

# The Cyprus Problem in Australia

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## RESUMÉ

La question chypriote occupe une position visible au sein de la politique australienne qui "dans des conditions normales serait traitée comme marginale". Ceci n'est plus évident qu'au niveau du parlement fédéral, où on trouve que la question chypriote a été soulevée approximativement 274 fois dans les débats parlementaires aussi bien de la Chambre des Représentants que du Sénat. Cet article procure un compte normatif et déductif de ce phénomène en établissant d'abord un cadre conceptuel de la connection de l'Australie avec le problème de Chypre. Il sera souligné que la formation d'une politique australienne sur la question chypriote réside sur la capacité de la communauté gréco-australienne d'agir comme un groupe d'intérêt dans un environnement politique pluraliste. Cependant, quelqu'un aurait soutenu qu'en comparaison avec d'autres pays qui ont une importante communauté grecque l'intérêt national immédiat de l'Australie ainsi que sa sphère d'influence ont restreint tout rôle essentiel qu'elle pourrait jouer dans la question chypriote. Sous un tel prisme, la présente étude examinera également comment et dans quelle mesure la question chypriote a été influencée par la relation tripartite entre la communauté gréco-australienne (diaspora), le pays d'accueil (l'Australie) et le pays-d'origine (la Grèce et Chypre).

## ABSTRACT

The Cyprus issue occupies a visible position within Australian politics which 'under normal circumstances would have been treated as marginal'. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in the federal parliament, which has accumulated approximately 274 entries in the parliamentary debates of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. This article provides both a normative and deductive account of this phenomenon by first establishing a conceptual framework of Australia's connection with the Cyprus problem. It will be pointed out that the formation of an Australian policy on Cyprus rests on the capacity of the Greek-Australian community to act as an interest group within a pluralist political environment. However, it would be argued that in comparison to other countries which maintain a sizeable Greek community, the subsequent relevance of an issue such as Cyprus to Australia's immediate national interest and sphere of influence restricts any substantive role that Australia can undertake in the conflict. Within such a prism, the paper will also examine how and to what extent the Cyprus issue in Australia has been determined by the triadic relationship between the Greek-Australian community (diaspora), the host-country (Australia) and the home-country (Greece and Cyprus).

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There is no doubt that the most profound ethnic (national) issue having preoccupied and galvanised the Greek *paroikia* (community) in Australian politics has been the Cyprus problem. Its longevity in Australian politics - as illustrated in the federal parliamentary debates - essentially reflects the Cyprus problem's own turbulent historical nature as a protracted international conflict. However, in contrast to the abundance of primary material, very little - in the nature of studies - has been written on the Cyprus issue in Australia.<sup>1</sup> Only recently has there been some attempt to research this unique occurrence of international relations as a case study for the much broader field of diaspora politics.

Even though migration is an ancient socio-political phenomenon, as Professor James N. Rosenau remarked, ethno-diaspora politics has escaped the attention of international theorists, who have failed to find a place for it in their analytical frameworks. Within the context of an ideological reassessment of the structural and procedural changes to the conventional view of power relations in the 'age of subgroupism', diaspora politics has become an important tendency in the study of the globalisation of politics.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, diaspora politics falls within the demarcation barrier that separates domestic and foreign politics.

The introductory nature of this article endeavours to provide a contextual framework for the Cyprus issue in Australian politics by focusing primarily on its evolution and presence in the Federal Parliament. The reason for concentrating on the Federal Parliament is that given Australia's constitutional and governmental structures and processes, Australian foreign policy is formulated, debated and ratified in federal parliament. For all intents and purposes, parliament - especially the House of Representatives - is considered the epicentre of institutional politics in Australia.

