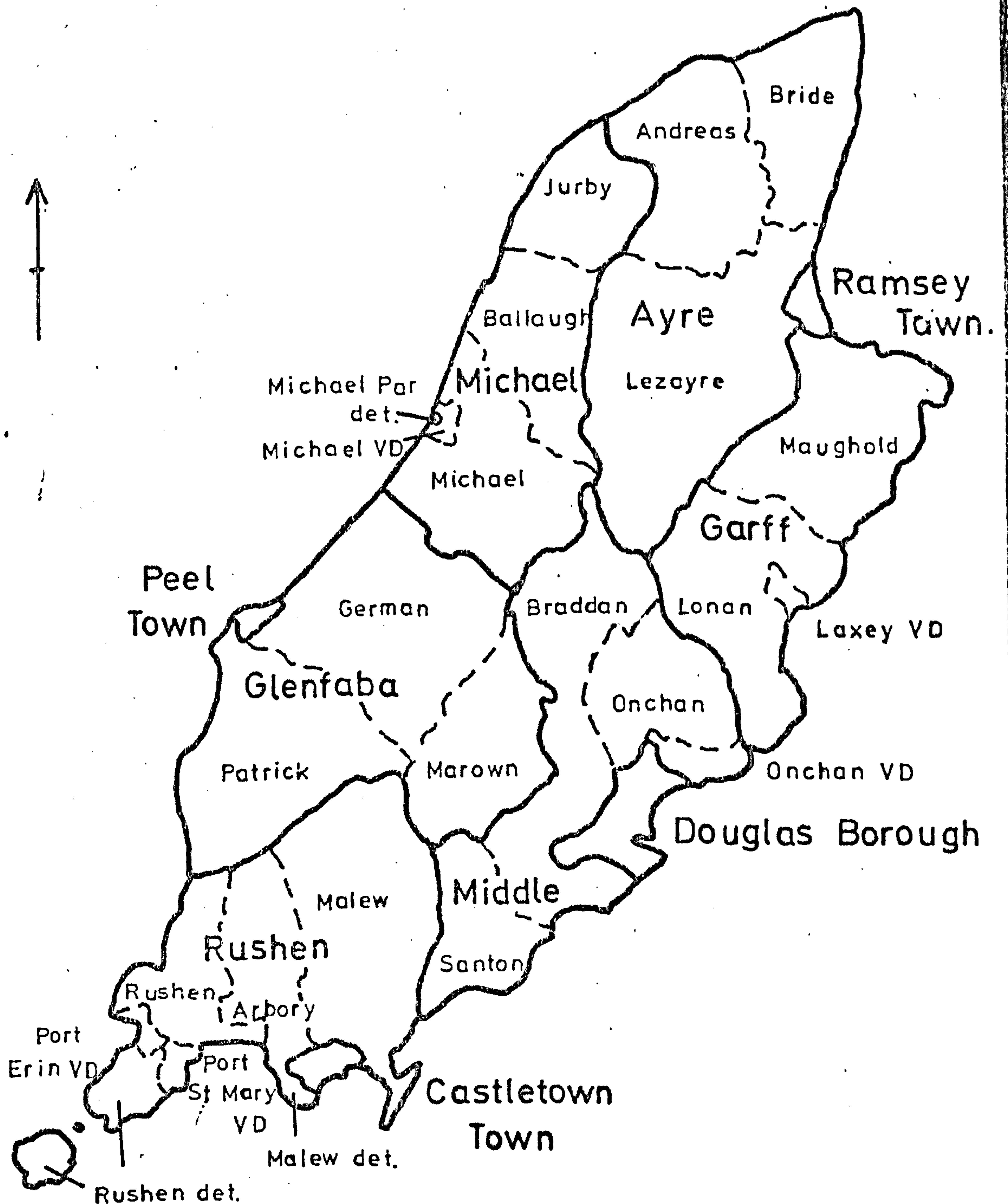




## Isle of Man : General.

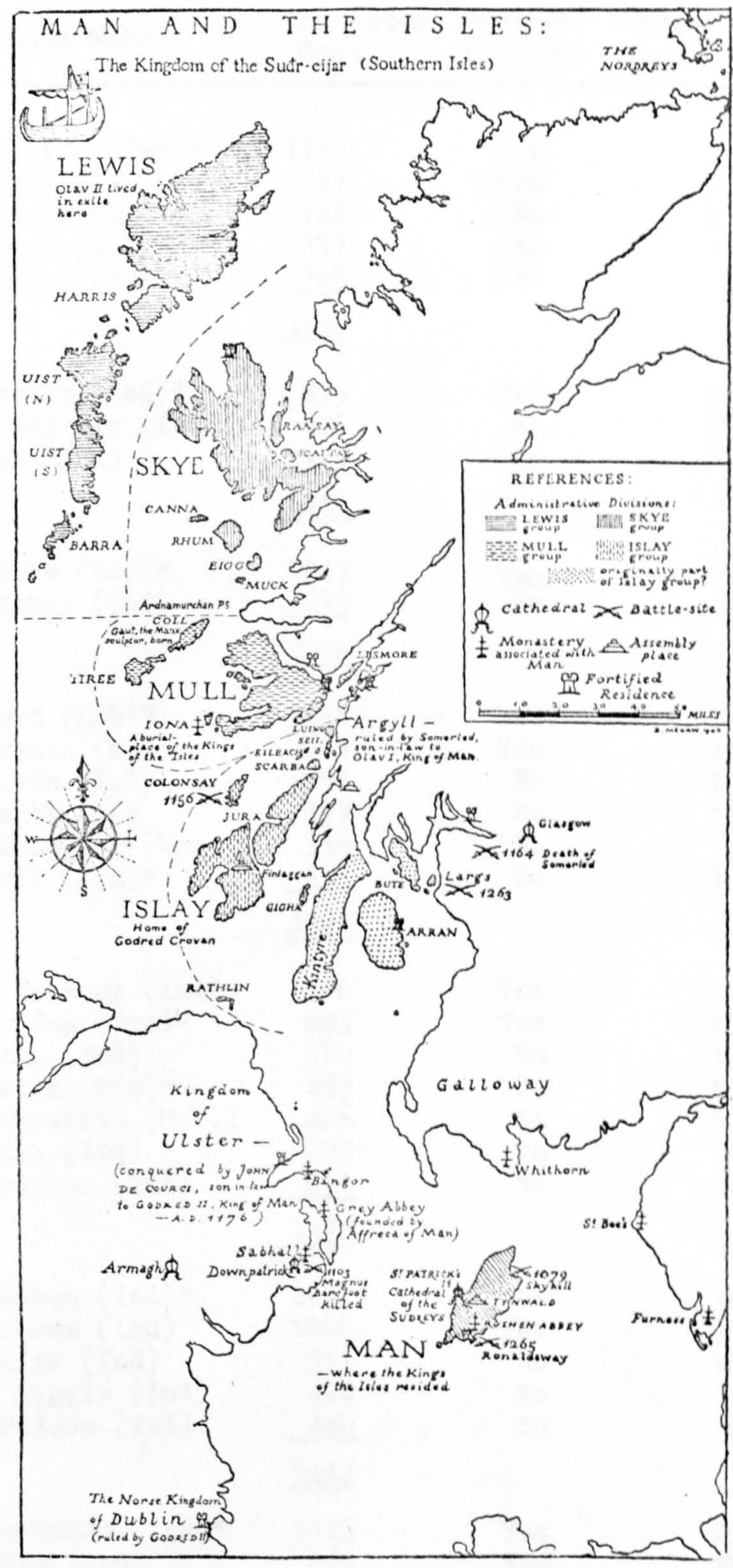


# Isle of Man : Political units.





APPENDIX XIX



The Kingdom of Man and the Isles showing the districts sending representatives to Tynwald



ISLE OF MAN GENERAL ELECTION 1976  
 - SHOWING THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST  
 FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR THE HOUSE OF KEYS

Constituency	Candidate's Name	No. Votes Cast	Whether Elected	Votes as a % of total votes cast.
Ayre	P. Radcliffe (Ind)*	1111	Yes	35.31
	J.N. Radcliffe (Ind)	771	Yes	24.51
	J.C. Clucas (Ind)*	742	No	23.59
	W.K. Crowe (M.V.)	357	No	11.35
	T.H. Clague (M.V)	<u>165</u>	No	5.24
		<u>3146</u>		
Castletown	E.C. Quayle (Ind)*	893	Yes	55.36
	C.L.P. Vereker (Ind)	405	No	25.11
	C. Peach (Ind)	<u>315</u>	No	19.53
		<u>1613</u>		
North Douglas	W.A. Moore (Lab)*	1243	Yes	59.87
