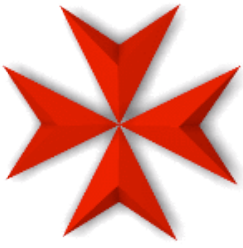


THE MALTESE WELLINGTONIAN



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE MALTESE ASSOCIATION OF WELLINGTON AND THE MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS OF MALTA SOCIETY

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Our first edition of 2012. Time really goes fast. We are still awaiting the Agreement to be finalised and now that the election has come and gone in New Zealand maybe just maybe we will finally manage to get this hurdle over.

In this edition we have a couple of articles re the Maltese Living Abroad ,1 from The Maltese High Commission in Canberra which Mr Tabone has already advised us is to be corrected as to the number of representatives from Australia 5 instead of 6 and 1 written by Mr Laurence Dimech about this new grouping which I fully agree with.

This newsletter is being put together by Mr Frank Doherty in the absence of our usual helper Mrs Lucienne Hensell who is enjoying a well merited rest with the family in Malta. We are extremely grateful for the work given by everybody in our effort to keep this newsletter ongoing and on time.

Again we ask those who wish to contribute to post articles to us at [31 Allen Tce. Tawa. Wellington 5028](mailto:31.Allen.Tce.Tawa.Wellington.5028) Or email us at malta_assn@hotmail.com.



The Editor: Anthony Micallef

ISSN 1179-4828

Subject: Being Maltese...GOOD ONE

Being Maltese.....means....

- * You move abroad with 2 kgs of frozen pastizzi or Hobz Malti and a Timpana recipe in your luggage
- * You move out from your parents house.....to move in with your spouse...within walking distance of your parents' house
- * You have been officially engaged longer than you have been dating.....while waiting for your house to be built
- * You have been separated longer than you have been married.....while sleeping under the same roof
- * Your best friend lives 2 blocks away, but you only drive there
- * The difference between the before and after pictures of your Mum's wedding, is about 5 stone
- * The only way to decorate your escorts, capris and trucks is to stick banners across the windscreen such as 'rambo sex' or 'baby think twice', bumper sticker tend to be 'Eat my Dust'
- * Zebra crossings are a matter of opinion
- * Give Way translates to Get out of my Way
- * Stop sign is in fact Give Way
- * No Waiting, Unloading Only, NO parking, actually mean Parking at your convenience
- * You don't even turn off your mobile phone in church (even if you are a priest)
- * You think the north is entirely culturally different from the south....with the total geographical area being 18miles long, Gozo is considered another country
- * You think the only places to visit abroad are 'Oxford Street', Lourdes and the Vatican
- * Big Ben is in Birkirkara and not in London
- * you go to church every Sunday even though you're atheist
- * you get married in church so that your in-laws would not know you're an atheist
- * you care more about what the neighbours think, then about your own opinion
- * you are an independent adult, but your mum still buys your underpants and does your washing.

- * Catholic shrines and posters of Elvis and Rambo jostle for space on public transport
- * The cry 'Aw sex!' is seen as a legitimate chat-up line (Variation in Gozo tends to be 'Aw Gobon'...no pun intended)
- * Before marriage, sex is a taboo and parents expect their kids to have never engaged in sex. However if you're not pregnant by the end of your honeymoon, your grandmother (and parents) starts saying special prayers.
- * You strike bargains with the Almighty in order to achieve your ends.
- * You call your children Denzel, Shania, Aaliyah and Rihanna... even though you have no connections with the film industry... (these names were amongst the most popular names in 2007 making it to the top 20)
- * Your idea of eating out is going to the Diner in the Airport Viewing Gallery or to Serkin in Rabat for pastizzi and tea.
- * You go to Catechism classes to pick up girls
- * You disagree profoundly with your chosen political party's policies, but vote for them anyway, cos that's what your father did, and your grandfather, and his father..... anyway you still invite your local MP to your wedding as it will impress your guests
- * You don't believe in bribes but in gratitude
- * At home you have 'Teachers', 'Vermouth' and perhaps 'Shandy'
- * Your parents used to dip the pacifier in Whisky so that you sleep during parties
- * Your parents' favourite brand used to be GM as anything from toilet paper to towels used to have this logo (Not 'General Motors' but 'Gvern ta' Malta')
- * You go to other people's weddings in order to criticise the wedding souvenirs and the food.
- * You send your children to private lessons even though they are the top of their class
- * You are not a racist but open minded except if your kid turns up to be gay or decides to marry an African or Arab person.

Birgu - The Forgotten City

By *Winston Law Zammit B.A.(Hons.) M.A*

After Mdina, Birgu is the second oldest city of Malta, and its development was largely due to two factors, its vicinity to the Grand Harbour which led to its development as the island's commercial centre in the period before the arrival of the Order, and the existence of Fort St. Angelo, which made Birgu a safe place where to live in, as the inhabitants could easily take refuge in it, in the event of a Moorish raid.

The Order Of St. John 1530 - 1571



With the arrival of the Order of St. John in Malta, began without any doubt the most glorious chapter in the history of Birgu. The Order chose Birgu as its headquarters, due to its proximity to the sea. Grand Master Philippe Valliers de L'Isle Adam established his residence in Fort St. Angelo, while the Knights of the various languages built or rented houses which they turned into Auberges; two of which bear some resemblance of their former glory are the Auberge de France and the Auberge D'Angleterre.

The Parish Church of St. Lawrence became the conventual church of the Order, and this humble parish church now became the Conventual Church of an illustrious and Sovereign Order. As a result the Parish Priest began to perform his duties in the Church of the Annunciation of the Dominican Friars.

After the Order settled down, L'Isle Adam's first care was to strengthen the defences of Birgu. Fort St. Angelo was strengthened and bastions were erected around Birgu. However, the Order did not limit itself to defensive works, for in 1532, the Conventual Church of St. Lawrence which had been gutted by fire on Easter Monday, was rebuilt, and in the same year work was taken in hand on the erection of the Order's Hospital. L'Isle Adam also erected a residence for himself and his successors.

As the Order devoted the greater part of its energies to maritime activities, hence we have the beginning of the dockyard, near the wharf of Birgu, for the maintenance of the Order's fleet.

The Great Siege - 1565

The Great Siege is without any doubt the most important episode in the history of Birgu. With the arrival of the Turkish Armada on the 18th May 1565, the city gave refuge to thousands of Maltese from the surrounding countryside.

The walls of the city were defended by Knights from eight Languages, the Maltese Militia and foreign soldiers. After the fall of Fort St. Elmo (23rd June) the Turks concentrated the greater part of their attacks on Birgu and Fort St. Angelo, and subjected the two places to

an almost incessant bombardment lasting two months. The walls were badly damaged, and many houses were destroyed. On the 18th August, the Turks blew up the bastion of the post of Castille with a mine, and penetrated into the fortifications. The Knights and the Maltese panicked, but La Valette rushed to the spot, led a counter attack, and the enemy was driven out of the fortifications. After the siege, in recognition of the gallant and prominent part displayed by its inhabitants, the city was called Civitas Victoriosa for short Vittoriosa.

