

Famous Portraits Series

Dom Mintoff

Prime Minister of Malta (1955-1958; 1971-1984)

Born: 6 August 1916 - Died: 20 August 2012 (Aged 96)



1. Mintoff as a student at the Seminary in 1928 (aged 12)



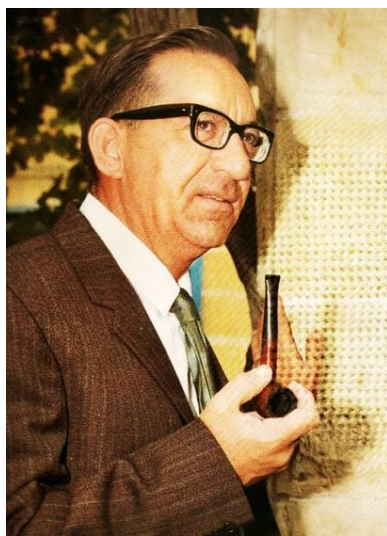
2. Dom Mintoff as General Secretary of the Labour Party (1935-1945)



3. Dom Mintoff as Prime Minister for the first time in (1955-1958) (aged 38-41)



4. Dom Mintoff as Leader of the Opposition in the 1960s (aged around 50)



5. Dom Mintoff as Prime Minister (1971-1984) (aged 55-68)



6. Dom Mintoff when he retired from active politics in 1998 (aged 82)

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Image credits:

1. [https://www.pinterest.cl/pin/702209766883969448/?amp_client_id=CLIENT_ID\(&mweb_unauth_id={{default.session}}&mp_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.cl%2F&pin%2F702209766883969448%2F](https://www.pinterest.cl/pin/702209766883969448/?amp_client_id=CLIENT_ID(&mweb_unauth_id={{default.session}}&mp_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.cl%2F&pin%2F702209766883969448%2F)
2. Pin on Dom Mintoff (pinterest.com)
3. Dom Mintoff - 1955 | MaltaToday | Flickr
4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/21/world/europe/dom-mintoff-proponent-of-maltese-independence-dies-at-96.html>
6. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2191512/Former-Maltese-PM-Dom-Mintoff-ended-countrys-200-year-military-link-Britain-dies-96.html>

Dom Mintoff was born in Cospicua. He attended the Government Elementary School and the Seminary, from which he proceeded to the Lyceum and the University of Malta. In 1939 he was awarded a Rhodes scholarship at the University of Oxford where he obtained his M.A. in Engineering Science.

During the years 1941-1943, Mintoff worked as a civil engineer in the UK, and as an architect in Malta from 1943 onwards. During 1943-1947 he was General Secretary of the Labour Party. In 1945, he was elected member of the Malta Council of Government. He was re-elected in 1947 and held the post of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Works and Reconstruction. He resigned in 1949 when he quarrelled with Prime Minister Paul Boffa.

Mintoff was then chosen to lead the newly set up Malta Labour Party in 1949. He was Prime Minister for the first time during the years 1955-1958. He resigned office in 1958 following the failure of his plan for Integration with the UK. He served as Leader of the Opposition during the years 1962-1971 during the quarrel with the Catholic hierarchy in Malta. The MLP won the general elections of 1971 and Mintoff became Prime Minister for the second time.

Mintoff's primary aim was that of securing peace and stability in Europe and the Mediterranean. To this end, he immediately asked for negotiations with the British Government for the closure of the British military base in Malta. Final agreement was reached following hard negotiations between September 1971 and March 1972 on a seven-year defence agreement with Britain.

Mintoff negotiated treaties of friendship and economic cooperation with China and with various Arab and Eastern European states, steered Malta in the Non-Aligned Movement, changed Malta from a constitutional monarchy (where the Queen of the United Kingdom was Malta's Head of State) to a republic in 1974 and established Malta as a neutral and non-aligned state in 1979.

In 1984, Mintoff resigned from Prime Minister and Leader of the Malta Labour Party, but kept his seat as a Labour MP to which he was re-elected in the general elections of 1987, 1992 and 1996. Mintoff's final act in politics was in 1998 when he abstained in a vote of confidence which brought down Prime Minister Alfred Sant's government over the Birgu yacht marina project.

After his retirement from politics, Mintoff was occasionally involved in public life, such as during the referendum campaign on Malta's membership in the EU in 2003 and following Alfred Sant's resignation as MLP leader in 2008 and the reapproachment with the new party leader Joseph Muscat.

Further reading:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dom_Mintoff
- Documentary in 12 parts: Dom Mintoff - Bijografiji Part 1/11 - YouTube
- Mintoff – il-bniedem u l-istorja, Mario Cutajar (Editor), SKS, 2012.
- Duminku Mintoff – Bejn Storja u Miti, Sergio Grech (Editor), Horizons, 2012.

Questions

1. Trace Dom Mintoff's early career in Maltese politics in the 1940s.
2. How did Mintoff become leader of the Malta Labour Party in 1949?
3. Briefly explain TWO arguments in favour of Mintoff's plan for Malta's Integration with the United Kingdom in the 1950s.
4. Identify TWO similarities and TWO differences between Mintoff's Integration proposal and Borg Olivier's Dominion Status.
5. Identify TWO domestic and TWO foreign policy issues which Dom Mintoff had to deal with when he was Prime Minister between 1971 and 1984.
6. How was Mintoff involved for the last time in Maltese politics in 1998?
7. Identify FOUR adjectives which best describe Mintoff's character and personality and give reasons for your answer.
8. In your opinion what was his greatest achievement and his greatest failure?