	P. Hardinge (Ind)	<u>833</u>	No	40.13
		<u>2076</u>		
South Douglas	E.M. Ward (Lab)*	1281	Yes	29.15
	P.A. Craine (M.V)	899	Yes	20.46
	H.D. Cowin (Ind)	852	No	19.40
	G. Howarth (Ind)	693	No	15.77
	G.F. Nicholson (Ind)	338	No	7.69
	J.J. Bell (Ind)*	<u>331</u>	No	77.53
		<u>4394</u>		
East Douglas	D.F.K. Delaney (Ind)	716	Yes	21.20
	E.C. Irving (Ind)*	683	Yes	20.22
	D. Martin (Ind)	520	No	15.39
	K.E. Cowin (Ind)*	483	No	14.30
	A.A. Ainsworth (M.V.)	426	No	12.61
	J.M. Hall (Ind)	299	No	8.85
	B.M. Cottier (Ind)	<u>251</u>	No	7.43
		<u>3378</u>		
West Douglas	B.Q. Hanson (Ind)*	2077	Yes	38.17
	T.E Kermeen (Ind)	1860	Yes	34.18
	P.D. Quirk (Ind)	571	No	10.49
	E.F.L. Figgis (Ind)	494	No	9.08
	E.A. Bridson (Ind)	<u>440</u>	No	8.08
		<u>5442</u>		
Garff	H.C. Kerruish (Ind)*	1115	Yes	29.27
	E.J. Mann (Ind)	869	Yes	22.81
	J.M. Faragher (Ind)	824	No	21.63
	H.L. Fry (Ind)	502	No	13.18
	J.D. Moore (M.V.)	<u>499</u>	No	13.11
		<u>3809</u>		