After the siege, the Bastions and fortifications of the city were repaired, but on March 18th 1571 Grand Master Pietru Del Monte together with the Convent, left Vittoriosa, to begin their residence on the then unfinished city of Valletta. Thus Birgu ceased to be the headquarters, but it remained the base of the Order's Fleet.

The Inquisition (1575 - 1798)



The departure of the Order was followed four years later by the arrival in the city of another important personage, the Inquisitor, who established his residence in Vittoriosa. The chief task of the Inquisition, who was the Pope's representative, was to safeguard the Roman Catholic Faith in Malta and to try all cases concerning heresy.

The first Inquisitor was Mgr. Pietro Duzzina and the last one was Mgr. Giulio Carpegna who left Malta in May 1798.

The Inquisitor resided in the large palace still existing in Vittoriosa, which was enlarged to its present size in 1767. It is here worth mentioning that two prelates, who held the post of Inquisitor in Malta i.e. Fabio Chigi and Antonio Agnatelli, were later elected Popes and took the names of Alexander VII (1655—1667) and Innocent XII (1691—1700)

Vittoriosa in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Although the Order had transferred its seat to Valletta in 1571, later Grand Masters did not sever their connection with Vittoriosa. In fact Grand Master Fra Antoine De Paule (1623 - 1636) introduced the custom of holding a second installation ceremony at Vittoriosa. Several of his successors continued this innovation and began to hold a second installation ceremony at Vittoriosa. The last one to do so was Manoel de Vilhena in September 1722.

During the seventeenth century the city's fortifications were repaired. In 1665 during the Magistracy of Fra Nicola Cottoner, a section of the walls was rebuilt, and during the Magistracy of Gregorio Caraffa (1660 - 1690), Fort St. Angelo was strengthened. During the Magistracies of Fra Marcantonio Zondadari (1720 - 1722) and Fra Antonio Manoel de Vilhena, (1722 - 1736) further works on the fortifications were taken in hand, including the rebuilding of the main gate, which was finished in 1722.

Also throughout the seventeenth century, new churches were built, while old ones were rebuilt. Two religious communities, the Carmelite Friars and the Oratorian Fathers settled in Vittoriosa, and each respectively built a church and a convent there. The Dominican Friars also rebuilt their church, which was completed in 1657. The old hospital was given by the Order to the cloistered nuns of St. Benedict, who built a church attached to it in 1679.

In 1681 work was taken in hand on the rebuilding of the Parish Church of St. Lawrence on the designs of the Maltese architect Lorenzo Gafà. The new parish Church was completed and opened to the public on 10th August 1697. On that day Grand Master Perellos made his solemn entrance into the city.

The French Rule (1798 - 1800)

In June 1798, Malta was captured by the French, who were led by Napoleon Bonaparte, but on the 2nd September of the same year, the Maltese rose against the French, and in a few hours Mdina and all the countryside were in the hands of the Maltese insurgents. Only Valletta and the Three Cities remained in the hands of the French, who were thus besieged in them for two years.



British Rule

The importance of the British Naval Power meant that the British Navy would make full use of the Malta Drydocks, as actually happened, and with the passing of time, the British Naval Authorities appropriated the greater part of the Wharf of Vittoriosa for their own use. British forces were also stationed in Fort St. Angelo, which till 1979 was still in the hands of the British Services. The British Military Authorities also appropriated for their use the Inquisitor's Palace, which became an officer's mess, while the Armoury in 1800, began to be used as the first British Naval Hospital in Malta.

The Second World War (1940 -1943)

Before the outbreak of the second world war in 1931, Vittoriosa had a population of 6573 and was therefore densely populated, but as soon as the war broke and the city began to be bombed with bombs, due to its vicinity to the Dockyard, there was an exodus from it, into the villages in the centre of the island.

The German raids (1941 - 1942) left devastating effects on Vittoriosa and deprived the city of some of its historic monuments. The Parish Church of St. Lawrence was hit and extensively damaged. The Church and Convent of the Dominican Friars were reduced to a heap of rubble, as were the old clock tower in Victory Square and the Governor's Palace. Certain areas of the city became a heap of ruins, so that it was impossible to distinguish between one street and another. The city was nearly deserted, save for a few of its inhabitants who lived in the ditch outside the city. After the war, the ruined areas were rebuilt, but the city has certainly been impoverished with the irreparable loss of some of its historic monuments.

Ĉensu and Maria Tabone – 70 years married today



Living a married life for 70 years is no small feat. Retaining a deep love and respect is exceptional. Believe it or not, Papa Ĉensu and Mama Maria still recall the date and circumstances of their first kiss.

Mama Maria knew that Ĉensu needed some hobbies to refresh his mind

- Philip Farrugia Randon

A few years ago in a TV interview, Ĉensu Tabone referred to marriage as a closed box. "You don't know what's in it until you open it."

Then he stopped for a second, looked at his wife, Maria, with twinkling eyes, smiled and said: "I couldn't have found anything better".

Maria was still in her early mid-teens when she was smitten by Ĉensu, seven years her senior. She decided that he was the one for her.

Let me share a small secret: to this day whenever we tease Mama Maria about a lady who, when still in her teens, supposedly had tried to innocently compete with her for Ĉensu, her eyes and voice still betray a jealous trait. Whenever this topic surfaces, Ĉensu unfailingly looks lovingly at Maria and asks "But who won?"

Problems almost started on the very first day of their honeymoon in Gozo. It was wartime.

Papa Ċensu, who was then a very young doctor in the Royal Malta Artillery, was recalled to Malta since an imminent enemy air attack was feared but luck was on his side.

Before he left Gozo, the fear of the threatened attack was found groundless, so his superior officer quickly sent a message, "Tell Tabone he can go back to bed!" Presumably, he did.

He specialised in ophthalmology in the UK and soon after was entrusted with the anti-Trachoma campaign in Gozo, which was a big success.

Papa Ċensu discovered a new cure for this terrible disease and this soon won him international acclaim. He became the first ophthalmic surgeon to be employed with the World Health Organisation. This led him to work in far away places, such as Taiwan, Indonesia, Iraq and his name and fame grew as he developed further within the WHO.

Meanwhile, the family was growing at a persistent rate, reaching a final count of eight children, actually nine since one died immediately after birth. The funny side is that while Papa Ċensu was working abroad he would visit Mama Maria every year and before returning to work, Maria would be expecting the next baby. One year he missed his yearly visit. When he came the next time, they had twins.

