

are least likely to have is seismic.

True, the pattern differences between earthquakes and nuclear explosions are easy to discern if the waves are received strong and clear. But the waves lose their identity at lower levels. True, there is an international network of seismic receiving stations. But there are also a large number of unidentified seismic events every year. Signals are confused in the natural noise of the earth, and many events simply escape seismic detection.

Moreover, tests are now usually identified because of their known location near a test site, or because of other

identifying information. Tests conducted in hard rock are more easily identified than those detonated in soft earth, and it makes a big difference whether the test takes place above or below the water table. Shifting the test to previously unused areas of different geologic composition or into seismically active regions would make accurate seismic detection much more difficult and uncertain. Finally, tests can be camouflaged in real earthquakes, multiple detonations can be designed to simulate earthquakes, and nuclear explosions can be set off in large "decoupling" cavities such as salt

domes and even contained in large steel spheres.

The United States would find it hard to detect such tests, and even if they were detected we would have much greater difficulty identifying them. Should the U.S. discover what it believed to be a covert Soviet test, it would be hard to pinpoint the exact location, and to provide sufficient proof to convince a world which did not wish to see violations that indeed a violation had already occurred. What remedy would be available to the United States if the Soviet Union refused to acknowledge its violation

and also refused to permit onsite inspection? As long as the Soviet Union insists that onsite inspection is essentially voluntary, on a case-by-case basis, and requires seismic evidence to support an inspection request, non-seismic intelligence will be of limited value to enforce a comprehensive test ban treaty.

In the absence of clear and unambiguous safeguards including guaranteed onsite verification, issues that are still unresolved despite more than a quarter century of effort, a nuclear test ban is not in the best interest of the United States or of the free world. □

SPECTATOR'S JOURNAL

THE MALTESE FALTER

by William McGurn

Valetta, Malta—In a country known for its *festi*, or religious festivals, Easter week in Malta is one of the more colorful, with each parish trying to outdo its neighbor. Thus Mosta boasts a solemn Good Friday procession of biblical characters and holy statues, followed by hooded, white-robed

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penitentes slogging through the streets with heavy chains tied to their feet, while on Easter Sunday the men in another parish heave a life-size statue of Christ in the air to signify He is Risen. Amid the celebrations the tourist might be hard-pressed to find any dark shadows falling on this tiny, sun-drenched island sixty miles to the south of Sicily.

But at the same time the pious Maltese were preparing for Easter their unelected prime minister, Carmelo

Mifsud Bonnici, was making a pilgrimage to Tripoli. There he told Muammar Qaddafi that the Maltese were "one with the people of Libya" during this "grave hour"—i.e., the skirmish with the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Gulf of Sidra. If the tourist looked a bit closer, he would find other disquieting signs. The Grand Harbor that once played host to Phoenician trading galleys and as recently as 1979 served as a strategic British port now caters to Soviet tankers. Opening up the socialist daily, he would find an advertisement for Libyan mercenaries to fight against "U.S. aggression" (*before* the strike against Qaddafi). Further inland, the visitor might be surprised to find a branch office of the Palestine Liberation Organization, a police force armed and trained by the North Koreans, and an alarming number of Libyan males of military age.

Welcome to Malta, problem child of the Mediterranean.

In its move toward the Soviets and the "non-aligned" bloc, tiny Malta is rumbling down the same path that has proved so disastrous for other erstwhile European colonies. But in this country, where the British are still popular, the violent lurch belies a long and noble tradition as a Western bastion. Only four decades ago this little island stood alone in the entire Mediterranean against a ferocious air attack by the Axis powers, a display of fortitude that earned the Maltese the King George Cross that today adorns their flag. Some four centuries before that this same island—with a handful of armed knights and a few thousand locals—

repulsed the vastly superior forces of the Sultan of Turkey in a victory that set church bells a-ringing even in the Protestant England of Elizabeth I. Called the Great Siege, the battle reversed the direction of history in favor of Christian Europe.

Today Malta is in the midst of a second siege on the Western way of life, but this time from within. The lion's share of the credit for the country's slide from democracy and its newfound kinship with folks like Kim Il Sung and Colonel Qaddafi (both of whom have been decorated with Malta's highest honor) belongs to its prime minister until 1985, Dom Mintoff. A Rhodes scholar, Mintoff was said to have ruled the island with the contempt of a colonial governor, and this description was lent credence by the successor he chose to inflict on his people, his education minister, Mifsud Bonnici. Having led his people from a robust democracy to the fringes of the collectivist Promised Land, Mintoff has left it to Mifsud Bonnici to cross the Jordan.

No doubt there is a dash of malice in this choice, considering that the humorless Mifsud Bonnici early in his career backed the island's reactionary archbishop, the late Michael Gonzi, in the latter's efforts to deny the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church to Mintoff and other Labor party leaders, this in what is probably Europe's most devout country. "You have to understand that Mintoff is a rogue," says one supporter of the opposition Nationalist party. "Mifsud Bonnici, on the other hand, has merely switched religions. He is as zealous for socialism today as he was for Christianity twenty years ago." Nicknamed

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"Dr. Zero" by his opponents because he has never been elected to any office, Mifsud Bonnici is feared because he appears to believe all the nonsense Mintoff spouted just to attract attention.

For the unfortunate souls who have had to endure his Labor party, however, it matters not whether Mintoff was opportunist or ideologue. The bottom line is still a smorgasbord of Marxist-inspired programs administered with all the delicacy of a Chicago pimp. Thus has Malta seen its one university brought to heel, a worker/student plan from China's Cultural Revolution adopted, links with the Soviet bloc and the Arabs fostered, a PLO office opened, the Israeli *chargé d'affaires* shot at and that embassy closed, the country's largest trade union legally incorporated into the Labor party, and the sole independent newspaper—the pro-Western *Times* of Malta—looted and burnt down by a Labor mob.