Glenfaba	R.J.G. Anderson (Ind)*	1038	Yes	28.98
	W.K. Quirk (Ind)	631	Yes	17.62
	H.D.C. MacLeod (Ind)	542	No	15.13
	W.A. Gilbey (Ind)	501	No	13.99
	R.A. Watson (Ind)	322	No	8.98
	J.R. Gelling (Ind)	282	No	7.87
	J.S. McKenzie (Ind)	<u>266</u>	No	7.43
		<u>3582</u>		
Michael	J.J. Radcliffe (Ind)	471	Yes	38.80
	G.M. Kermeen (Ind)	442	No	36.41
	D.K. Stevenson (Ind)	257	No	21.17
	G. Leeming (Ind)	<u>44</u>	No	3.62
		<u>1214</u>		
Peel	R. MacDonald (Ind)*	1002	Yes	49.53
	D.B. Vaughan (Ind)	565	No	27.93
	K. Clague (M.V.)	232	No	11.47
	W.J. Merritt (Ind)	167	No	8.25
	J. Paramor (Ind)	<u>57</u>	No	2.82
		<u>2023</u>		
Ramsey	J.J. Christian (Ind)	1520	Yes	24.65
	G.C. Swales (Ind)	853	Yes	13.83
	J.L. Kneale (Ind)	834	No	13.53
	A. R. Bell (M.V.)	812	No	13.17
	C.A. Cain (Ind)	804	No	13.04
	G.F. Crowe (Ind)	432	No	7.01
	J.D. Wright (M.V.)	292	No	4.74
	J. Venables (Ind)	242	No	3.93
	G.W. Mackie (Ind)	196	No	3.18
	J.T. Corrin (Ind)	<u>180</u>	No	2.92
		<u>6165</u>		
Middle	A.A. Callin (Ind)	3124	Yes	27.04
	R.L. Watterson (Ind)	2132	Yes	18.45
	J.R. Creer (Ind)	2001	Yes	17.32
	E. Ranson (Lab)*	1793	No	15.52
	P.A. Spittal (Ind)*	1632	No	14.12
	J. Parnell (M.V.)	<u>873</u>	No	7.55
		<u>11555</u>		
Rushen	E.J. Lowey (Lab)*	3310	Yes	27.12
	M.R. Walker (Ind)	2690	Yes	22.04
	N.Q. Cringle (Ind)	2385	Yes	19.54
	C.H. Faragher (M.V.)	1846	No	15.12
	H.B. Cowley (Ind)	1108	No	9.08
	J.A. Maddrell (Ind)	<u>866</u>	No	7.10
		<u>12205</u>		

\* denotes retiring member

M.V. - Mec Vannin

Lab. - Manx Labour Party

Source: Government Circular No. 167/76 G.O. Reference no 161.20(3).  
Isle of Man Digest of Economic and Social Statistics, 1977  
Published by Isle of Man Treasury: Economics Section.



## APPENDIX XXI

MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE HOUSE OF KEYS  
IN THE NOVEMBER 1976 ELECTIONS

## AYRE

Mr P Radcliffe IND  
Mr N. Radcliffe IND

## CASTLETOWN

Mrs E. Quayle IND

## NORTH DOUGLAS

Mr A. Moore LAB

## SOUTH DOUGLAS

Mr M. Ward LAB  
Mr P. Craine MV

## EAST DOUGLAS

Mr D. Delaney IND  
Mr. E.C. Irving IND

## WEST DOUGLAS

Mrs B. Hanson IND  
Mr T.E. Kermeeen IND

## GARFF

Mr. H.C. Kerruish IND  
Dr E. Mann IND

## GLENFABA

Mr. R.J.G. Anderson IND  
Mr W. Quirk IND

## KIRKMICHAEL

Mr. J. Radcliffe IND

## MIDDLE

Mr. A. Callin IND  
Mr R. Watterson IND  
Mr J.R. Creer IND

## PEEL

Mr. R. Macdonald IND

## RAMSEY

Mr J.J. Christian IND  
Mr G. Swales IND

## RUSHEN

Mr. E. Lowey LAB  
Mr M Walker IND  
Mr N. Cringle IND



## APPENDIX XXII

ELECTORATE, VOTERS AND PERCENTAGE POLL,  
MANX GENERAL ELECTION, - NOVEMBER 1976

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Electorate</u>	<u>No. of Voters</u>	<u>% Poll</u>
Ayre	2135	1725	80.8
Castletown	2011	1613	80.2
N. Douglas	2874	2076	72.2
S. Douglas	3710	2453	66.1
E. Douglas	2907	1936	66.6
W. Douglas	4465	3011	67.4
Garff	2577	2107	81.8
Glenfaba	2330	1904	81.7
Michael	1613	1214	75.3
Middle	6602	4653	70.5
Peel	2426	2023	83.4
Ramsey	4058	3312	81.6
Rushen	6615	5258	79.5
All Island	44323	33285	75.9

Source: Isle of Man Digest of Economic and Social Statistics 1977.

Produced by the Isle of Man Treasury. Economics Section.



ELECTIONS AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR FOR THE  
HOUSE OF KEYS

Questionnaire for Members of the House of Keys

Name:

Address:

Member of the House of Keys for .....

- 1 When were you first elected to the House of Keys?
- 2 Upon what grounds did you base your election campaign?
- 3 From which political party or organisation, if any, did you have support?
- 4 Which would you say were the most important factors influencing the voters in your constituency? Please number in order of importance.
  - a) One specific issue; if so name it
  - b) Several issues
  - c) Your personality and that of the other candidates
  - d) Your career and social background
  - e) Your birthplace. (Whether Manx or not)
  - f) Your previous experience of council or committee work, either in Government or in any other organisation.
  - g) Your position on the political spectrum of Left and Right.
  - h) The social background of the voters in your constituency.
  - i) The areas they live in.
  - j) Their religion.
  - k) Their sex.
  - l) Their occupation
  - m) Other factors (please state)
- 5 What are your opinions on the issue of "plump voting" for one candidate when the voter is entitled to more than one vote?
- 6 Do you feel that the voters understand the implications of "Plump Voting"?
- 7 For what reasons do you feel that you were successful in your campaign?
- 8 Are you happy with the electoral system in the Island at the moment? Yes/No
- 9 If the answer to question 8 is Yes; please state your reasons; if No, please outline your criticisms.
- 10 What possible reforms can you suggest for the House of Keys' election machinery?
- 11 Do you feel that there ought to be a popularly elected Legislative Council? Yes/No

continued.....