During one of his work phases abroad, overseas calls were introduced in Malta and Mama Maria was reputedly the first to use it. She went to Cable and Wireless by appointment to phone her husband. It was such a dramatic, expensive exercise.

Maria cried at one side of the phone and Ċensu on the other. They barely said one word as the charges soared but their spirits were united in the ether.

Papa Ċensu founded the Medical Officers Union (now MAM) and later entered politics in the early 1960s. That meant a very busy schedule, which allowed little time to share with the family.

Maria was by his side and backed him to the hilt, though she too had a somewhat active life and was one of the co-founders of the women's section of the PN. At home he was the boss but she was the general manager. He gladly delegated to her certain duties, such as managing the family finances, which needed some juggling to make ends meet. We still jokingly refer to her as the "financial wizard". Paper abounded and super abounded in the house, ending up filling not one but three studies.

I once affixed Dante's words on the door of the first study: "Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate" (Abandon all hope, ye who enter).

I was referring to Mama Maria's continuous hopeful efforts to convince her husband to put some order. Though there were discussions on the topic they remained simple discussions, which always ended in the same manner: Ċensu smiling, hugging Maria.

Whoever thinks that a successful marriage exists only when both spouses are the same in character and habits, should revise this idea. Papa Ċensu has a mania for being punctual. She, on the other hand, has a chronic inability to look at the clock and appreciate that she has only a couple of minutes to stop what she is doing, wash, change and leave.

I must concede that when Papa became President of Malta, Mama was always punctual, terrified that she would leave the public waiting.

Even her cooking has always been a last-minute affair. Mind you, her food is unreservedly first class but she manages to do everything at the last ticks of the clock. I remember often hearing Papa Ćensu returning home, when she would tell us “keep him busy” as she took out all the necessaries to perform a cuisine miracle. He knew this all along but he also knew the end result would be delicious and, in any case, quick. Mama Maria knew that Ćensu needed some hobbies to refresh his mind from the heavy chores of the day, so she backed him even here at some cost. He would cannibalise electric fans, which he bought from a second-hand dealer (Tal-Pikless), and adapt and adopt, restore and revamp them into workable machines, which admittedly were far from elegant. Steve Jobs would not have entrusted him with an Apple design.

His other hobby was mending clocks, including actually creating missing parts. All this meant a certain amount of invasion in some parts of the house. Maria knew this hobby was essential so she wisely concluded that it was likewise essential to treat it as such. Surrounded by eight children, in-laws, 19 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren, the Tabone couple look back at these past 70 years of married life as one continuous love story, which the good Lord, whom they fervently and lovingly adore, has graced them with.

As in the past, they still do not miss their daily Mass, Holy Communion and Rosary. As in the past, they still feel close to the needy and those who suffer. When Ćensu was a very young boy and his teacher would tell him, “very good!” he would answer, “but is it very good indeed, Miss?”

Allow me to take up that cue and lovingly tell Mama Maria and Papa Ćensu: “It has been very good... indeed!”

Church considering mechanism to investigate irregular admissions to its schools



The Church is considering regulations for the investigation of cases of irregular admission of children into its schools.

A spokesman for the Curia confirmed that a document being discussed proposed the setting up of a structure to investigate reports of irregular admission.

Sources said the proposal was made following allegations that some children were admitted to schools after 'donations' were given by the parents.

Admission to primary schools is currently by ballot.

The sources said it is being proposed that when a case is proven before a school year would have started, the child will not be admitted. In other cases the child's siblings will lose their automatic right to be admitted.

Another proposal is for action to be taken so that children who lost their place because of the wrongful admission will not suffer the injustice.

Religious staff in Church schools found to have acted irregularly will be reported to the Archbishop. Lay staff will be reported to their school and might be dismissed.

The document, the sources said, says that anonymous reports will not be investigated. Cases will also not be investigated retroactively.

Commemorating Manwel Dimech

A hundred years ago Malta was passing through interesting moments. An initiative had been launched which promised to bring about gradual, though profound, change to the social and political fibre of the Maltese islands. However, this had sent a shiver down the spine of the established classes, who wanted to stop it in its tracks.

The initiative was taken by a group of young men led by Manwel Dimech, a self-proclaimed political activist and social reformer. They proposed to start an organisation, called Ix-Xirka tal-Imdawlin (the Fellowship of the Enlightened) for the unification of the workers, the emancipation of women and the general improvement of the standard of life for all Maltese.

Why was such a plan deemed to be so threatening to the bourgeoisie and especially to the Catholic Church? The main reason was that it had in its sight, the ultimate transformation of the social, political, economic and religious structures of Maltese society. Dimech and his colleagues believed that such structures were the direct and indirect cause of the real and psychological misery the Maltese were going through, and hence had to be changed.

Despite expected hardships and repercussions for its founders and members, the Xirka was established on October 21, 1911. The Bishop of Malta, Peter Pace, reacted with great forcefulness: he excommunicated Dimech and set off a whole year of serious harassment and persecutions for the man.

Dimech did not falter. He resisted the powerful assault, continued his Xirka and his other activities, including his private school and the publication of his weekly *Il-Bandiera tal-Maltin*. Unfortunately, this was only for a year and half, because he was then deported to Egypt by the British colonial government, and died in exile.

These remarkable events will be commemorated at a conference at the Osborne Hotel, South Street, Valletta tomorrow from 6.30 p.m. Four talks will be delivered to explore, beyond Dimech's story, his connection to various areas of scholarship.

The event will also include the launching of a book in Maltese edited by Mark Montebello. It brings together a unique collection of Dimech's original writings, including the novels *Ivan* and *Prascovia* and *Majsi Cutajar*, the statute of the Fellowship of the Enlightened, together with hundreds of citations from Dimech's works, especially from his weekly *Il-Bandiera tal-Maltin*.

Concept of Greater Malta

Monday, November 7, 2011 was indeed a good day for the Maltese community living abroad because a Bill, entitled Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act 2011, was passed through second reading by the Maltese Parliament with the unanimous support of both political parties.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tonio Borg, with much determination, has worked on this Bill since the Convention for the Maltese Living Abroad held in Malta in March 2010. Worldwide consultation took place and many opinions were put forward. It was commendable that both the minister and his counterpart, George Vella on the opposition benches, were able to reach a consensus.

The ultimate aim of the council is to be an advisory body representing communities abroad before all Maltese government entities including the public service and any public authority, institution or organisation responsible for implementing policies affecting these communities. Its aims are many and they encapsulate in full the concept of the Greater Malta advocated in my study paper presented to the Maltese convention held in Malta in January/February 2000.

This Bill also promises a directorate responsible for Maltese living abroad within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other ministry.

Importantly, there will be an addition of a new article 20a to the Constitution to read as follows: "The state shall facilitate the participation of Maltese citizens who live abroad in the political, social economic and cultural life of Malta."

