Employment

In our Electoral Programme we promised to continue our efforts to create more work and new jobs with the final aim of full employment in the shortest possible time.

The Malta Labour Party on their part promised to give employment within three months of election; and such promise, however fantastic, went down well with the gullible.

The latest figures of unemployed show that 7,956 are registering for employment. These consist of 4,691 men, whereof 455 are over the age of 60; 1,419 women, 1,094 boys and 752 girls.

These figures are considered high representing as they do about 10% of the gainfully occupied population, and Government would be failing in its duties towards the Electorate if it did not do something drastic and very soon to reduce this percentage to a negligible proportion.

I am therefore to propose that Government should study the introduction of some crash development programme which would absorb as many of the persons registered for employment as possible, and especially the men, and thus bridge the gap between now and the time when the new industries, the new hotels and the tourist industry as a whole would have provided enough jobs all round.

I am also to propose the introduction of courses where unemployed men would be trained in occupations which are in short supply in spite of the present unemployment. I am referring in particular to occupations in the building industry which, although booming, is hampered by the lack of skilled and semi-skilled operatives. In order to make training attractive, trainees would be paid an adequate remuneration. In accordance with the provisions of the National Assistance Act, such remuneration would be deductable in full from any social assistance which may be in payment to the trainee if he is the head of the household, and to the extent of 50% if the trainee is a dependant in a household in receipt of social assistance.

Honourable Ministers are requested to agree to practical steps to give immediate effect to the recommendation.

21.7.66.