..... continued

- 12 To what extent do you feel that you have been able to implement the policies which you outlined in your election manifesto?
- 13 How do you feel that the electoral system will change in the future, for example on such issues as the importance of political parties, constituency changes, number of seats per constituency, etc.
- 14 If you have any other comments to make they will be most gratefully received.

Thank you for your kind co-operation.

J. M. Templeton (Miss)

PERSON	DATE	PLACE	INTERVIEW
(The name(s) of the interviewee(s) is/are given in brackets)			
<hr/>			
Government Officials	Mr. John D. Hughes Head of Legation Administration. (August 1976)	Mr. Leo Abela Chief of the House of Representatives. (April 1976)	Mr. T. J. Vassallo Chief Clerk of Parliament. (May 1976)
	Mr. Aras J. J. J. Minister of Internal Affairs. Office in Malta. (August 1976)	Mr. Anthony J. J. Chief Clerk of House of Representatives. (April 1976)	Mr. J. J. J. Minister of Internal Affairs. (April 1976)
		Mr. Maurice Abela Chief Electoral Officer and Minister of Internal Affairs. (April 1976)	Mr. G. J. J. Minister of Internal Affairs. (April 1976)
Other Officials	Archivist at National Library & Records Office, Tangier. (July 1976)	Mr. Richard J. J. Minister of Internal Affairs. (April 1976)	Mr. J. J. J. Minister of Internal Affairs. (April 1976)



## APPENDIX 24

CATEGORISATION OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN THE COURSE OF THE RESEARCH  
IN THE CASE STUDY AREAS.

It was my intention, as far as possible, to arrange a series of interviews with persons drawn from equivalent categories in terms of occupation and/or political standing in each of the three case study areas. In addition to the formal interviews many informal conversations, some scheduled and some impromptu, added greatly to the matrix of information from which I sought to gauge the 'flavour' of the local political environment. The main oral contributions to my case study evidence are listed below:-

CATEGORY OF PERSON INTERVIEWED	FAROE ISLANDS	MALTA	ISLE OF MAN
	(The date(s) of the interview(s) is/are given in brackets)		
Government Officials	Hr. Johan Djurhuus- Head of Løgting Administration. (August 1976)	Mr. Leo Abela- Clerk of the House of Representatives. (April 1976)	Mr. T.E. Kermeen- Clerk of Tynwald (May 1973) Elected M.H.K. in 1976
	Hr. Arne Juul Arnskov - Head of Rigsombudsmand's Office in Faroe. (August 1976)	Mr. Anthony Borg- Deputy Clerk of House of Repres- entatives. (April 1976)	Deemster Easton- Head of Manx Judiciary. (April 1977)
		Mr. Maurice Abela Chief Electoral Officer and Principal Govt. Statistician (April 1976)	Mr. G. Kissack- General Registry, I.O.M. Government (April 1977)
Other Officials	Archivist at National Library & Records Office, Torshavn. (July 1976)	Mr. Richard Stagno Navarra - Press & Information Officer British High Commission (March 1976)	Miss Anne Harrison Archivist & Librarian Manx Museum and National Archives, Douglas. (Several times 1972-1979)



.....continued

CATEGORY  
OF PERSONS  
INTERVIEWED

FAROE ISLANDS

MALTA

ISLE OF MAN

Politicians

Hr. Jakup Lindenskov Landsstyri member & Social Democrat Løgting member.	Hon. Lorry Sant- Minister of Development, M.L.P., M.P. (April 1976)	Mr. J.A.C.K. Nivison Member of Legislative Council. M.L.P. (April 1973)
Hr. Demmus Hentze- Landsstyri member & Peoples Party Løgting member	Dr. Guido De Marco Secretary of P.N. & advocate. (March 1976) Now Deputy Leader of the P.N.	Mrs Elspeth Quayle Member of Executive Council & M.H.K. (September 1978)
Hr. Hedin Klein- Landsstyri member & Republican Party Løgting member. (all together with interpreter July 1976)	Mr. Paul Carachi M.L.P., M.P & Journalist for the G.W.U. Press (March 1976)	Mr. J.B. Bolton Former Chairman of Finance Board, M.H.K. (April 1977)
Hr. Agnar Nielsen Samband Løgting member, N.Stremoy (July 1976)	Mr. Michael Falzon P.N., M.P. editor of party paper & architect (March 1976)	Mr. C.C. McFee former member of Legislative Council & Keys, M.L.P. (April 1973)
Hr. Flemming Mikkelsen- Samband Løgting member, Vagur. (August 1976)	Anne Agius - Ferrante - Unsuccessful P.N. parliamentary candidate, Maltese aristocracy. (April 1976)	+ several M.H.K.'s during the period 1972-1979 mostly no longer serving as members e.g. Mr. T. Faragher Mr. E. Callister Mr. R. MacDonald
Hr. Sverri Midjord Social Democrat Løgting member, Tvøroyri. (August 1976)		

A selection  
of others

Hr. Oscar Tomsen & Hr Sigurd Simonsen - Tourist Information, Torshavn (July 1976)	Young civil service messenger, Clerk's Dept., M.L.P. supporter. (April 1976)	Mr. David Keggin P.R.O. for M.N.P. (April 1979)
Hr. Palli Nolsøe Torshammer Stores (July 1976)	Anglo-Maltese Church curator, P.N. supporter (March 1976)	Various members of Mec Vannin, some now in M.N.P. (1972-1979)
Hr. Peter i Gonged journalist (August 1976)	Priest, St. John's Co-Cathedral, Mdina. (March 1976)	Various officials at I.O.M. Government Offices. (1972-1979)
Hr. Olé Thorup Danish electrical engineer. (July 1976)	Newspaper vendor P.N. supporter- (April 1976)	Mr. G.A. Quinney Secretary of TGWU Douglas Branch (April 1973) Now M.H.K.



