THE SUN

Immersion Project' inaugura

On February 28, the Minister of Education, Dr. Louis Gallois, and French Ambassador Didier Desrumaux inaugurated the French Immersion Project at the Franco-Maltese Centre at the Junior College, Malta. The centre, which forms part of the Curriculum Department of the Division of Education, is co-directed by Education Officer Frank Gatt.

In his address, Mr. Gatt dwelt on the development of the centre and how the present project came about. Mr. Gatt began by thanking all those producers who have done a very good job in promoting the French Resource Centre during the past six months, including the National Curriculum Project. He also thanked all those who have supported the project, not only financially but also through their participation in the centre.

"I believe that the centre as a whole has been a success," Mr. Gatt explained. "But we believe that it is only the beginning of a larger project that will have a positive impact on the Maltese education system. Our aim is to create a centre that will be a model for other centres in the region."

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However, Mr. Gatt wanted, "The project does not change itself. People change it. I was enthusiastic that I had thought of a very simple way to change it. How can we change it? We can help it, for the better. For there is always a moral purpose in positive change. If I think of today's education, to have this moral purpose, you need to become directors of positive change."

He went on to say that the key to change is vision, inquiry, collaboration and strategy.

"Personal purpose and vision are the staffing agenda. We need positive leaders in staffing forces. We know that our visions have been in the past and we have achieved them. We need to continue to take up your future challenges and present in our vision."

Mr. Gatt also thanked, "Our French partners who gave us all their trust and confidence and allowed us to pursue our vision."

He added, "It is a very small project in the Franco-Maltese Centre. It includes the Minister of Education, Dr. Louis Gallois, and French Ambassador Didier Desrumaux, who jointly inaugurated the Immersion Project."

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MR GATT addressing guests at the Franco-Maltese Centre. They include the Minister of Education, Dr. Louis Gallois, and the French Ambassador, Didier Desrumaux, who jointly inaugurated the Immersion Project.

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The ability to collaborate is becoming one of the core competencies of postmodern societies. It is an ancient discipline of personal management, of charismatic leadership, of bottom-up and top-down forms of management. It is a great skillset that produces disciples. This is why we are happy that our Francophone students are coming to the French Resource Centre to learn from our colleagues and friends. And I think I am for the right track."

"We are very proud of our students," Mr. Gatt said, "and we are proud of our colleagues and friends. We are very happy that our Francophone students are coming to the French Resource Centre to learn from our colleagues and friends. And I think I am for the right track."

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The staff at the FRM, the students, the teachers, the students. They all started to share their visions and they worked wholeheartedly towards the realization of the project, he said.

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"And a very special thanks to Mr. Raymond Parisi, subject co-ordinator, who suffered to the project from the very start and shared it with us through his years of hard work. And a very special thanks to Mr. Raymond Parisi, subject co-ordinator, who suffered to the project from the very start and shared it with us through his years of hard work.
curated at Franco-Maltese Centre

vident and positive moments that accompany any project. Thanks to Ray, to Miriam, his wife, and their
extension of the pavilion. I am a great believer in people. Con-
tributes to what Sartre believes, 'The art of poising the
Last but not least, the Ferret, the Mr Gatt continued. "This does not mean that I am fully satisfied. Far from it.
Mastery means approaching one's life as a creative work. Mastery is a
life-giving generative process; mastery is not something you possess
but a process, a lifelong discipline. In fact, it may sound paradoxical
but it is true. People with a high level of personal mastery are aware
of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. The jour-
ney towards mastery is an unending one and the journey itself and not the
destination is the reward.

"Vision, inquiry, collaboration and mastery are important. But these
would mean nothing without enthu-
Li, that is, an unselfish heart that
pursues generous blood. Enthusias-
ism can provide positive contagion to all
those around you. And when en-
thuasiasm is genuine, it will spread like
harmless wildfire and entitle all
and sundry.