The Maltese communities, especially those living in Australia, are well-structured and in most states have community councils representing most of the active associations. Since the convention of 2010, the Federation of Maltese Living Abroad was also formed. However, its role within the new structure of the council will now need to be clarified. Too many structures may result in much talk and very little action.

Many attempts were made in the past to have one strong federation to represent the Maltese communities in Australia but nothing came out of it because a fractured community played nicely in the hands of various governments in Malta. I say this to emphasis how difficult it will be for this council to function effectively not only in Australia, where the majority of the Maltese citizens live, but globally, where needs and aspirations are diverse and, therefore, more complex.

The delegates representing the Maltese living abroad will be chosen by the government. I would have preferred delegates to be elected but this is not possible for many obvious reasons. Delegates specifically chosen may develop dual loyalties and could very well be swallowed up by the government of the day. Past experiences teach us that there will be some who see this council as a vehicle for self-status and prestige. It is therefore imperative that selection must be made on merit. By merit I mean active participation and deep knowledge of the workings of the communities. Academic degrees, though helpful, do not guarantee effective participation on the council as, historically, the migrant community abroad is made up of volunteers with commitment, often from the working or middle class. I write this because I believe that the success of this council will ultimately depend on a balanced formula of people firmly committed to the Greater Malta concept.

It will be hard to dispute or indeed argue against the aims and the aspirations of this council. Among many, there are two that stand out.

One is the promotion of the history of migration in Malta's education curriculum.

The other is to prepare any proposal or make any suggestion or recommendation relating to legislation or administrative measure as well as international agreements and EU regulations affecting the right and interests of Maltese living abroad and, most importantly, to ensure that Maltese living abroad are not excluded from any benefits that would otherwise be applicable to them originating from institutions of the EU.

These are lofty aspirations that have been associated with us Maltese living abroad. I have been passionate about promoting these inherited rights in my many writings.

I wish for this council to go forward and to bridge the divide that exists between the Maltese in Malta and the Maltese living abroad. Yes, indeed, we are not just a country but one nation with a vast diaspora scattered around the world.

When the present government bestowed dual citizenship to us migrants and subsequent generations it was perhaps the greatest achievement ever.

It came after many years of toil and struggle. With this council and with both political parties very much involved, let us hope the true meaning of citizenship will be restored and fully respected in all aspects.

Court Humour.....

IT CAN BE HARD KEEPING A STRAIGHT FACE AS A COURT REPORTER

These are from a book called Disorder in the American Courts, and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters that had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place.

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: My name is Susan!

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget.

ATTORNEY: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: He's 20, much like your I.Q.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Are you for real?

ATTORNEY: She had three children , right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honor, can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death..

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the circus was in town, I'm going with male.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them ... the live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral ...

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 PM

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

ATTORNEY: Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

WITNESS: Are you qualified to ask that question?

And last:

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

Culture



Tarxien Heritage Walk

14 October 2011 19:06

After its very successful series of summer events which included a harbour fortifications harbour cruise with a live commentary by Dr. Stephen Spiteri, and a dinner held in Gozo in September, FAA is now starting its winter season with a heritage walk of Tarxien on Saturday 22nd October.

The Tarxien temples indicate that this locality has been inhabited for more than five thousand years. During the Great Siege of 1565 the men of Tarxien were enlisted in the Militia and sent to join the Mdina garrison while during the French Blockade (1798-1800) two Tarxien batteries stood guard over the French blockaded within the Cottonera Lines. World War II bombings destroyed many houses in Tarxien, while

large houses like Palazzo Abela were used to billet soldiers and as the headquarters of the regiments in the surrounding area.

The FAA heritage tour will start at the Tarxien Temples and proceed to ara i-Bjut (Semitic for 'Behind the House'), one of the oldest parts of Tarxien where the architecture of the Ta' Manduca house recalls some of the buildings found in Birgu. The tour will include a visit to Palazzo Abela, built as a country villa by Bishop Leonardo Abela in 1562 and the old chapels of Santa Marija tar-Rokna and of Saint Bartholomew designed by Giuseppe Bonnici (1709-79). In Triq Sqajjaq, the oldest street in Tarxien, the tour will pass id-Dar tal-Logutenent, the residence of Guzeppi Montebello, one of the leaders of the uprising of the Maltese against the French in 1798 and proceed to Villa Lanzon which served as an Air Intelligence Unit in WWII.

At the end of the walk, visitors will be treated to tea, coffee and home-baked cakes at Villa Tarxien, as guests of Mrs. Janatha Stubbs. Built on the highest spot of Tarxien, Villa Tarxien's grounds still retain the remains of a tower built before 1691 from where the local militia (id-dejma) used to mount watches against any landing by the Barbary corsairs or Ottoman forces, especially from Marsaxlokk.

Few are aware of the fact that Tarxien has played an important role in Malta's history or of the rich heritage to be found in its old streets and buildings – for which reason those who love Maltese heritage are urged not to miss this rare opportunity to learn about this forgotten corner of Malta's past.

Land expropriated for freeport development violated family's human rights - European Court



The European Court of Human Rights has ruled in favour of the Frenco Randon family and concluded that the expropriation of their land for the development of the Malta Freeport was in violation of their human rights as the family had been deprived of access to the courts.

Forty-six members of the Frenco Randon family claimed a violation of their right to a fair hearing within a reasonable time and a violation of their right to peaceful possession of their property.

The European Court heard that the family owned four plots of land and that the land had been subject to a requisition order in 1969.

The family had refused the compensation offered for the land and although the Commissioner of Lands was required at law to institute proceedings before the Land Arbitration Board he had failed to do so.

In the 1990s, following changes to the law, the family was entitled to file a request before the ordinary courts requesting a time limit within which the commission had to institute proceedings before the board.

After the family's request, the Civil Court ordered the commissioner to file proceedings before the board within three months from February 4, 2000.

The commissioner had filed these proceedings only in respect of two of the four plots of land. It resulted that only one of the four plots of land was being fully utilised for the Freeport. Two of the plots were outside the Freeport zone.

In October 2008, the First Hall of the Civil Court had delivered a constitutional judgement in favour of the family and had ruled that the family had been deprived of access to the courts as only the commission had had the right to file proceedings before the board up till the 1990s. The family was awarded €100,000 by way of compensation.

On appeal, the Constitutional Court had, in part, confirmed the first court's judgment but also found that the family's right to enjoyment of property had been violated because not all the land had been utilised for a public purpose. The court reduced the compensation award to €20,000.

These two judgments were limited to only two of the four plots.

The family then took action in connection with the remaining plots of land and the First Hall of the Civil Court had awarded it €125,000 by way of damages for the lack of access to a court.

The court found that the case was more serious than the first court case because the commissioner had not filed action before the board even though he had been ordered by a court to do so.