CATEGORY OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED	FAROE ISLANDS	MALTA	ISLE OF MAN
A selection of others continued	Hr. E. Petersen Schoolteacher, Suderoy. (July 1976)	Schoolteacher Marsascale. (April 1976)	Mrs. M. Faragher Fabian Society, M.L.P. (April 1973)
	'Harry' - a part-time fisherman & motor mechanic. (August 1976)	Also a variety of shopkeepers, fishermen, & drivers, etc.	Mrs. A. Kneale Penal Reform Group (April 1973)
	Mrs. Hilda Peters Faroese lady married to an Englishman & living near Loughborough (several times 1975-1978)		Mr C. Price Schoolteacher (September 1974)  Miss V. Roach Newspaper editor- (September 1974)

N.B. It has not been possible to record all the people who were interviewed in the case study areas here. In some cases the name of the informant was unrecorded and in the case of Malta some names have been withheld in accordance with the wishes of the people concerned.



## APPENDIX 25

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA CONCERNING THE

## CASE STUDY AREAS

	1956	1970	% change	% of total population	% of working population
<b>a) FAROE ISLANDS</b>					
Fishing	8,953	8,242	-7.9	24.1	29.2
Agriculture and market gardening	1,173	733	-20.6	3.2	3.4
Fish processing industry	1,639	1,402	-14.7	4.4	5.2
Other manufacturing industries	9,757	10,094	3.4	26.3	26.3
Commerce and services	2,902	3,500	20.6	7.9	9.1
Transport, etc.	4,141	4,753	14.8	11.1	11.7
Administration, liberal professions	2,844	3,593	26.3	7.7	9.3
Service trades	532	646	21.4	1.4	1.7
Unclassified	911	1,439	56.8	2.5	3.1
Property, interest, rentiers, pensioners	4,166	4,526	8.6	11.3	11.7
<b>b) MALTA</b>					
Total of working population	14,027	14,751	5.2	11.8	15.2
Total of non-working population	23,075	23,861	3.4	62.2	61.9
<b>c) ISLE OF MAN</b>					

## According to sex:

Men	11,610	11,705	0.8	92.2	79.2
Women	2,417	3,046	26.0	17.8	20.8
(Married women)	727	1,236	70.3	3.2	5.4

## According to age:

14-19 years	2,232	1,930	-13.5	15.3	17.2
20-24 years	1,992	2,013	1.1	14.2	14.7
25-44 years	3,962	5,774	45.7	28.2	39.1
45-64 years	5,243	4,393	-16.2	37.4	29.8
65 years and over	598	639	6.7	4.3	4.2

## According to work status:

Self-employed	1,821	2,803	53.8	13.0	14.7
Part-time fishermen	858	10	-98.8	6.1	0.1
Functionaries, officials, civil servants, etc.	3,476	4,379	26.0	24.8	29.7
Workers	7,872	8,159	3.6	56.1	59.2

continued.....



a) FAROE ISLANDS: COMPARATIVE SURVEY BY POPULATION AND OCCUPATIONALGROUPINGS IN 1966 AND 1970

	CENSUS		% change	% of the whole represented	
	1966	1970	1966-70	1966	1970
<u>Whole Population</u>	37,122	38,612	4.0	100.0	100.0
<u>According to economic sector:</u>					
Fishing	8,950	8,242	-7.9	24.1	21.4
Agriculture & market gardening	1,178	935	-20.6	3.2	2.4
Fish processing industry	1,639	1,402	-14.5	4.4	3.6
Other manufacturing industries	9,757	10,094	3.5	26.3	26.1
Commerce and trade	2,902	3,500	20.6	7.8	9.1
Transport etc.	4,141	4,255	2.8	11.1	11.0
Administration, liberal professions	2,844	3,583	26.0	7.7	9.3
Service trades	592	646	9.1	1.6	1.7
Unclassified occupations	933	1,429	53.2	2.5	3.7
Property, interest, rentiers, pensioners	4,186	4,526	8.1	11.3	11.7
Total of working population	14,027	14,751	5.2	37.8	38.2
Total of non-working population	23,095	23,861	3.3	62.2	61.8
<u>According to sex:</u>					
Men	11,610	11,705	0.8	82.8	79.4
Women	2,417	3,046	26.0	17.2	20.6
(Married women)	727	1,238	70.3	5.2	8.4
<u>According to age:</u>					
14-19 years	2,232	1,930	-13.5	15.9	13.1
20-24 years	1,992	2,015	1.2	14.2	13.7
25-44 years	3,962	5,774	45.7	28.2	39.1
45-64 years	5,243	4,393	-16.2	37.4	29.8
65 years and over	598	639	6.9	4.3	4.3
<u>According to work status:</u>					
Self-employed	1,821	2,203	21.0	13.0	14.9
Part-time fishermen	858	10	-98.8	6.1	0.1
Functionaries, officials, civil servants, etc.	3,476	4,379	26.0	24.8	29.7
Workers	7,872	8,159	3.6	56.1	55.3

Kildes: Folke-og boligtilværet 1966 og 1970.

(Folkets og Bopælens Censuser 1966 og 1970)

continued.....



continued...

continued...

