

# Australian Minister on Maltese meat imports

(Reuter's Service)

CANBERRA, March 30. Maltese imports of Australian beef featured in a question and answer in the Australian Senate on March 28.

Queensland National Country Party Senator Ronald Maunsell asked:

"Last week I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Primary Industry a question in regard to a press report that Malta had cancelled meat imports from Australia. Can the Minister inform the Senate whether the Government has received further information which would clarify the situation?"

Science and Environment Minister, Senator James Webster replied:

"The Office of the Minister for Trade and Resources, Mr. Anthony, provided me with some information. I understand that what Senator Maunsell has said previously is substantially correct. Recently the Maltese Government approached the Australian Government with a view to securing a special price for beef because recent quotations were significantly higher than in 1977.

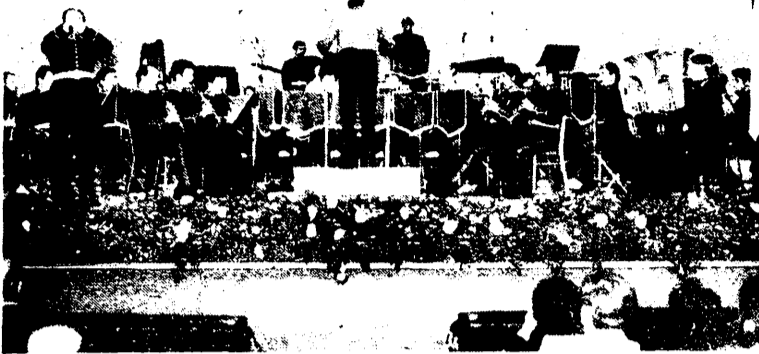
"I understand that the Australian Government replied that Australia was unable to offer meat to Malta below current market prices and that exports were handled by private Australian companies.

"It was pointed out also that

world prices for beef had risen substantially over the past two years. Australian beef, of necessity, was being sold very cheaply in 1977 in the face of world over-supply and at levels well below the cost of production of cattle in Australia.

"The Maltese Government has not advised the Australian Government of any decision to discontinue imports of beef from Australia. Therefore the High Commissioner has been requested to clarify the position.

"Mr. Anthony states that he understands that the Maltese Government recently purchased quantities of pork from Denmark. The greater part of those purchases was made as a consequence of most of Malta's pig population being eliminated by an outbreak of African Swine Fever. Senator Maunsell might have noted that the Maltese Government issued a press release which suggested that a move was afoot in the Australian Senate to inflict serious harm on Malta and her people by persuading the Australian Government to put pressure on the European Economic Community not to sell meat to the Maltese Government. Any suggestion that any move is afoot in the Senate adversely to affect the welfare of the Maltese people is certainly and clearly without any substance whatever."



## Floodlit harbour

The Royal Navy's 6,000-ton missile destroyer H.M.S. London, which sails out tomorrow at 11 a.m. with the last Commander British Forces Malta, brights up Grade Harbour with powerful and effective floodlights. In the foreground is Senglea bastion, one of the many high ramparts around Grand Harbour which is floodlit in connexion with the March 31 celebrations.

## FAREWELL CONCERT AT MANOEL

The audience which packed the Manoel Theatre on Thursday evening burst out singing "Auld Lang Syne" at the end of a concert by the combined bands of the Armed Forces of Malta and the British Commando Forces, Royal Marines. Highlight of the concert was the presentation of the "Parting Song" composed by Rear Admiral O.N.A. Cecil, the Commander British Forces Malta, to lyrics by the President of the Republic, Dr. Anton Buttigieg.

It was a moving moment when both the President and the Admiral came out together on the floodlit stage and embraced. Resounding applause came from the audience who showered the stage with flowers. Before the end of the event as the audience sang Auld Lang Syne, people from different walks of life at the Manoel shook hands in an occasion that was most touching.

Lt. A. Chircop, (top picture) directed the AFM Band while Capt. H.C. Farlow (lower picture) directed the Band of the Royal Marines. At right are the President and Mrs. Buttigieg as they arrived for the farewell concert.

## COL. GADDAFI IN MALTA

(Cont. from Page 1)

Times) were not allowed by the airport authorities to accompany other reporters on the apron side of the VIP lounge. Maltese reporters were told to adhere to these instructions after Mr. Toni Pellegrini, Director of Information, was requested to intervene. Maltese reporters were later placed in an office of the Civil Aviation Department where they could see the arrival at some distance but without being able to hear what Col. Gaddafi could have said. Reporting representatives of the Libyan press, however, were at the VIP lounge area.

Alouette 111 helicopters, made available to Malta some months ago but still flown by Libyan pilots until Maltese counterparts complete their training, flew low over areas of Luqa Airport and on other areas when Col. Gaddafi, accompanied by Dr. Buttigieg, was driven on to Verdala Castle.