On appeal, the Constitutional Court confirmed its earlier judgment and reduced the damages awarded to €27,000.

On November 22, the European Court, including Maltese Judge David Scicluna, noted that it was not contested that in this case there had been a deprivation of property in violation of the European Convention of Human Rights.

The Court, therefore, ruled that it would examine whether this deprivation had placed a disproportionate burden upon the family.

The Malta government had submitted that the family would receive the value of the land as in 1969, as established by the board, together with five per cent interest.

The European Court added that it had previously decided that awarding compensation that reflected values applicable decades before and deferring payment for decades without taking this delay into account was inadequate and constituted a violation of the right to enjoyment of property.

The Court therefore ruled that the family's right to property and to access to the courts had been violated.

However the Court did not deliver a decision as to the compensation to be awarded to the family.

It resulted that the family was claiming compensation of €7,531,650 being the value of the land together with €250,000 for non-pecuniary damages.

The government had submitted that the 1969 values should apply together with €47,000 by way of moral damages.

The European Court invited the government and the family to submit, within three months, their written submissions as to the compensation payable.



Fuel for Maltese power stations 20% higher than EU average

24 November 2011 09:09

According to prices published last Monday (21 November 2011) by the Directorate General for Energy of the European Commission Malta is buying its fuel (Sulphur 1%) at €684 per ton whereas the average price of this fuel in the 27 EU member states is €569 per ton - €115 (20%) cheaper. In the 27 EU member states only Ireland and Portugal buy this fuel at a higher price than Malta. Ireland buys it at €756 per ton while Portugal buys it at €703 per ton.

When taxes are added to the fuel imported from overseas the price of a ton of fuel in Malta rises from €684 to €714, an increase of €30 per ton. Malta's fuel price still remains 13% higher than the EU average price of €628. The fuel price in all 27 EU states is cheaper than in Malta (including Cyprus which has similar transport costs to Malta where the price of a ton of fuel with taxes is €704, cheaper by €10 per ton). Only Denmark, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden buy their fuel at a higher price than Malta.



International Conference highlights Malta Human Trafficking problem

28 October 2011 20:08

An international conference, focussing on border security and asylum and human trafficking is currently taking place at the Dolmen Hotel Bugibba. Organised by the University Department of Civil Law and the Institute of Criminology, it is being sponsored by the US Embassy. The conference is entitled “Border Securities: Human Experiences.

Dr Terence Coonan delivered his keynote speech this morning on “Asylum, and Human Trafficking Victim Protection: Current Trends and State Practices”. This afternoon the conference heard that human trafficking, even for a sexual purpose is increasing in Malta and in the world as there is an increasing demand for it.

Assistant professor Maurizio Albahari from US Notre Dame University told the conference that existing legislation against human trafficking should be strengthened.

University Frances Camilleri Cassar who lectures at the University of Malta said that the victims of human trafficking are left voiceless and they are caught in a cruel poverty trap. Courts give light sentences against human traffickers and last year no person was charged with human trafficking in Malta.

The conference is being held against a damning UNHCR report on Malta published at the end of June. (Refworld 2011 Trafficking in Persons Report – Malta)

The report confirms that Malta is a source and destination country for European women and children subjected to sex trafficking. It also says that “Malta is likely a destination country for men and women subjected to forced labor, including in restaurants, private households, and in unskilled or semi-skilled labor”.

The approximately 2,000 irregular African migrants currently residing in Malta may be vulnerable to human trafficking in Malta's informal labor market, the report finds. It says there were anecdotal reports that Malta may be a transit country for African women subjected to sex trafficking in continental Europe.

The report finds that the courts give too light sentences to traffickers. “In the only trafficking case resolved this year, the trafficking offender received a suspended sentence despite the fact that Article 248A-E of Malta's criminal code prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons and prescribes punishments of two to nine years' imprisonment”

The report found that the government did not identify any victims of trafficking in 2010, despite credible reports that victims of trafficking had presented themselves to police. “There were anecdotal reports that a Nigerian irregular migrant had been deported in 2010 after informing the police that she was a victim of trafficking; the police did not investigate her claim”, the report said.

In July 2010, a Somali woman who was a possible victim of trafficking received a six-month suspended prison sentence, after being found guilty of making a false declaration to immigration officials and being in possession of false documentation.

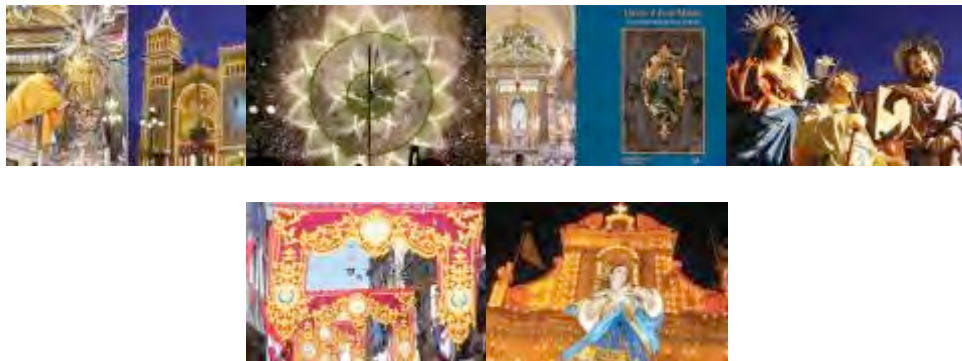
U.S. Embassy Political Officer Thomas Yeager will deliver concluding remarks at the Conference at 4:30 pm.

Joanne Cocks

The colours of Maltese village feasts



Mqabba ground fireworks.



The summer festa season may well be over and the decorations stored away but a publication bringing together the different aspects of these traditional feasts promises to keep the enthusiasm going.

... a salient characteristic of the holiday season..

- *Joanne Cocks*

The first volume in a 12-part series entitled *Ilwien il-Festi Maltin* (Colours of Maltese Festas) seeks to celebrate the splendour of the village celebrations that are a salient characteristic of the holiday season on the island.

Photographer Mark Micallef and editor Andrew Borg joined forces to produce “an unfolding photographic representation that probes all aspects of the Maltese festa”.

Mr Borg explains that the photographic experience they are sharing seeks to document each feast celebrated across Malta and Gozo, be it a celebration in honour of a patron saint, a secondary feast or simply a devotional manifestation.

Each volume will highlight the particular charm behind the feasts, also thanks to Mr Micallef’s photography. He shoots more than 30,000 images during a festa season.

The publication seeks to capture the many facets of the manifestation: popular devotion, liturgy, sacred music, band marches, aerial and land fireworks displays, priceless church furnishings, street decorations and artistic statues.