	CENSUS		% Change	% of the whole represented	
	1966	1970	1966-70	1966	1970
<u>According to occupational group</u>					
<u>/industry:</u>					
Fishing	3,491	3,207	-8.1	24.9	21.7
Agriculture & mkt gardening	430	362	-15.8	3.1	2.5
Mining & quarrying, etc.	118	309	-7.6	0.8	0.7
Fish processing industry	718	627	-12.7	5.1	4.3
Other manufacturing industries	2,201	2,366	7.5	15.7	16.0
Building and construction	1,509	1,470	-2.6	10.8	10.0
Public Works	88	94	6.8	0.6	0.6
Commerce and trade	1,443	1,814	25.7	10.3	12.3
Transport, etc.	1,621	1,633	0.7	11.5	11.1
Public administration	376	431	14.6	2.7	2.9
Teaching, libraries, the Church	480	635	32.3	3.4	4.3
Health service, social welfare etc.	504	648	28.6	3.6	4.4
Other liberal professions & arts	67	102	52.2	0.5	0.7
Service trades	420	462	10.0	3.0	3.1
Unclassified occupations	561	791	41.0	4.0	5.4

Kilde: Folke-og boligtaellingerne 1966 og 1970.  
(Source: People and Housing Census 1966 and 1970)



FAROE ISLANDSCOMMENTS on the findings of the survey of comparative data 1966 & 1970

There was a growth in the working part of the population; in 1966 the economically active groups constituted 37.8% of the total Faroese population and in 1970 it was 38.2%. This growth was due to a steady increase in the proportion of married women coming onto the job market.

On the other hand members of the age groups 14-19 years constituted a falling proportion of the workforce. This is connected with the extension of the period spent in full time schooling and education generally.

With increased diversification in the economy and the very marked disappearance of the traditional part-time fishermen other sectors are becoming increasingly important. The self-employed, co-operatives, as well as a growing number of officials and public employees are forming a larger element in the workforce.

Entrepreneurs and business groups point to a decline in the numbers of people employed or engaged in the fishing and fish processing industries, likewise agriculture, mining, etc. and to the rapid growth in the numbers of those employed in administration and the liberal professions, as well as in commerce and the distributive trades.

These two developments - 1) the falling number of those engaged in primary economic occupations such as agriculture and fishing, and 2) the rising number engaged in tertiary occupations like administration, liberal professions and the arts and a variety of services - are well known in themselves to most people in modern society.



The fall in the numbers of those engaged in primary production does not necessarily mean that these economic groups diminish in their significance and importance to the community even though their percentage contribution towards the gross national product lessens. Frequently it is the healthy condition of these groups founded on a rationalised base with steady and constant production which provide the scope for more employment in other sectors of the economy.

ARBOG FOR FAERØERNE 1978 p.p. 52 & 53 translated.

Published jointly by the Faroese administration and the (Danish) Commissioner for the Faroes.

ISBN 87-503-2894-8

Stougaard Jensen, Copenhagen.



b) MALTA: COMPARATIVE SURVEY OF POPULATION BY SEX AND OCCUPATIONALGROUPING IN 1976 AND 1978

Section	<u>1976</u>			<u>1978</u>		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
<b>MALTA GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>						
Departments	16,242	4,061	20,303	15,751	4,057	19,808
Public Corporations except Drydocks	1,206	181	1,387	1,246	173	1,419
Armed Forces Malta	634	-	634	806	-	806
Malta Pioneer Corps	7,601	275	7,876	6,600	98	6,698
<u>TOTAL</u>	25,683	4,517	30,200	24,403	4,328	28,731
<b>BRITISH SERVICE DEPARTMENTS</b>						
Industrial	2,571	168	2,739	1,288	51	1,339
Non-Industrial & H.M. Forces	590	-	590	306	-	306
<u>TOTAL</u>	3,161	168	3,329	1,594	51	1,645
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>						
Agriculture*	5,391	1,174	6,565	5,737	768	6,505
Fishing*	743	6	749	827	5	832
Oil drilling	272	7	279	196	28	224
Stone quarrying & clay pits	375	-	375	454	5	459
Manufacturing Industries:-						
Food (except beverages)	1,720	496	2,216	1,754	441	2,195
Beverages	1,038	231	1,269	1,020	205	1,225
Tobacco	145	339	484	151	375	526
Textiles	1,074	2,336	3,410	1,243	2,304	3,547
Footwear and other wearing apparel	1,502	4,837	6,339	1,635	6,245	7,880
Wood and Cork	69	16	85	21	1	22
Furniture and fixtures	1,720	112	1,832	2,408	96	2,504
Manufacture of Paper and paper products	211	60	271	234	84	318
Printing, publishing and allied industries	900	573	1,473	1,004	483	1,487



Section	<u>1976</u>			<u>1978</u>		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Leather and leather products	544	482	1,026	665	640	1,305
Rubber products	813	249	1,062	808	229	1,037
Chemical & chemical produce	499	341	840	542	554	1,096
Non-metallic mineral produce	925	37	962	918	40	958
Metal products	951	97	1,048	1,125	133	1,258
Mfr of machinery	574	37	611	941	51	992
Electrical machinery	543	1,491	2,034	679	1,474	2,153
Transport equipment	6,548	130	6,678	7,176	159	7,335
Misc. industries	699	857	1,556	1,152	923	2,075
Construction	4,026	25	4,051	4,519	40	4,559
Wholesale & retail trade	8,288	3,596	11,884	8,084	3,586	11,670
Banks & other financial instit.	859	427	1,286	1,056	590	1,646
Insurance	105	77	182	138	84	222
Real Estate	275	99	374	151	119	270
Transport	4,026	424	4,450	5,001	541	5,542
Storage & Warehousing	104	16	120	124	35	159
Communications	1,045	125	1,170	1,411	118	1,529
Community & Business Services	1,356	1,418	2,774	2,219	1,798	4,017
Recreation Services	706	114	820	744	137	881
Personal services	4,724	3,854	8,578	5,351	3,874	9,225
Diplomatic missions	78	58	136	81	57	138
TOTAL	52,848	24,141	76,989	59,569	26,222	85,791
GRAND TOTAL OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED POPULATION	81,692	28,826	110,518	85,566	30,601	116,167
TOTAL MALTESE POPULATION	146,571	157,613	304,184	150,872	160,549	311,421

SOURCE: Department of Labour and Emigration.

see notes to table overleaf.



