

## HELLENISM IN THE ANTIPODES

ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΝΤΕΠΙΣΤΕΛΛΑΟΝΤΟΣ ΜΕΛΟΥΣ κ. HON. E. G. WHITLAM, AC, QC

*In January 1788 one of the world's two superpowers built an English coastal town on the most remote and sparsely populated continent. Today Australia is one of the most ethnically diverse societies in the world, drawn from more than 140 nations.*

*In the capital of Greece it will be noted that the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Multicultural Affairs in the national government of Australia is Nicholas Bolkus and that in the State Government of New South Wales, the most populous State in Australia, the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs is Michael Photios. In the State Parliament of Queensland, the most rapidly growing State, the Speaker is Dimitrios Fouras, whose brother, Andreas, was last week reelected to the Greek National Assembly at the top of the poll for the nomos of Patras.*

## AUSTRALIA'S GREEK HERITAGE

*Within the Academy of Athens, I can quote the words of King Constantine II on his visit to the Sydney exhibit at the session of the International Olympic Committee at Lausanne four months ago:*

There are more people who speak Greek in Melbourne than in any city in the world other than Athens and Thessaloniki.

*The census in 1901, the year that the six British colonies became the Australian nation, showed that there were 815 men and 63 women who had been born in Greece. The Australian Government established a Migration Office in Greece in 1952. The census in 1991 showed that 136, 327 inhabitants of Australia had been born in Greece and 22, 212 in Cyprus and that, in addition, 150, 913 and 20, 157 inhabitants of Australia had a parent or both parents born in Greece and Cyprus respectively. The corresponding numbers who spoke Greek at home were 123, 862, 16, 220, 111, 771 and 11, 850.*

*These census figures demonstrate the strong commitment of Greek parents and their children to maintain their Greek heritage in Australia through succeeding generations. In the English-speaking country of Australia, only the Italian*

*language is spoken by more inhabitants than the Greek language. Moreover, 90 per cent of Greeks who have come to live in Australia have taken out Australian citizenship. Australia has the largest Cypriot community in the world after Cyprus itself.*

*I doubt that this situation was in the minds of those who formed the Academy in 1927. I confess it was not in my mind when I graduated in Ancient Greek at the University of Sydney at the end of 1937. The University was founded in 1852. One of the first four professors was the Professor of Classics and from 1885 to 1991 there was always a separate Professor of Ancient Greek. In 1963, however, the first Professor of Classical Archaeology was appointed and in 1983 the first Professor of Modern Greek. In 1992, the overall responsibility for classics and ancient history was taken over by a single professor.*

*As the first Australian without Greek ancestors to have been honoured by admission to the Academy of Athens, it might be appropriate for me to reflect on these changes.*

#### BRITISH LINKS

*My own first visits to Greece and Cyprus were in a British context. In 1962 after Britain applied to join the European Community, I visited several other Community and Commonwealth countries as Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party to assess the consequences for Australia if Britain was admitted. Since Greece had become an Associate Member of the Community in July 1961 I visited Athens and was briefed by Ambassador Leonidas Papagos, the bearer of a great name. In the next few years the political situation in Greece required my visits to be less formal; as late as April 1973 I chose as Prime Minister to make only a technical stopover in Rhodes.*

*In the 1960s I visited the Australian Police contingents which had been stationed as part of the UN Peace Force in Cyprus since 1964 and I circled the British sovereign bases. I was received by Archbishop Makarios III, who, before the British Government relegated him to the Seychelles, had been the first Christian Prelate to hold great political office under the English Crown since Cardinal Wolsey. In 1960 he was elected President of a newly independent Republic of Cyprus.*