The aim of the series, Mr Micallef and Mr Borg explain, is to instil a keen appreciation of the work of the legion of volunteers who sacrifice long hours of their limited free time to make sure their town or village celebrates its feast in style.

The 272-page book, featuring more than 650 colour photos, has captions in both English and Maltese. It covers the feasts of St Paul, Rabat; St Peter, Birżebbuġa; St Joseph, Kirkop; the Assumption of Our Lady, Mqabba; Our Lady of Lourdes, Paola; Our Lady of Victories, Senglea and the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, Victoria.

It also includes a message by Archbishop Paul Cremona, an analytical study about the Maltese festa by Charles Coleiro and an introduction by Mr Borg and Mr Micallef.

The book, which is available from leading bookshops, parishes and band clubs, will this weekend also be on sale during the festa activity at Monte Cristo Estates.

Further information is available from Mr Micallef via e-mail markmicallef1985@gmail.com (tel. 7905 8691), Mr Borg at deerandrew@gmail.com (tel. 9938 5496) or from Facebook group *Ilwien il-Festi Maltin*.



Prime Ministers and ministers all over Europe cut their salaries to rule by example

18 November 2011 15:31

Slovakia is another European country that in the last few hours has taken steps to freeze the salaries of the prime minister and ministers as they impose austerity measures on their citizens to deal with the crisis in the euro zone.

In recent weeks and months the prime ministers and ministers of the United Kingdom, France, Finland, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Ireland all took steps to cut their salaries in solidarity with the families of their countries who have to make sacrifices to heal the deficits and public debts of their countries.

Earlier on today Slovakia's Speaker of parliament tables a bill to freeze the salaries of ministers for the coming years.

British Prime Minister David Cameron had cut his and his minister's salaries by 5%. French Prime Minister recently said that the salaries of his cabinet and of President Nicolas Sarkozy are going to be frozen.

The first decision taken by Prime Minister Enda Kenny of the Republic of Ireland was to cut the salary of the whole cabinet including him and for ministers to reduce the amount of money they spend on their transport.

In Finland the cabinet of ministers reduced their salaries as part of the measures they took to reduce the budget deficit.

In Bulgaria Prime Minister Bovko Borisov not only froze the salaries of the members of parliament but also said that those who do not attend will be fined.

In Bosnia ministers cut their salaries by 15%.

The new Prime Minister of Italy Mario Monti is also expected to announce a cut in the salaries of his cabinet.



Rugby: Malta ranked 42 in world

17 November 2011 13:54

Many will now know that the Maltese National Rugby Team has risen eleven places in the world rankings to forty second. Considering that Malta only joined the International Rugby Board in 2000 this is an amazing achievement. Although a Rugby Association was founded in 1991, it remained very much a minority social activity until the Malta Rugby Football Union was formed and serious competition was entered for the European and World championships. Understandingly for the first years there were a succession of heavy defeats until the breakthrough victory, 8 – 3 vs Monaco in 2003.

Malta's style is to use the ball to cover as much of the pitch as possible to stretch the usually heavier and physically stronger opposition, which makes for an attractive flowing game.

MRFU have been lucky (or perhaps clever) to engage a series of talented coaches in Messrs Ethel, Bennett, Richards and now for several years Mr. Damian Neill, and are now a force to be reckoned with among far larger countries with player pools of many thousands. Quite early on there was realisation that there are probably more people of Maltese origin abroad than currently live in Malta, and so the news was sent out that players with a Maltese grandparent would qualify to play for Malta under IRB rules. This meant that experienced players would be available to boost and influence the small band of local enthusiasts. Several players from Australia

made the long trip home, as well as those from UK. This had an added social and emotional positivity in that grandparents, aunts and uncles come proudly to matches to see their descendants represent Malta and many lovely reunions took place on the back of Rugby.

Furthermore, for a junior side, Malta has outshone many other much larger nations in the support and presentation of the international events, and countries have always complimented Malta on their reception and the excitement of the matches. The European Rugby President attended a match and said it was as good an event as any premier match.

The last but one European Rugby Conference was held in Malta and voted the best ever by over one hundred delegates; it is rumoured that they want to come back.

At home the standard rises every season, and the MRFU earns valuable tourist income by hosting several international club tournaments. More and more local players are challenging for international places, and Malta's most capped player is Kavallieri Ian Borda.

As Rugby is now very much in the schools, the juniors are clamouring to play but there is a problem in that the MRFU have a very restricted playing area, and urgently need a stadium and more pitches.

The future depends on the investment in Malta's most successful team sport.



Top three security threats for Maltese: illegal immigration, corruption and the financial and economic crisis

25 November 2011 18:26

A Eurobarometer survey on internal security published today shows that most of the Maltese consider illegal immigration followed by corruption and the economic and financial crisis as the most important challenges to the security of citizens at the moment while for most Europeans the economic crisis and terrorism top the agenda. 38% of Maltese mentioned illegal immigration when they were asked to identify the biggest threat. Only the Cypriots with 55% put illegal immigration higher than Malta at the top of their concerns in the entire EU.

27% of Maltese said that corruption and the financial and economic crisis were the next biggest threat to their security. 20% of Maltese say organized crime is the biggest threat for them while 15% said that the biggest threat is poverty.

The Eurobarometer survey carried out in June but published today accompanies the first annual report on the implementation of the EU Internal Security Strategy. The survey provides a detailed analysis of the way in which internal security is perceived both at the EU level and within individual Member States. In the course of this survey, 26,840 European citizens aged 15 and above were interviewed in all 27 Member States of the European Union.

The main challenges to European security, identified by at least one in five Europeans, are the economic and financial crises (34%), terrorism (33%), and organised crime (21%). Poverty, irregular immigration, corruption, environmental issues/climate change, natural and nuclear disasters and the security of EU borders were also cited by around 18% of respondents. Fewer than one tenth of Europeans mentioned wars and civil wars, religious extremism, and petty crime as the most important security challenges faced by the EU.

The main challenges to national security, as identified by at least one in five Europeans, are the economic and financial crises (33%), terrorism (25%), poverty (24%), and organised crime (22%). Some 18% also mentioned corruption, irregular immigration, petty crime, natural disasters, and environmental issues/climate change and cyber crime. Less than one tenth of respondents mentioned nuclear disasters, the security of EU borders, religious extremism, and wars and civil wars as the most important security challenges faced by their country.

Four out of ten Europeans want the EU to do more to fight these threats. Only around half of Europeans believe that enough is being done to tackle these challenges at national and European levels.

Cybercrime is seen as the challenge most likely to heighten over the next three years (63%). This is followed by organised crime (57%), and then disasters (54%) and terrorism (51%). One in four respondents (43%) thinks that EU border security will be an increasing challenge to EU security over the next three years.

Three-quarters of Europeans believe that internal EU security is linked to external events and developments, although there is considerable variation between Member States. The US is the most often cited as the EU's main partner in security, followed by Russia, China and Turkey.