NOTES: Figures are based on a Manpower Survey held each November.

\*Figures derived from Census of Agriculture and Fisheries. Part-time farmers and fishermen and workers are not included.

✱ Except furniture and woodwork in connection with the building industry.

✱ Made up of 2,334 members in the Malta Pioneer Corps, 4,250 (275 females) in the Dirghajn il-Maltin, 386 in Izrau Rabbi Organisation and 906 auxiliary workers, in 1976; whilst in 1978 there were 1,651 members in the M.P.C.: 3,861 (98 females) in the D.I.M. 372 in the Izrau Rabbi Organisation, 801 auxiliary workers and 13 members in the Revenue Security Corps.

### Explanatory Notes

Employment statistics in Malta are based on information collected by the Department of Labour on reports by Government Departments, Public Corporations and up to 1971 on those submitted by Labour Officers who compiled data on Employment in Private Industry in the course of regular inspections carried out in the enforcement of labour legislation. Manpower surveys carried out by the Department of Labour provided data from 1972 to 1977 although these did not cover employment status, wages, and hours of work, which were still compiled from the Labour Officers' Inspection Reports. Data for 1978 were still derived from a count of the workbooks at the Labour Department during November.

The Gainfully Occupied Population up to 1971 comprised all persons in employment in Government Departments, Public Corporation or Defence Establishments on 31st December and those at work in the Private Sector at the time of the Labour Officers' inspection over different periods of the year. In Manpower Surveys held since 1972 data were collected of all persons in employment in all sectors as at mid-November. From 1972 onwards the number of workers in Agriculture and Fisheries was based on data collected in the Annual Agricultural and Fisheries Census held in October/November. In previous years the Agricultural Census provided



data on Agricultural employment whilst the figures for Fishing were an estimate computed by the Department of Agriculture. The Gainfully Occupied Population includes all persons of sixteen years and over, who are either own-account workers, self-employed persons, wage/salaried employees or unpaid family members. Part-time farmers are not included. All civilians and Maltese Military personnel in Defence Establishments are included but foreign servicemen are excluded.

Malta's economic development, tourism and building up and the island's infrastructure had been greatly strengthened. Many lessons had been learned during the course of the first five years and the experience was incorporated within the second plan which ran from 1964 to 1969. Manufacturing industry, whilst remaining the largest single sector of development lost ground to tourism and agriculture. The allocations of development finance were greatly increased in these last two sectors.

As the pace of economic development quickened emigration steadily declined from 6,090 in 1963 to 1,624 in 1975. During the late 1960's and early 1970's the largest growth area in the Maltese economy was tourism which gave a considerable impetus to the local construction,

Extract from 'Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978'

- Department of Information, Valletta.

the fact that the number of manufacturing units in the islands have steadily increased.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Pius Camilleri, (Director of Information at the Malta High Commission, London) in the provision of much of this data.

Two factors which illustrate this are respectively the decline in the numbers emigrating and the way in which the transition from a situation where the greatest part of the employment available on the island was absorbed by the British Defence establishment to the total closure of the military bases has been successfully achieved without major economic problems.



COMMENTARY

During the 1950's and 1960's efforts to diversify the Maltese economy were made by the British. These efforts were intensified following the granting of full independence to Malta and as the run down of the British military establishment was speeded up. By the end of the first five year plan in 1964 some new industries had been established, the Malta Drydocks nationalised, tourism was building up and the islands' industrial infrastructure had been greatly strengthened. Many lessons had been learned during the course of the first five years and the experience was incorporated within the second plan which ran from 1964 to 1969. Manufacturing industry, whilst remaining the largest single sector of development lost ground to tourism and agriculture. The allocations of development finance were greatly increased in these last two sectors.

As the pace of economic development quickened emigration steadily declined from 8,090 in 1965 to 1,624 in 1975. During the late 1960's and early 1970's the largest growth area in the Maltese economy was tourism which gave a considerable impetus to the local construction, crafts, agricultural, and service industries. The spectacular growth of the tourist industry should not, however, be allowed to obscure the fact that the number of manufacturing units in the islands have steadily increased.

Over the last decade and a half the Maltese have had some considerable success in diversifying forms of employment. Two factors which illustrate this are respectively the decline in the numbers emigrating and the way in which the transition from a situation where the greatest part of the employment available on the islands was derived from British defence spending to the total closure of the British bases has been successfully achieved without major economic problems arising.



c) THE ISLE OF MAN:i) COMPARATIVE SURVEY OF WORKING POPULATION BY SEX AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPINGS IN 1966 AND 1976