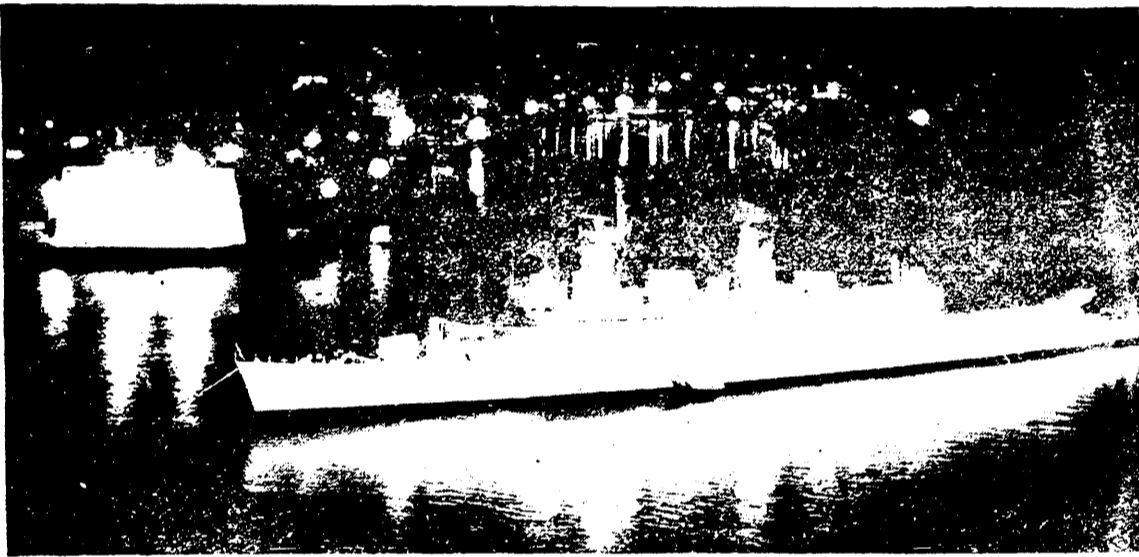
The Police had a tough task to clear a path through the Libyan welcome parties as they crowded the official car when it came out of the airport. There were also Arab tribesmen riding traditionally decorated white horses. They fired blank shots from rifles as Colonel Gaddafi started on his way to Verdala Castle.

The Libyan students and the members of the Peoples Congresses chanted energetically led by youngsters equipped with loudspeakers. The Libyans made their way to Luqa in a variety of vehicles, including four buses brought over from Tripoli on the cruise liner Toletela which is serving as a floating hotel in Grand Harbour.

During the morning, the imported buses led by a Libyan registered Land Rover equipped with a loudspeaker, toured various areas of Malta with Libyans waving Libyan flags and chanting Arab songs.

The members of the Diplomatic Corps, who were at the airport and who were presented to Col. Gaddafi, were the French Ambassador, the British High Commissioner, the Chinese Ambassador, the German Ambassador, and the Australian Acting High Commissioner.

President Gaddafi will be delivering a speech at the Mediterranean Conference Centre Valetta, today at 5.30 p.m. The general public is invited to attend.



## Conservative M.P. killed

(Cont. from Page 1)

He recently said a campaign by 370 convicted guerillas in Northern Ireland's Maze prison to be classified as political prisoners was "a cheap propaganda exercise".

The blast was faintly heard inside the debating chamber of the House of Commons.

His voice breaking with emotion, Mr. Cocks told the stunned Parliamentarians: "It is with the deepest regret that I have to inform the House that an explosion has occurred on the precincts of Parliament...."

"The whole House will join with me in expressing utmost abhorrence of this outrage."

Mr. Neave was the most prominent British public figure to be assassinated in London since the IRA killed Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in 1921. He was a former British Army Chief who campaigned for Northern Ireland's union with Britain.

Mr. Neave was one of Mrs. Thatcher's closest aides and masterminded her successful bid to take over leadership of the Conservative Party in 1975.

Her first reaction to his assassination was that it would make no difference to her campaign to become Britain's — and Europe's — first woman Prime Minister.

She said his death was a tragedy.

The last Member of Parliament to be murdered in the British Parliament was Spencer Perceval, who was Prime Minister when he was shot in the lobby of the House of Commons in 1812.

The IRA has unleashed a new wave of attacks on what it calls "British interests".

One of its top men in Belfast has admitted it was involved in the killing of Britain's Ambassador in Holland a week ago —

Sir Richard Sykes was shot as he was getting into his car outside his residence in the Hague.

Mr. Neave's political agent said tonight: "He knew he was a target, all his constituency staff have known for a long time that he was at risk".

Prime Minister James Callaghan said he was shocked and appalled by the cowardly murder of Airey Neave and described him as a distinguished and very brave man.

## LIBERALS WIN BY-ELECTION

LONDON, March 30.

Britain's general election campaign was jolted today by surprise opinion poll findings and a freak Parliamentary by-election result.

A Gallup poll in the Daily Telegraph showed the Conservative lead over Labour had dropped to seven per cent compared with fourteen and a half per cent two weeks ago and 20 per cent last month.

The biggest upset was the by-election in the Seedy Edge Hill constituency of Liverpool which produced a spectacular victory for the third-ranking middle-of-the-road Liberal Party.

Last night its candidate 28-year-old David Alton, won Edge Hill by a big majority.

Labour, which had held the seat since World War Two gathered less than half the Liberal vote. The Conservative candidate polled so badly he lost his 150 sterling deposit for failing to attract one eighth of the vote.

Edge Hill, suffering from grim housing problems, is not a typical constituency and most politicians were not putting too much importance on the result.

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