**Pact between Muslims and Christians**

Stanley Fishlow (The Sunday Times, April 4) must acknowledge that there is no hard evidence for the existence of any dhimmi-type pact between Muslims and Christians for the whole Muslim period. The charge of the 869-870 AD period should simply rule out the very possibility of such a pact at that time.

Then, only constant vigilance and the presence of a garrison would have prevented the dhimmi-status Gozitans from crossing the sea to the safety of Malta and settling in Malta. And there would have been plenty of archaeological evidence for the existence of such a community throughout all those centuries down to 1127.

The relatively well-known pact of ca. 1148 was definitely not a dhimmi-type pact, as I have explained already in my previous letter and other writings. Christians were not involved, and both Al-Hamriy and Al-Qararini start off by stating that Malta was inhabited by Muslims, that the Gozitan population was then inhabited by Gozitans who were then inhabited by Saracens who were himself no doubt talking comprehensively of the whole Maltese archipelago and apparently unaware that there was a community of dhimmi-status Christians on the island of Gozo.

In 1191, Christian captives were found on Gozo and they were helped to leave the island by Jeffrey Roger. On Gozo, no Christians of any sort were reported by his people ashore on that island. The well-known agreement was reached between the local Muslim administration of Malta and Count Roger, but no provision was recorded to have been made for the practice of Christianity on either island, both of which were invaded by the Normans.

The Pact of Old that is reported in the poem must be the one of ca. 1148, thus also indicating that the practice of Christianity had long since died out on both islands and was only resumed in 1127 with the re-conquest of the islands by Count Roger II. The poem even manages to record the expulsion from the island in 1127 not only of the Gozitans but also of the dhimmi missionaries, the latter forcefully recalling to the reader the ghambis and their fate.

Ghambis were known to be outstanding Muslim warriors as both Al-Qararini and Al-Hamriy reported.

Ghambis were also described in the documents of the time as black mercenaries.

Incidentally, their expulsion in 1127 is the reason why there is no mention in this poem explaining why Malta was not left with the ethnic population of the entire island. The American history as the result of these events is black slavery on communities planted there by the white slavers of the sixteenth century. I have omitted all the falls in the ca. 140 pp. of the introduction to the book. If Professor Fishlow complains that I have not read the British system of law, that is exactly what I have been asked to do by omitting all reference not only to most of my main points, and also to the pact of 1148 itself in its two versions. He also strangely avoided any detailed examination of the nature of dhimmi pacts in general.

May I finally thank the three scholars for their strenuous labours which have enabled us to create a clearer idea of what the population of the Maltese islands was like in the ninth to thirteenth centuries, the period of the Crusades and anti-Crusades of ifhads in which Malta was involved. The introduction itself definitely needs more work, I think. In my opinion, much structural re-thinking and re-thinking is needed. St Julian's, Gudetta Wettstein

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**Reforming Matsec system would help students**

I am in my first year at University and can still remember with perfect clarity the heights of my A-levels were. I describe them as the epitome of my abilities. I was very fast and, when compared with other countries, ridiculously fast. This could not be compared by just looking at a Matsec pass-papers and Eden- cel or AQAs past-papers.

Our educational system used to be the best in the British system and, exactly as the title has it, was self-made. One has to mention that all students have a full control over the whole system. We can choose any school, any curriculum and any subject we want.

One can take an Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level in a subject and, if further interest is developed, it can literally be taken to the next level.

This could lead to students expecting more with different subjects and possibly encouraging them to choose subjects that could be conducive to their enjoyment of academic life.

However, the problem with grading always remains. I think that it may suit the British system of providing a variety of students' papers; however, Malta's current situation should be jointly set to offer a constant standard through Sixth Form College.

As for Systems of Knowledge (SKOK), I think that makes it 50 students to enrol in a country where there may only be 15 students who are the fact that it is compulsory.

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**A warning to those who follow the progressives**

Those who advocate responsible government spending should not protect those who consume a lot but do not declare their true income. The advocates by their pretend- ing to be in favour of transparency, yet keen on resorting to accountant- ing for their benefits, which have been distributed to the highest income- earners. It is like a morgue. I just don't want to go there anymore. What have they done to me? I am so used to that kind of abuse. I was reborn? In my opinion, but thank you for all that you've done for me and my sister walk tall for having been accepted by you lovely people.

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**Rubber band technology**

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**The pope's visit**

Somebody once said "With God nothing is impossible."

Was this a prophecy? MARX AND MARX