	1966			1976		
	Male	Female	TOTAL	Male	Female	TOTAL
Population of working age	18,285	22,442	40,727	22,328	25,781	48,109
Population economically inactive	4,448	16,076	20,524	6,849	17,982	24,831
Population economically active	13,837	6,366	20,203	15,479	7,799	23,278
<u>Category by selected occupational grouping. (i)</u>						
Agriculture & Fisheries	1,829	40	1,869	1,456	93	1,549
Mines & Quarries	45	-	45	31	-	31
Glass & Ceramics	9	2	11	22	13	35
Furnace Forges Foundries*	74	-	74	29	1	30
Electrical & Electronic	435	9	444	527	12	539
Engineering & allied trades	1,078	35	1,113	1,750	107	1,857
Woodworkers	560	9	569	687	6	693
Leather workers	39	13	52	38	92	130
Textiles	116	140	256	35	71	106
Clothing	43	59	102	21	81	102
Food & Drink	387	109	496	381	122	503
Paper & Printing	115	7	122	139	20	159
Other Manufacturers	32	18	50	167	71	238
Construction	508	3	511	1,011	4	1,015
Painting & Decorating	317	1	318	406	1	407
Engineering Plant	80	3	83	153	-	153
Other Labourers	1,392	121	1,513	1,034	28	1,062
Transport & Communication	1,435	121	1,556	1,573	91	1,664
Warehousemen, Packers etc	245	45	290	264	98	362
Clerical Workers	972	983	1,955	1,202	1,928	3,130
Sales Workers	1,147	1,028	2,175	1,271	1,217	2,488
Services Sports , Recreation	1,432	2,826	4,258	1,340	2,224	3,564
Administration & Management	666	20	686	716	111	827
Professional, Technical, Artists	816	768	1,584	1,171	1,406	2,577
Armed Forces (U.K.)	56	4	60	45	1	46
Inadequately described occupations	9	2	11	10	1	11
<u>All occupations</u>	<u>13,837</u>	<u>6,366</u>	<u>20,203</u>	<u>15,479</u>	<u>7,799</u>	<u>23,278</u>

\*The 1966 figures include Gas, Coke, & Chemical makers not listed in the 1976 Census.

(i) Derived from 'Classification of Occupations' 1960 & 1970

SOURCE: Isle of Man Census 1966 and 1976 Reports  
I.O. M. Government Offices.



THE ISLE OF MAN:(ii) OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF EMPLOYMENT

<u>Occupation</u> *	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Professional & Technical Workers	2,268	1,251	1,017
Administrative & Managerial Workers	3,398	2,624	774
Teachers	673	276	397
Clerical Workers, Commercial Travellers	3,167	1,186	1,981
Shop Assistants	1,308	319	989
Manual Workers - skilled	6,096	5,526	570
" " - semi skilled	4,429	3,101	1,328
" " - unskilled	1,882	1,141	741
Members of H.M. Forces	46	45	1
Unclassified elsewhere	11	10	1
All Occupations	23,278	15,479	7,799

(\*) Based upon a sociological and occupational classification used by the United Kingdom Department of Employment.

SOURCE: Treasury, Isle of Man Census 1976 Report.



(iii) ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR  
1976 - SHOWING DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO SEX, AGE GROUP  
AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

ISLE OF MAN INDUSTRIAL SECTORS	LABOUR FORCE		SECTOR TOTAL AS % OF WORKFORCE	SELF EMPLOYED PERSONS*	AGE GROUPS BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR					
	MALE	FEMALE			TOTAL	15-24 25-44 45-59 60+				
						15-24	25-44	45-59	60+	
1. Agriculture Forestry and fishing	1,186	92	1,278	5.49	576	240	490	366	182	
2. Manufacturing: food & drink	375	174	549	2.36	11	114	238	143	54	
3. Manufacturing: engineering	1,098	200	1,298	5.58	43	244	570	348	136	
4. Manufacturing: textiles, clothing & footwear	130	263	393	1.69	8	121	130	105	37	
5. Manufacturing: other, mining & quarrying	553	162	715	3.07	37	143	290	187	95	
6. Construction	3,186	100	3,286	14.11	607	657	1,579	736	314	
7. Gas electricity & water	479	50	529	2.28	-	89	200	165	75	
8. Transport & communication	1,862	254	2,116	9.09	128	298	911	661	246	
9. Wholesale distribution	739	177	916	3.94	52	168	372	253	124	
10 Retail distribution	1,245	1,388	2,633	11.31	466	545	897	818	373	
11. Insurance banking, finance & business services	671	502	1,173	5.04	76	336	462	255	120	
12. Professional, educational, medical & scientific ser.	1,308	2,193	3,501	15.04	299	535	1,452	1,095	418	
13. Tourist Accommodation	486	638	1,124	4.83	359	192	469	315	148	
14. Other catering and entertainment	491	418	909	3.91	146	174	367	245	123	
15. Miscellaneous services	890	894	1,784	7.66	195	413	593	498	280	
16. Public admin. & defence n.e.c.	780	294	1,074	4.61	7	205	435	329	105	
					9					
	15,479	7,799	23,278	100.0	3,019	4,474	9,455	6,518	2,831	

\*These are included in the figures for the total labour force but also shown separately in this column.  
n.e.c. = not elsewhere classified

SOURCE:- Compiled from various tables in the Isle of Man Census 1976 Further Report.



COMMENTARY

The significant changes in the Island's economic structure in the course of the last two decades have, of course, had repercussions on the labour force. As is inevitable and indeed desirable in a dynamic economy, this has meant that there has been a shift in the relative importance of differing categories of employment.

For example, in the period 1951-76 agriculture declined significantly as an employer of labour, as did tourism. The decline of these traditional areas of economic activity has been balanced by a growth in other areas (but it might be noted that the labour force has grown only very slightly in spite of the fact that the population of the island is significantly higher now than in 1951 following its decline through the 1950's). Among these growth areas, particularly since 1961, there has been a wide range of jobs in manufacturing, construction and the professions (this last has been a particular area of expansion for female employment).

Over the years in question levels of female economic activity have fluctuated about an upward trend, although it is still the case that the proportion of women of working age in employment is relatively low if compared, for instance, with the United Kingdom.

Extract from 'Isle of Man Digest of Economic and Social Statistics 1979'

Printed (by Authority) by I.O.M. Government Reprographic  
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