## DEMOKRATIA AND PRAXIKOPIMA

*After its election at the end of 1972, my Government inaugurated many welfare, educational and broadcasting services for immigrants. After the events of July 1974 and the republican referendum of 8 December 1974 had made *d e m o k r a t i a* a reality in both senses of that Greek word, I decided it was time for an Australian Prime Minister to make an official visit to Greece. It was arranged that Mr Constantine Karamanlis and I should meet on 2 January 1975. Before arriving from London, my wife and I and my Special Minister of State, Hon. Lionel Bowen, were to attend the unveiling of a memorial erected by the citizens of Rethymnon in honour of their Australian comrades-in-arms who had been among the 16 700 Australian soldiers who served in Greece during April and May 1941.*

*I had to make a sudden return to Australia in the aftermath of the cyclone which flattened Darwin on Christmas Day. I was able to rejoin the rest of the party in Iraklion on New Year's Eve and to visit Olympia on New Year's Day before, as my opponents proclaimed, returning from the ruins of Darwin to the ruins of Athens.*

*I was the first head of government to meet Mr Karamanlis in his new position. We decided to draft an Australia-Greece Cultural Exchange Agreement. Excavations were soon begun at the site of Torone under the leadership of Alexander Cambitoglou, who had inspired a great interest in archaeology at the University of Sydney as Professor of Classical Archaeology and Curator of the Nicholson Museum, named after its founder and greatest benefactor, Sir Charles Nicholson Chancellor from 1854 to 1862.*

*In November 1975 the Governor-General of Australia, without consulting the Queen or me, perpetrated a *p r a x i k o p i m a* which delayed the conclusion of the cultural agreement for four years. One *p r a x i k o p i m a* proved enough in Australia. I became an overt republican. A referendum to abolish the Australian monarchy is expected to be held before Sydney hosts the Olympic Games in the year 2000.*

*The vice-regal coup also had an irreparable consequence. The government was establishing a building, a collection and a statute for a National Gallery of Australia. The gallery had been offered a bronze athlete of the school of Lysippus which had been recovered from the sea bed off Fano, beyond territorial waters, in 1963. As the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, the Louvre and the Museo Nazionale*

*in Reggio di Calabria demonstrate, such bronzes can now come to light only from shipwrecks.*

*I had been shown round Olympia by the great Director of Antiquities in Greece, Nikos Yalouris. He had been Greece's first archaeologist diver, having explored the sea-bed off Katakolo in 1957-1960. I sought his advice on the Lysippus. He later let me know that its provenance was impeccable. Thereupon I arranged to pay for it in two instalments, the first immediately the 1975 Budget was passed, and the second after the 1976 Budget. One of my successor's first acts was to cancel the order. The Getty Museum in Malibu, which I had visited in September 1974 on my way home from the General Assembly, was happy to pay half as much again as we would have paid. It is now the centrepiece of their expanding sculpture collection. One of my predecessors had described the National Library of Australia as Australia's Parthenon, despite the different arrangement of columns. He had bought for it a copy of a reissue of Magna Carta by King John's grandson, Edward I. In the National Gallery of Australia the Lysippus would have been a more authentic part of the Australian heritage. My successor compounded his injury by an unsurpassed display of ignorance. He cancelled the order on the grounds that it was an «ancient bronze of unknown authorship». Would it enhance the value of the Charioteer of Delphi, the Horses of St Mark's, the Poseidon from Artemision, the Ephebe from Agde or the Warriors of Riace if we knew the identity of their creators?*

#### CYPRUS AND ROYALTY

*There will be renewed international interest in Cyprus, the other Greek-speaking country, during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) between 20 and 25 October in Limassol. Queen Elizabeth II is recognised as Head of the Commonwealth by all 50 of its members and as Head of State by 16 of them. When I attended CHOGM in Jamaica in April 1975, the President of Cyprus had become our doyen. The group photograph was taken on Her Majesty's Yacht Britannia with Makarios III sitting at the right hand of Elizabeth II.*

*It is eight centuries since an English monarch visited Cyprus. Richard I Lionheart, on the Third Crusade, learned that some of his fleet had been shipwrecked on Cyprus (April 1191). The usurping Basileus Isaac Komnenos held the crusaders captive and threatened the ship carrying Richard's affianced bride Berengaria. In early May Richard forced a landing, defeated Isaac, and ultimately took him captive. He conquered the island and appropriated the large treasure accumulated by Isaac. Even before Isaac's capture, Richard's marriage was*

celebrated at Limassol (12 May). It is believed that the marriage was not consummated there, or ever. Richard first appointed English justiciars to govern Cyprus, then sold it to the Templars. When they defaulted in 1192, he made Guy de Lusignan, the titular king of Jerusalem, his regent.

#### PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

King Richard showed how easy it would be for the Crusaders to sever and rule parts of the Byzantine Empire. The Fourth Crusade captured Constantinople instead of Jerusalem in 1204. The next year the Villehardouin family established the Principality of Achaia with its capital at Andravida and port at Clarence. For the visit to Olympia on New Year's Day 1975 my aircraft had to use the facilities of the Greek Air Force base at Andravida. Our Greek hosts were somewhat astonished when I asked to visit the remains of the Catholic Cathedral before taking off for Athens.

The heiress of the last Villehardouin Prince of Achaia, Goulielmos II, married Florent of Hainault. His grandniece, Philippa of Hainault, brought the title of Duke of Clarence to the English royal family when she married Edward III. Lionel, their second surviving son, was made Duke of Clarence. The second duke was Thomas, second son of Henry IV. The third was George, who was drowned to the satisfaction of his brothers Edward IV and the future Richard III in a butt of Malmsey, the wine exported from Monemvasia. The fourth Duke of Clarence became William IV: his pre nuptial children were given the surname Fitz Clarence and a descendant of one of them was Governor - General of Australia between 1961 and 1965. The last prince to bear the title was Albert Victor, who died before his father became Edward VII.

The Crusaders also established a Duchy of Athens in 1204. Gautier II de Brienne, who had inherited the title of Duke of Athens, emerged as signore of Florence at the time when Boccaccio (1313-1375) had returned to live there. In the seventh story of the second day of the Decameron a princess from the eastern Mediterranean on her way to marry a king in the western Mediterranean is stranded in Clarence; the Prince takes possession of her but soon afterwards he is killed and she abducted by the Duke of Athens. Chaucer visited Florence as an emissary of Edward III in 1373 and later abridged and adapted Boccaccio's *Teseida* as the «The Knight's Tale». In it, and in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the pre-historic King Theseus of Athens was transformed into a mediaeval duke of Athens.

*This may be an occasion for me to bring together the dynastic and hierarchic links between Greece and Britain which Australians have inherited.*

*A Cretan, Petros Filargis, graduated as Bachelor of Theology at Oxford and in 1409 was elected as Pope Alexander V. Manuel Chrysoloras, whose lectures on Greek in Florence (1397-1400) revived Greek learning in Western Europe, accompanied and represented the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos on visits to the Italian, French and English courts to seek aid against the Turks. On his visit to England in 1408 he searched for Latin manuscripts. Andronikos Kallistos, who had taken refuge in Italy with Cardinal Bessarion after the fall of Constantinople, settled in London in 1476 and died there in 1486.*

*Under James I of England rapprochement was attempted between the Church of England and the Ecumenical Patriarchate Cyril Lucaris, influenced by studies in Venice and Geneva before his election as Patriarch of Alexandria (1602) and Constantinople (1620), sent Metrophanes Critopoulos, later Patriarch of Alexandria, to study at Balliol College, Oxford (1617-1622) and under Archbishop Abbot in London (1622-1624). In 1642, under Charles I, Nathaniel Kanopius graduated Bachelor of Theology at Oxford, where he introduced coffee; he became Bishop of Smyrna in 1651. In 1662 Charles II decorously despatched the Earl of Castlemaine, the husband of his principal mistress, to spend two years with the Venetian fleet sent to defend and recover Crete.*