Two years ago Mintoff started a row with the local church over the latter's school system, which he said had to be

free. During the ensuing confrontation (which is still unresolved) it was Mifsud Bonnici who as education and deputy prime minister did the most to fan the flames. At one point he delivered a rousing speech to a mob of dockworkers (many brandishing weapons) and led them through the streets of this capital city, where a group then attacked the church curia—just ten yards from the police station—desecrating altars and ransacking the archbishop's office. Though Mifsud Bonnici disclaims any responsibility, he did tell me at the time that the attack was "fortunate" if it persuaded people to think twice about bucking the will of the Labor party. Recently, too, he said that he was ready to take to the streets again.

That's not the sort of thing that shows up in the government's newsletter sent abroad, especially with elections a year away and Mifsud Bonnici badly in need of Western money to patch up the economy his ruling party

has done so much to wreck. Nor does this newsletter focus on the military treaty with Libya, which some fear might be invoked to ensure a Labor victory next time around. Already locals are talking about "taking" a victory à la Corazon Aquino should the government try to steal it again. "The problem may come," says one Maltese, "when Mifsud Bonnici finds he cannot win an election but realizes he can still govern."

Fueling such fears are the prime minister's past statements that elections might be "useless and baseless." This kind of talk, together with the nasty harassment of opposition voices, has attracted the unwanted attention of foreign journalists and human-rights delegations from the European Parliament to the Helsinki watchers, and matters were not helped last year when Mifsud Bonnici clapped into prison an Italian Christian Democrat politician on the island to give a speech. Nor is it alleviated by something called the "Foreign Interference Act," a law that can be used against foreign journalists

reporting in Malta and which some believe might be invoked as an excuse for suspending the next elections. Given too that the Labor party lost the last one but still managed through some crude gerrymandering to carve out a three-seat majority in the 65-seat parliament; one ought not underestimate the lengths to which this party will go to stay in power.

Adding to this fear is that unlike other Third World-style demagogues, Mifsud Bonnici gives no evidence of the traditional vices open to those in power: wine, women, or riches. He still lives quietly at home with his brother, a priest, and is known to be ruthlessly scrupulous about personal gain. In other words, apart from the outright toppling of the Libyan strength behind him, there is nothing this world has to offer that might keep the prime minister of this strategic island-paradise from turning it into the Cuba of the Mediterranean—except for his own better judgment.

And that of course is just what has the rest of us so worried. □

AMONG THE INTELLECTUALOIDS



FAST TIMES ON PARLIAMENT HILL

by Malcolm Gladwell

On March 10 of this year, after a hearty breakfast of three eggs, four slices of toast, cheese, orange juice, and coffee, Jacques Hébert took his red sleeping bag and three bottles of Perrier and lay down in the foyer of the Canadian Senate building in Ottawa. There he would remain for three weeks, holding court, receiving visitors, granting interviews—but never eating. For the Prime Minister of Canada had tried to cut Hébert's favorite government program, and Jacques Hébert—Senator Jacques Hébert of the Parliament's Upper House—was on a hunger strike.

There have been other, more spectacular hunger strikes of course. In 1981 IRA terrorist Bobby Sands languished in a Northern Ireland cell for 66 days. But Sands was a young man disciplined by conflict. Hébert is a

62-year-old with a history of heart trouble. Although his friends spoke poignantly of his strength and commitment—"Jacques has the drive of a pioneer and the strength of a bull. He can move mountains to get what he wants"—it was clear they were worried. By March 21 Hébert's heartbeat was irregular. Three days later he admitted to feeling weak for the first time—"tired, but alive." As his weight plummeted, Hébert's physician, Dr. Byron Hyde, instituted daily urine tests. Two doctors trained in Chinese massage techniques were called in to help the Senator deal with increasingly worrisome bouts of insomnia.

Was it worth it? Many close to the scene had their doubts. At stake was only a \$20 million relic from the Trudeau era, an "outward bound"-style jobs program for youth, called Katimavik. Hébert's party leader John Turner counseled an end to the protest, and a television poll showed that an overwhelming majority of Canadians felt the same way. Novelist Mordecai

Richler called Hébert a pretentious bore. Prime Minister Mulroney answered Hébert's *cri de coeur* on behalf of Canadian youth with a one-sentence form letter thanking the Senator for his interest in the problem. And when Hébert's mentor, Pierre Trudeau, finally showed up, he told reporters that his visit was only a "photo opportunity" and went straight to lunch.

But Hébert was insistent. Flanked day and night by his trusted personal aide Guy de Grandpré, a staffer from his office, his doctors, and a battery of cameras and newsmen, he invoked memories of Mahatma Gandhi. He knew his cause was just and that the public support was there, even if no one else did: "I see the numbers of letters published in the newspapers. That's a sign." He had faith that others would soon sense the importance of his mission: "There must be a Gallup poll that will be taken any time, I presume." "If need be, Jacques will be prepared to go all the way," Dr. Hyde told reporters.

"But not to the point of death. I don't think he would go to that point because he wouldn't be able to come back and fight again."

Today the deadly game of chicken is over. The Mulroney government made Hébert a face-saving offer, that, after twenty-one days on the hard marble floor of the Senate lobby, he could not refuse. A special committee of prominent politicians, academics, and dignitaries has been set up to look for ways to revive Katimavik. Some have suggested that the program become a non-profit corporation, and others that it be expanded to include not just unemployed youth but also retired civil servants and suburban housewives. What is more likely, however, is that the whole matter will just quietly fade away.

Hébert tried to maintain that Katimavik was of critical importance, but it was really just an adventure, an extended summer camp for a few thous-

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