The Cyprus issue, which 'under normal circumstances would have been treated as marginal', occupies a visible position within Australian politics.<sup>3</sup> The significance of this presence only becomes more apparent when we attempt to search for the Cyprus issue's placement

in Australia's overall foreign affairs agenda. According to the Department of Foreign Affairs Report of the mid-eighties it does not feature in any of its seven main areas of concern (ie. disarmament, Australian New Zealand United States Alliance ANZUS, agricultural and trade relations, apartheid, Australia's participation in the UN, the Asia-Pacific region, and general). Australia's limitations as a regional middle power compels, according to former Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans,<sup>4</sup> to be selective in the sort of issues [Australia] runs with.<sup>5</sup> Cyprus does not impact on Australia's national interest nor is Australia a major player in the Cyprus dispute. So why has the Cyprus issue preoccupied the parliamentary representatives of this country for over four decades?

In concurring with our assessment, Australian foreign affairs researcher Adam Cobb explained that the 'reason Cyprus has featured far more significantly in Australian foreign policy than its size or distance would otherwise suggest' is due to the fact that Australia has 'a unique (although quite different) historical link' with both Greece and Turkey and that there are many Australians of Greek and Turkish background.<sup>6</sup>

This point was echoed by Prime Minister Robert Hawke<sup>7</sup> in 1983, during his parliamentary report regarding Australia's participation in the Commonwealth five-member Cyprus Action Group. As Hawke explained the reasons for Australia's interest in Cyprus - in addition to the general considerations - were twofold: 'firstly, the very large community in Australia comprising people of Cypriot origin; and secondly, the long-standing Australian participation in the police contingent as part of the United Nations effort on Cyprus.'<sup>8</sup> This was further reiterated by federal Labor Member of Parliament (MP) Leo McLeay<sup>9</sup> who said that 'Australia must play an important role in the resolution of the Cyprus problem, mainly because of the very large Greek Cypriot community in Australia'.<sup>10</sup> Ex-Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam,<sup>11</sup> illustrated the interconnection between Australia's foreign policy on an issue such as Cyprus and 'the effects of migration'. In the account of his government years, *The Whitlam Government 1972-1975*, Whitlam stated that:

"Greeks and Greek Cypriots [had] become permanent settlers in very large numbers and play an active and articulate role in public affairs. Many Turks [had] also come to Australia ... *Australian Governments therefore have had to take more interest in relations between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus than would have been thought necessary before World War. II*".(Emphasis added)

But Whitlam goes even further to admit that relations between the three countries of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey, in turn affected Australia's own relationship with the United States.<sup>12</sup>

The Cyprus issue is now here more present in Australian politics than in the federal parliament which has between 1955 and 1999 accumulated 274 entries in the parliamentary debates of both the House of Representatives (178 entries) and the Senate (96 entries). Undoubtedly, Cyprus's prominence in Australian politics has been largely due to the role that the Greek-Australian community has played, especially since 1974. Despite their various differences and internal conflicts, the Cyprus issue has managed to remain one of the few issues to which all Greek-Australian forces have united behind. This is reflected in their collective adherence to the leadership role of the Panavustraliani Sindonistiki Epitropi Kipriakou Agona (PASEKA - Pan-Australian 'Justice for Cyprus Committee') and its state branches, SEKA, in its political advocacy for the Cyprus problem. A role that has been castigated by some critics of multiculturalism on the basis that such ethnic groups use their electoral strength to lobby the major political parties and individual parliamentarians for their specific homeland ethnic causes.<sup>13</sup> Leaving aside the moral overtones of such an aspersion, this accusation is based on a series of assumptions both about ethnic lobbies as well as the decision making process in the formulation of Australia's foreign policy.

Such criticism does bring into focus another aspect of the Cyprus issue in Australia and diaspora politics in general: That is the so-called 'Greek' electoral power in Australia. Based on demographic statistical analysis of the 1998 federal election results, there appears to be approximately 18-19 (9 Liberal Party and 9-10 ALP parliamentarians)

marginal lower house seats whose Greek-speaking voters outnumber their electoral margin achieved at the last election poll. Theoretically, if they acted as an electoral block, these Greek-speaking voters could have swung the result in these eighteen marginal seats the other way.<sup>14</sup> However, to date, there is no evidence to suggest that voters of Greek-speaking background in these, or any other seat for that matter, act politically as a homogeneous/monolithic group. Nevertheless, parliamentarians in these marginal seats are well aware of their Greek-Australian constituency and some have made an effort to become more active on the Cyprus problem.