*For the coronation of George II, Britain's second Hanoverian King, Handel wrote an opera on Richard's conquest of Cyprus. Richard's odyssey homewards had brought him to Corfu in 1193 but George II's grandson George III became the Sovereign Protector of the United States of the Ionian Islands. Britain captured Ithaki, Kefallinia, Zakynthos and Kithira from Napoleon's forces in 1809. At auctions in Zakynthos in 1813 the British Museum, supported by the Prince Regent, later George IV, bought 23 slabs from the frieze of the Temple of Apollo Epikourios at Bassae and the family of the future King Otho of Greece bought the marbles from Aigina for Munich. In 1815 the Ionian Islands were declared an independent State under the protection of the British crown.*

*The Ionian Islands passed to George IV in 1820, to his brother William IV in 1830 and to their niece Queen Victoria in 1837. Her son Edward, Prince of Wales, visited Corfu in 1862. In March 1863 he married Princess Alexandra of the Danish House of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg and her brother, Prince William, became King of the Hellenes with the Hanoverian and Greek name George I. Britain immediately gave him the Ionian Islands.*

*Britain then sought an alternative base in the Eastern Mediterranean. It took over the administration of Cyprus in June 1878 on the eve of the Congress of Berlin, at which Austria-Hungary was allowed to occupy the Turkish provinces of Bosnia-Herzegovina. When Russia, Britain and France declared war on Turkey in November 1914, Britain annexed Cyprus. In September 1915, when Bulgaria became an ally of Germany and Austria-Hungary and invaded Eastern Serbia and Serbian Macedonia, Britain offered to transfer Cyprus to King Constantine I on condition that he declared war on his brother-in-law, the German Emperor. He refused and the opportunity of enosis was lost.*

*To complete the family saga, one of George I's descendants was born in Corfu and married the Queen of England. Their second son is named after his grandfather, Prince Andrew of Greece. Today the links between the Greek-speaking nations and Australia depend on migrants not monarchs.*

#### CULTURAL RELATIONS

*It should not be thought that the reactionary xenophobia which denied the Lysippus to the National Gallery of Australia was always to be found among leading Australian politicians. Eighty years earlier James Martin, premier of NSW, sought the advice of Sir John Young, governor of NSW, about a statue for his harbour-side mansion in Sydney, «Clarens». Young, who had been the eighth and last but one of the Lord High Commissioners of the Ionian Islands, advised him to commission a replica of the choregic monument of Lysikrates which stands beneath the Acropolis. It is now in the Sydney Botanic Gardens, close to Martin Place and Sir John Young Crescent.*

*As the years passed, my successor came to see merit in Australia's Greek legacy and Greek population. The Agreement on Cultural Exchange was at last signed in November 1979. It entered into force in November 1981. At the same time and as its first fruits, Alexander Cambitoglu was able to establish the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens.*

*In Zakynthos on Saturday 5 March 1983 I listened to the results of the Australian elections in which my party was restored to power under Mr Bob Hawke. During the interregnum I had made some visits in the Ionian Islands. The first Greek migrants had come to Australia from there. Three great poets were born in Zakynthos, Foscolo in 1778, Kalvos in 1792 and Solomos in 1798; all went to Italy for their education, the first and second died in England and the second and*

third became the first great poets in *K a t h a r e v o u s a*. The fashion for poetry in *d e m o t i k e* was established by Aristotelis Valaoritis (1824-1879). After completing his education in Pisa (1842-1848) and travelling widely in England, he returned in 1850 to his native Levkas, which he represented in the Ionian Constituent Assembly and till 1869 in the Greek National Assembly. The most celebrated person from the Ionian Islands to live in Australia was Countess Diamantina Roma, a daughter of the President of the Ionian Senate, whose family had long served in the Venetian dominions. Her husband, Sir George Bowen, had been rector of the Ionian Academy from 1847 to 1851 and chief secretary of the government of the Ionian Islands from 1854. He was a partisan and protégé of Gladstone. Between November 1858 and February 1859 Gladstone investigated Ionian wishes for accession to Greece and then appointed him the first governor of Queensland (1859-1868). Bowen was later made governor of Victoria (1873-1879). He and his wife spoke Italian between themselves. Her names are to be found throughout Queensland and also in Victoria and the Indian Ocean.