Claudia Calleja

Cemetery to be privately managed

Over 4,000 applications for graves



Malta's main cemetery, the Maria Addolorata in Paola, is to come under private management and will also be extended by 2,900 graves.

A call for tenders will be issued to cover both measures under a government policy to tackle the growing shortage of burial space.

A spokesman for the Health Ministry said the winning bidder, who will take over the management of the Addolorata, will have the choice to issue a call for the construction and management of a crematorium.

The cemetery will remain the property of the government, which will also retain control over the price of graves.

The introduction of cremation has long been discussed as a solution to the shortage of graves. Currently, cremation is not regulated by law since there are no crematoriums. However, bodies that were cremated abroad have been allowed a normal burial in Malta.

Over the past years the government has been looking at ways to solve the shortage of burial space and come up with various proposals to extend the cemetery.

In 2006 former Health Minister Louis Deguara announced that some 2,782 graves were going to be developed but the project did not materialise. Three years later, his successor, John Dalli, announced an extension of 9,000 graves but this proposal did not come to fruition either.

Speaking in Parliament last week, Health Minister Joseph Cassar confirmed that the real cost of a new grave (which is currently just over €3,000) was €8,000 and this would be reflected in amendments to the price order regulating the price of graves at the Addolorata.

There are 15,537 graves at the Addolorata including 14,329 privately owned graves and 1,209 common ones. Until May this year there were 4,029 pending applications to buy graves there. Some applications have been pending for over a decade.

Krustini Rusks or Country Biscuits

Ingredients

- 400 g flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 100 g margarine
- 100 g sugar
- 50 g can dried orange peel finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- grated rind and juice of 1 orange
- 50 g roasted almonds roughly chopped

Directions

1. Sift flour, add baking powder and rub in.
2. The margarine.
3. Beat egg in a bowl and add the sugar.
4. Mix the egg and sugar well and add to the flour.
5. Add orange juice together with all the other ingredients.
6. Mix well and add very little water to obtain a rather stiff dough.
7. Divide dough into four portions and form each portion into a long flat roll.
8. Bake in a moderately hot oven until light gold in colour.
9. Allow to cool completely.
10. Cut the baked rolls in 1 cm thick slices and bake again until golden and crisp.



Eurobarometer survey: 58% of Maltese believe that not enough is being done to fight poverty in Malta

29 November 2011 16:52

When asked the question: Do you think hat enough is being done to fight poverty in your country, 24% said No, Not all; 34% said: No. Not really and only 33% said that 'Yes.

This the result of Eurobarometer Survey published today in Brussels. The results show that 58% believe that not enough is being done to fight poverty in Malta.

The Survey on Income and Living Conditions in Malta published earlier on this year shows that there are 15% of the population living at the risk of poverty. The most vulnerable groups are children (21%) and the elderly (19%).

Last October the National Statistics Office said there is no discrepancy between the figure of 82,000 (20% of population) Maltese at risk of poverty given by the EU Commission in Krakow, Poland, recently in a conference on poverty and social exclusion and the 61,000 (15%) given by NSO.

The 15 per cent figure published by NSO refers to persons at risk of monetary poverty. The 20 per cent referred to by the Commission does not only consider a household's monetary income, but factors in material deprivation and also considers the amount of household members in employment (work intensity) or otherwise.

NSO says that the Commission's figure therefore refers to persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion. NSO also publishes this data, and both figures are also available on Eurostat's website.

In the same meeting in Krakow, the Maltese government's action plan against poverty was mentioned as having the aim of lifting 6,560 out of poverty by 2020 , which is about two persons every day over nine years. This would leave 75,440 persons at the risk of poverty in Malta and Gozo by 2020.

Land expropriated for freeport development violated family's human rights - European Court



The European Court of Human Rights has ruled in favour of the Frenco Randon family and concluded that the expropriation of their land for the development of the Malta Freeport was in violation of their human rights as the family had been deprived of access to the courts.

Forty-six members of the Frenco Randon family claimed a violation of their right to a fair hearing within a reasonable time and a violation of their right to peaceful possession of their property.

The European Court heard that the family owned four plots of land and that the land had been subject to a requisition order in 1969.

The family had refused the compensation offered for the land and although the Commissioner of Lands was required at law to institute proceedings before the Land Arbitration Board he had failed to do so.

In the 1990s, following changes to the law, the family was entitled to file a request before the ordinary courts requesting a time limit within which the commission had to institute proceedings before the board.

After the family's request, the Civil Court ordered the commissioner to file proceedings before the board within three months from February 4, 2000.

The commissioner had filed these proceedings only in respect of two of the four plots of land.

It resulted that only one of the four plots of land was being fully utilised for the Freeport. Two of the plots were outside the Freeport zone.

In October 2008, the First Hall of the Civil Court had delivered a constitutional judgement in favour of the family and had ruled that the family had been deprived of access to the courts as only the commission had had the right to file proceedings before the board up till the 1990s. The family was awarded €100,000 by way of compensation.

On appeal, the Constitutional Court had, in part, confirmed the first court's judgment but also found that the family's right to enjoyment of property had been violated because not all the land had been utilised for a public purpose. The court reduced the compensation award to €20,000.

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The court found that the case was more serious than the first court case because the commissioner had not filed action before the board even though he had been ordered by a court to do so.

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The Court, therefore, ruled that it would examine whether this deprivation had placed a disproportionate burden upon the family.

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The government had submitted that the 1969 values should apply together with €47,000 by way of moral damages.

The European Court invited the government and the family to submit, within three months, their written submissions as to the compensation payable.

Migrants win €10,000 compensation for forced repatriation from Malta



Two Somali men have been awarded compensation of €10,000 each after the Constitutional Court found that they were forcibly repatriated to Libya from Malta and had not been given the opportunity for asylum

The case was instituted by Abdul Hakim Hassan Abdulle and Kasin Ibrahim Nur after they managed to endure torture in a Libyan jail and abandonment in the Sahara Desert before returning to Malta.

They filed their application against the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and the Principal Immigration Officer.

The court heard that Abdulle had left Somalia in 2004 following the persecution of his Madigan tribe by militant islamists. After crossing the Sahara desert into Libya he tried to cross the Mediterranean on a boat with 30 other persons. The boat sunk and Mr Abdulle swam back to Libya. His son drowned on this voyage.

Mr Nur left Somalia in 2003 because he had lost all his family due to the ongoing war. He too crossed the Sahara desert into Libya. In September 2004 both men left Libya by boat in an attempt to reach Europe. Their boat was intercepted by a Maltese patrol boat and they were brought to Malta.

Upon their arrival they were taken to the Police Headquarters. Neither of them was given the opportunity to apply for asylum in Malta nor were they assisted by an interpreter.

