

Art. 23 Times

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PRIMELY PRECEDENTS

Only one primely author has his titles starting in pr- in Malta. Arbitrarily allowing myself to break such household spell it is in this way that I introduce my article of such author's latest primely precedents ... political precedents. The last 11th March elections have made him whose political practice has been profusely underestimated the party leader with a number of unprecedented electoral victories in Maltese politics. No matter how fervently political foes attempt to peter out such conquests, Alfred Sant has shown that "the final proof of greatness lies in being able to endure continuously without resentment."

With the last Local Council results some of the achievements secured can be hereby enlisted. These were:

- The fourth consecutive electoral victory for MLP since 2004 the first one being the relative 48.42% victory in EP elections.
- Beyond the EP relative majority, thus, this is the third absolute majority victory on a local level since 2004. In the 2004 elections MLP obtained 50.2% of the vote. In 2005 a 53.2% absolute majority and in 2006 a 53.95% absolute majority.
- This year's was also the first absolute majority obtained on the respective set of 23 localities most of which are (or were always considered to be) PN strongholds not only since 1993 (creation of the local councils elections) but also since 1950 general elections
- The extra relevance of the 2006 vote lies in the fact that it is also the highest non-PN percentage ever obtained in Local Council elections in at least 14 of the said 23 localities since 1993, namely : Birkirkara, Fgura, Lija, Marsaskala, Mdina, Msida, Mtarfa, Naxxar, San Gwann, Sliema, Tarxien, Xaghjra, Zabbar and Victoria (Gozo). One has to keep in mind the fact that as from 1993 until 1998, MLP didn't contest as a party to local elections and therefore the pro-MLP was not all too evident.
- The 2006 also triggered the lowest PN percentages ever obtained as from 1993 in 14 of the localities. These are Birkirkara, Gudja, Lija, Marsaskala, Mdina, Msida, Mtarfa, Rabat (Malta), San Gwann, Sliema, Tarxien, Xaghjra, Zabbar and Sannat.
- If we had to add the 2004, 2005 and 2006 results we would come up with an average for MLP majority as it stands today of 52.4%. This would mean the highest MLP majority

obtained since 1955 by Mintoff in any given general election. As the trend indicates when the 2007 elections take place this average will most probably go up rather than down.

- Such 52.4% majority however would be above any absolute majority ever obtained by PN during its history.
- On the other hand, if we had to take the percentages showing PN support as it stands at present over all localities in Malta and Gozo and as it arises from the results of the 2004 (44%), 2005 (46%) and 2006 (42.9%) elections this would amount to 44.3%. This is the lowest percentage for PN in any general election since 1962.
- The 2006 elections have also provided the highest increase ever in the number of elected candidates for any of the major parties for any given year.
- Actually, this has resulted in an over-all absolute majority of local councillors (44 more than PN) and absolute majority of mayors (7 more than PN)
- These local council results have also provided us with the highest percentage difference of votes obtained by comparing the MLP-PN vote ever on a local level. This year's percentage difference stands at 11.05% in favour of MLP. The 9.12% obtained in favour of Labour in the 2005 Local Elections and the 8.66% also in favour of Labour resulting from the 2004 EP elections follow.

With such results PN is going to end up with a political disadvantage much like that experienced by MLP in 1998 after which of course it suffered an electoral defeat in the same year's general election. The 2007 and 2008 LC elections will definitely be also favourable to MLP although extent remains unpredictable.

PN has to survive the next two years with a large democratic deficit. Politically, an EP majority at the Brussels level and an absolute majority at the local level make the national government the odd-one-out. The Local Councils association has ended up with a bad democratic deficit where an absolute MLP majority is represented by an absolute minority. Finally, such undemocratic structures would only serve to stir more anger and suspicion in the public as long as they last. The same goes to government's insistence on the actualization of the Sliema, Marsascala and Sannat (Ta' Cenc) projects. A ruthless government, persistent in its anti-environmental goals, is all that is needed to stamp once and for all traditional PN supporters as MLP or AD supporters. The worst thing government could say is that there is nothing to worry about. But as long as it keeps on saying it there is definitely nothing to worry about ... for Sant.