On Monday 7 March 1983 Mr Andreas Papandreou received me in Athens. He and Bob Hawke had dined with me at the Prime Minister's Lodge in Canberra in April 1974, four months before he returned from exile to Greece. He told me that Ms Melina Mercouri had been invited to visit Australia by my successor and Mr Hawke's predecessor. He asked whether Mr Hawke's Government would proceed with the invitation. I assured him, and the next day I assured her, that she would be more welcome than ever. She was the star of the Greek National Day celebrations in Canberra two weeks later. One of her triumphant appearances was at the Castellorizian Club in the Sydney electorate of Lionel Bowen, who was now Deputy Prime Minister.

In August 1983 I was appointed Australia's permanent delegate to Unesco and Australia's representative on the World Heritage Committee, which inscribes properties on the World Heritage List. I now had opportunities to visit Greece not as the head of the Australian Government but as a representative of it. In November 1983 Patrick White, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, and I were the two Australian philhellenes invited to the ceremonies marking the tenth anniversary of the assault on the Polytechnic.

In 1983 the Ministers of Culture of the European Community, meeting at the Zappio, adopted Ms Mercouri's idea that each year one important city should be chosen as the focus of European culture. They decided that in 1985 Athens should be the first cultural capital. In April 1985 at the Zappio Ms Mercouri chaired the

*4th session of the intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation. The Committee implements the 1970 Unesco Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. On the day after the 1975 πραξικοπήμα my government had intended to announce that Australia would ratify the Convention; Australia at last did so on 30 October 1989.*

*I attended the Unesco meeting at the Zappio. I learned to refer to the Parthenon marbles in the British Museum rather than to the Elgin marbles in order to emphasise that the marbles were not freestanding but were taken from a building which had a sacred significance. I recalled that Byron had condemned the conduct of Elgin and the British Museum at the time, while Elgin's son and grandson had gone on to perpetrate further imperial spoliations. The son destroyed the Summer Palace outside Beijing in the course of the British punitive expedition against China in 1860 and the grandson, as Viceroy of India, appropriated the Koh-i-noor diamond for the British Crown.*

*After finishing my term as Australia's permanent delegate to Unesco in November 1986 I remained for three years a member of the Executive Board of Unesco and of the World Heritage Committee. I have had not only the joy of helping to inscribe Ms Mercouri's first nomination, the temple at Bassae, on the World Heritage List in 1986 but the privilege of visiting the dozen other properties nominated by this great Greek Minister of Culture. Tomorrow the Australian Ambassador will take me on my third visit to Mystra in order to observe the impressive reconstruction work on the Palace and the Porch added by Princess Isabella (in Latin, Elizabetha), wife of the Despot Manuel Kantakouzenos and daughter of a later Guy de Lusignan.*

*Between November 1988 and July 1989 the Papandreou Government approved and the Hawke Government indemnified the outstanding exhibition of the Treasures of Ancient Macedonia at the State museums in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney.*

*The National Gallery of Australia was opened by the Queen in October 1982. In March 1990, during my period as the chairman of its Council, it secured an exhibition of 90 objects from the British Museum itself. The Director of the British Museum said: «The exhibition is without precedent in the history of the British Museum». The British Minister said: «It is the first time the British Museum has lent a complete exhibition to another institution and I am glad that it is an Austra-*

*lian institution which is the recipient». The exhibition proved the insatiable appetite which Australians have developed in the last 20 years for viewing objects of exceptional beauty and importance. It drew over 190 000 visitors to the National Gallery.*

*One of the architects now entrusted with stabilising the columns of the Parthenon was born in Australia to Greek parents and acquired his professional skills in Australia.*

*Ten days ago a committee of governmental experts on the international protection of cultural property, which included representatives from Greece and Australia, finalised a draft Unidroit Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural objects. The text must now be referred to a diplomatic conference, which is likely to be held in the northern autumn.*