Twenty days later the two men, together with four other illegal immigrants were taken, handcuffed, to the airport and were forcibly sent back to Libya. Both men asked to speak to the UNHCR representative in Malta but their request was refused.

Upon their arrival in Libya they were arrested, beaten and tortured while they were kept in prison for a week. They were transferred to another prison and, three months later, they were taken to court where they were tried without an interpreter.

The men were sentenced to one year's imprisonment. During their time in prison they were again beaten and tortured.

In November 2005 the men, together with some other Somali men, were taken on a three day drive into the Sahara where they were abandoned.

They spent 14 days in the desert without sufficient food or water. The rest of their company died but Mr Abdulle and Mr Nur managed to survive until they were rescued by some Berber bedouins, the court was told.

They made their way back to Libya and in June 2006 eventually managed to return to Malta.

In their constitutional application the men claimed that their right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment had been violated by the fact that they had been forcibly repatriated to a country which was known to practise torture. They further claimed that their fundamental human right to an effective remedy had been violated as Malta had not allowed them to apply for asylum.

Mr Justice Pace pointed out that in terms of law, an immigrant had to be informed of his right to seek asylum in Malta in a language he understood. This had not been done in this case.

The fact that no explanation had been given by the authorities and that the men had been detained at the Police Headquarters rather than being taken to a detention centre was very worrying.

The court added that the two men were not alleging that they had been subjected to torture in Malta. Their application was based upon the fact that they had been forcibly repatriated to Libya against their wishes. Libya was known to be a country without the rule of law and was also known to be a country where torture was practised.

A State was to be found guilty of inhuman and degrading treatment if it extradited a person to a country where he faced a real risk of being subjected to torture.

United Nations documentation of the time stated that asylum seekers and immigrants faced xenophobic acts of violence in Libya. Asylum seekers in Libya did not benefit from the international protection of the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees which Libya had not ratified. Reports also stated that hundreds of African migrant workers in Libya had been subject to racial violence and killings.

The court therefore found that Mr Abdulle's and Mr Nur's fundamental human rights had been violated. It awarded them €10,000 each by way of compensation.

Kummissarju Gholi ta' Malta



High Commissioner of Malta

MEDIA RELEASE 37-2011

The Malta High Commission is pleased to announce that Malta's Parliament has approved by a unanimous vote an Act that establishes the Council for Maltese Living Abroad.

The publication of the Bill was announced in Australia during a visit last month by Malta's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Tonio Borg. During separate meetings with the leaders of the Maltese community in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, the Deputy Prime Minister explained the principle details of the Act.

The Council will be composed of ten members from the Maltese communities, with six being from Australia. The Council that will have the function to advise and be consulted on any matter or measure that impacts Maltese Living Abroad will be chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Minister will not have a vote in the Council. Government will nominate members on the Council after due consideration is given to the advice and recommendations of the Maltese community councils.

At least one of the Council meetings will be held in Malta while other meetings could be held by video conferencing.

Apart from the representatives of the Maltese living abroad, the Council will include five other persons nominated by the Prime Minister, after consulting the Opposition, who can offer expert advice on Maltese communities abroad. These would not be necessarily resident in Malta.

The Council shall submit an annual report that has to be discussed by the Permanent Committee of European and Foreign Affairs and that of Social Affairs.

The act provides for regulations to be made to establish the Maltese Cultural Institute as a separate entity and structure from the Council.

Thus the Act establishes for the first time the legal instrument that gives an effective voice to Maltese living abroad, a promise made by Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi to the representatives that attended the Convention for Maltese Living Abroad in March 2010.

The Act is a result of a broad consultation process that include the Opposition.

Francis Tabone
High Commissioner

23 November 2011-11-24

Kummissarju Gholi ta' Malta



High Commissioner of Malta

MEDIA RELEASE 37-2011

I-Kummissjoni Gholja ta' Malta għanda l-pjacir thabbar li l-Parlament ta' Malta approva b'vot unanimu il-Liġi li jwaqqaf għall-ewwel darba Kunsill għall-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta.

Infakkru li l-pubblikazzjoni ta' din il-liġi thabbret propju l-Awstralja waqt żjara li l-Viċi Prim Ministru u Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin l-Avukat Tonio Borg għamel x-xhar li għadda. F'laqgħat li għamel lill-komunitajiet tal-Maltin f'Sydney, Melbourne u Perth il-Viċi Prim Ministru spjega id-dettalji prinċipali ta' din il-liġi.

Il-Kunsill se jkun magħmul minn għaxar membri mill-komunitajiet Maltin b' sitta jiġu mill-Awstralja. Il-Kunsill li se jkollu funzjoni li jagħti pariri u jiġi konsultat, ikun presjedut mill-Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin li però ma jkollux vot taħt ebda ċirkostanza. Il-Kunsill għandu jiġi konsultat dwar kull liġi jew miżura li tolqot lill-Maltin ta' barra. In-nomini jsiru mill-Gvern iżda trid tittiehed konsiderazzjoni ġusta lill-pariri u rakkomondazzjonijiet tal-kunsilli tal-komunitajiet Maltin.

Mill-inqas laqgħa waħda tal-Kunsill fis-sena trid issir f' Malta. Laqgħat oħrajn jistgħu jsiru permezz ta' *video conferencing*.

Minn barra r-rappreżentanti tal-Maltin ta' barra fil-Kunsill, ikun hemm ukoll ħames membri nominati mill-Prim Ministru wara konsultazzjoni

mal-Opposizzjoni, li jkunu esperti Maltin dwar il-komunitajiet Maltin ta` barra, kemm jekk igħixu Malta u kemm jekk le.

Il-Kunsill għandu jhejji Rapport Annwali li jigi diskuss fil-Kumitat Permanenti tal-Affarijiet Barranin u Ewropej u dak tal-Affarijiet Soċjali.

Il-ligi tagħti lok li jsiru regolamenti sabiex jitwaqqaf Istitut Kulturali Malti li jkun separat bħala struttura u bħala organu mill-Kunsill.

B`hekk fuq talba tal-komunitajiet Maltin kif espressa mir-rapprezentanti li attendew il-Konvenzjoni li saret f` Marzu 2010, u bi twettiq tal-wegħda illi l-Prim Ministru Gonzi għamel waqt dik il-Konvenzjoni, hemm għall-ewwel darba mwaqqaf b`ligi Kunsill illi jkun il-lehen tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra. Dan jaqbel mal-politika tal-Gvern li l-Maltin li jgħixu barra ma jitqisux biss bħala emigranti iżda bħala Maltin daqs il-Maltin li jgħixu Malta.

L-ligi hija frott ta` konsultazzjoni sfiqa inkluz mal-Opposizzjoni.

Francis Tabone
Kummissarju Gholi

23 ta' Novembru 2011