

RECRUITMENT CRISIS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

We read in a leader of the 'Times of Malta' of the 31st May 1968 that the Society of Administrative and Executive Civil Servants had presented to Government last December a scheme regarding recruitment into the Service. The leader said: 'If adopted, the scheme would not only be of benefit to the institution itself, but an asset to the "new" Malta in general'.

This reorganization scheme postulates a new system of recruitment based on the absorption of University graduates, and the elimination of the old Executive Officers' open examination which has lost its former standing.

Given the right type of University education, the implementation of such a scheme would be a step forward towards the realization of international standards of administration and the creation in the island of an intelligentsia having a broad and modern outlook. In Europe it is axiomatic that an Administrative Officer has got to have a University education.

The Civil Service as we know it in Malta was intended to serve the needs of a colonial government, but after Independence it has found itself with tremendous responsibilities thrust upon it, ranging from economic planning and the Island's development to the management of its foreign affairs. Civil Servants are now finding it necessary to read textbooks on political theory and economics.

A healthy outlook on the responsibilities of government, on the relations between Church and State, on international relations can only be the product of a higher education that, in Malta, is normally available at the University and M.C.A.S.T. — which incidentally are both badly in need of increasing the number of students and teaching staff. If the leadership of the Malta Government, and consequently that of private industry and commerce, will be recruited in time from the University and Polytechnic, our country will be on a par with its European counterparts in this respect. The whole intellectual and political outlook of the nation might change for the better as a result of enlightened graduates and specialists occupying key positions in the machinery of the State.

It seems it cannot now be said with any justice that the highest ranking Civil Servants are against the principle of a graduate Civil Service. The S.A.E.C.S., which is made up of non-graduate Civil Servants, is fighting for it tooth and nail. If Malta fails to get such a Service in a reasonably short time, it will be the Government's fault, and Government could hardly deserve the right to present Malta's case to the European Community. No European country is truly European if it lacks European standards in its system of recruitment to the higher Civil Service.

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