#### 1995. UNITED NATIONS YEAR FOR TOLERANCE

*Since I have been specifically admitted to the Moral and Political Sciences Section of the Academy, it might be acceptable for me to conclude this address by referring to a great current issue which Greeks in Australia are helping to solve and which, if I may presume to say, the Government of Greece is well placed to solve.*

*The people of Greece were the first in the Balkans to have their independence internationally recognised. On the way back to Paris from the Zappio meeting in April 1985 my wife and I visited Kalavryta. We shall never forget the symbols of Greek devotion to independence: the monument to Archbishop Germanos who on 25 March 1821 raised the white cross on a sky-blue background and the memorial to the 1436 males of all ages who were killed on 13 December 1943 as a reprisal for the deaths of Germans who were occupying Greece.*

*When Hitler dissolved Yugoslavia and invaded Greece in 1941, there were very few Australians who, or whose parents, had come from the Balkans. Fifty years later, when the policies of Hans-Dietrich Genscher led to the second dissolution of Yugoslavia, there were hundreds of thousands of Australians who, or whose parents, had come from the Balkans and, in particular, from all parts of Yugoslavia and Greece. I can understand the apprehension which Greeks feel about events in neighbouring countries. Greeks can understand the strains in multicultural Australia, where large groups of Balkan birth and parentage live side by side in the same communities.*

*In Australia the tensions from the Gulf War had elements of both racial vilification and religious intolerance. Manifestations of these evils were directed*

against Jewish men and Arab women because some wore distinctive head dress. As seen from Australia the strife in Bosnia-Herzegovina arises from religious rather than racial intolerance. For at least 1000 years the population has been of the same race and has used the same language. The doctrinal division between Catholic and Orthodox Christians has run for 1000 years through that very region. The Ottoman conquest 600 years ago produced many converts to Islam, particularly around the military and political strongpoints; Orthodox and Catholic Christians regard the Muslims as renegades.

The effect of the Emperor Franz Josef's protectorate over these Turkish provinces was exacerbated when he annexed them in 1908, when Hitler incorporated them in his puppet Greater Croatia in 1941 and when the United Nations admitted them as a separate nation in 1992. The admission was precipitate and ill-advised. After World War I and the fall of the Orthodox Russian Emperor, the Lutheran German Emperor, the Catholic Austrian Emperor and the Ottoman Caliph, the League of Nations often admitted the successor States after ascertaining the views of the inhabitants of the border areas. The borders of Bosnia-Herzegovina are those fixed for internal and not international reasons between the republics which constituted the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The UN has been stampeded into imposing sanctions on Serbia although it is clear that, man for man, the Catholics who wish to join Croatia and the Muslims who wish to preserve the old federal borders have perpetrated as many crimes as the Orthodox who wish to join Serbia.

In February this year the Australian Government declared that the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief was an international instrument relating to human rights and freedoms for the purposes of the *H u m a n R i g h t s A c t*. In March the Government was reelected but, like the Governments between 1965 and 1975 and since 1981, it did not have a majority in the Senate. In May the Opposition moved to revoke the Government's February declaration. Its arguments demonstrated that a religious xenophobia persisted in some reactionary circles which corresponded to the cultural xenophobia which lost the *Lysippus* at the end of 1975. Greek communities, forming the original and largest Orthodox communities in Australia, took an honourable and effective part in helping the Australian Government to repel the attempted revocation three weeks ago.

The UN and Unesco will celebrate their 50th anniversaries in 1995. Eleven months ago, the UN General Assembly welcomed the initiative of Unesco in pro-

*claiming 1995 United Nations Year for Tolerance and encouraged Unesco to prepare a Declaration on Tolerance. These proposals are on the agenda of the current Unesco General Conference and UN General Assembly.*

*The location of the Greek nation and the composition of the Australian nation give exceptional responsibilities and opportunities to persons in government, administration, education and the media in both nations to cooperate in advancing the proposals in 1994 and 1995. That is the most recent reason why I have enjoyed my relations with Greeks in Australia and why I am deeply grateful for my admission to the Academy of Athens.*