"Vision, inquiry, collaboration, mastery, enthusiasm, thinking and
action are sine qua non to achieving some real success when em-
Studying a project," Mr Gatt said
as he proceeded to explain what the
project is about.

"It is a hands-on, autonomous
experience," he said, "where stu-
dents will actually behave as if they
were in France itself. They are the
main actors at every moment of the
experience.

"We have transformed part of the
FRC - only a part, because we are
still offering the services we used to
offer before - into a French region,
to start with, Brittany. Our idea is to
develop the region every two or three
years. There are 22 regions in
France. So one can see how long-
term the project is.

The project is called Around Brit-
ainy in 180 minutes. Each time a
group of 25 students are invited, but
before their visit, the students will
have received material on Britain
sent by the FRC.

All the 25 students will be wel-
comed at the customs house and
diricted to complete the usual formal-
bites before entering any foreign
country: passports, visas and the like.
Afterwards, they will have a few
minutes' power point presentation on
Brittany.

After the presentation, the stu-
dents will proceed to the spacio-
sus hall which virtually represen-
t the region of Brittany. There
will be 18 groups, and each group will be under the guidance of a facilitator. B.Ed
students will also be participating.
Each group will visit the five
main pavilions.

These include a commercial pavi-
ion called "Made in Brittany," where students will actually use French currency, euros and French chequebooks to
pay for things they have actually
bought. The pavilion is full of authentic articles one can find in
Brittany. They will also be able to
buy postcards, fill them up and post
them to friends. There will be many
other activities besides.

In addition, Riccardo da la
Viera, tries to capture the atmosphe-
re of a main feature of Brittany: the sea.
Students will watch a video on the
Oceanopolis of Brest, they will
explore various charts on the sea,
become familiar with the names of
different fish and shells, and will
explore, by means of the Internet,
different sites in Britain that have
do to with the sea or seafaring life in
Brittany.

The next pavilion, Maison de la
Bretagne, is a research centre that
teaches students how to solve
crossword puzzles on various
aspects of Brittany. To help them
in their cultural quest, they can
access to various data
exhibited in the pavilion. They
can even, through the Internet, con-
tact students in Britain and ask for
their help. Finally, students can
test their answers on a gigantic
word puzzle which can be set up
at will to discover the solutions.

A fourth pavilion tries to recreate
the legends and mystic lore of Brit-
tain. So the pavilion simulates a
fantastic wood or forest where students
will enter and feel part of the myths
of this region: Merlin, Brittany, Tristan and Isolt, Arcturus... After
watching some slides, students take
part in hands-on, play-way activities
linked with the topic.

Last but not least, students will be
cooking for one day in which Britain is
cooking - it is not only cooking but other
delicates as well. This will take
place in a fully-equipped kitchen,
under the guidance of a French-
theatre of those who in the

throughout the project, all 25 students will meet up in the
main hall, called "Place du Cal-
vair," and will entertain themselves
to songs, dances and food as if they
were in Brittany itself.
Mr Gatt said that some spaces in
the main hall have been used to
mount exhibitions on Gauguin,
Bernard and Jouand, typical Brit-
tannish cuisine, and the geologic
mogic north. The region with particular
emphasis on the mangrove and peat in
areas. These exhibits are accom-
panied by explanatory captions.

As he added, future plans for the
project include the building of dor-
mitories and living areas, to be able
to house students for three or
four hours, or even for the whole
weekend. "Innovation will
then completely include if foreign stu-
dents are invited to join," Mr Gatt
remarked.

Mr Gatt then hit a white cande-
dle which symbolises the white
flags of Brittany, Malta and France,
and invited the Minister of State to light a
red candle representing the colour
in the Maltese flag and Ambassador
Desirened to light the blue
candle symbolising the blue in the
French flag. "I hope that these three

candles will continue to produce the
light and warmth which we need in
order to give the best to our students.
I repeat, our learners deserve the best
and nothing but the best.

"I hope that this project will help
all of us appreciate other cultures
and learn more positively, not only
in the differences exist between us," Mr Gatt concluded.