However, discussion of the Cyprus issue in Australia cannot take place without a comprehensive understanding of its historical evolution and transformation within the Australian parliament. For the purpose of analytical convenience, the entire period under investigation (1955-1998) has been subdivided into five distinct phases: the first Menzies period of 1955-1957 (peaking in 1956), the second Menzies phase of 1964-1966 (peaking in 1964); the Whitlam/Fraser phase of 1974-1978 (peaking in 1974), the Fraser/Hawke phase of 1980-1985 (peaking in 1983), and the Hawke/Keating/Howard period of 1991-98 (peaking in 1995 and 1996).

Each phase is determined by a combination - in varying degrees - of three contributing forces: the external factor (referring to developments in the broader Cyprus issue); the internal dimension (meaning the interrelationship between the Greek *paroikia/diaspora* and a group of parliamentarians, -including those of Greek background- who over the years and duration of their political careers have developed an affinity with the Cyprus issue and the Greek community). The first two factors have given rise to a third feature, which consists of Australia's participation, involvement and connection with the Cyprus conflict.

A clinical analysis of the Cyprus issue in the House of Representatives reveals that there is a clear correlation between the presence of the Cyprus issue in the federal parliament and developments in the Cyprus conflict.

For example, in late 1955 and 1956 events in Cyprus radically intensified with the British Governor Field Marshall Sir John Harding's imposition of a State of Emergency in Cyprus (26 November 1955); banning of the Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou (AKEL)<sup>15</sup> and other 'unlawful associations' (14 December 1955); deportation and exile to the Seychelles Islands of Archbishop Makarios on 9 March 1956; *Ethniki Organosi Kiprion Agoniston* (EOKA)<sup>16</sup> intensified its armed struggle by launching Operation Forward to Victory.

These developments, introduced the Cyprus issue into the Australian political debate. The debate peaked in 1956, with 12 entries, primarily because of the adversarial interaction between the pro-British philosophy of the Menzies Government and a Labor Opposition, which strongly disagreed with the government's one-dimensional perspective.

A closer examination of the parliamentary debates of this era also reveals an Australian dimension to the discussions on Cyprus. For example in 1956, the Leader of the Opposition, Herbert Evatt<sup>17</sup> proposed to the Prime Minister, Robert Menzies,<sup>18</sup> and the Minister for External Affairs, Richard Casey,<sup>19</sup> that the Australian Government undertake some mediating role in the conflict. Specifically, on 16 May 1956 Evatt asked Menzies if:

"...in the interests of Australia and of its close relationships with ... [Greece and the United Kingdom] and their peoples, will the Prime Minister and his Government consider Australian intervention in the [Cyprus] matter?"

By intervention Evatt did not mean only through the United Nations, 'but [a] direct approach to the governments affected, particularly ... Britain and Greece, in order to determine whether Australia can make any contribution towards reconciling the parties concerned on some basis of justice.'<sup>20</sup> The Menzies Government, whose policy on Cyprus was outlined when the issue was first brought to the Australian parliament on 25 May 1955, ignored the call. In particular, through

a *dorothy dixer*<sup>21</sup> by one of its backbenchers, Philip Lucock<sup>22</sup> inquiring about the government's views on the 'terrorist activities of extremists in Cyprus' who are seeking Enosis with Greece, Casey stated, in clear terms, that 'Australia supports the view that, as the United Kingdom holds sovereignty over Cyprus the General Assembly of the United Nations is not competent to interfere or express an opinion.'<sup>23</sup>

This Menzies policy infuriated Whitlam, who in 1956 castigated the Minister of External Affairs for not even making reference in his statement to the fact that Australia voted against Cyprus (together with West New Guinea) being placed on the UN's General Assembly agenda.<sup>24</sup> Even as late as 1960, Menzies, in answering a question by Opposition Leader, Arthur Calwell,<sup>25</sup> on South Africa and the United Nations, boasted that on Cyprus 'the attitude of the United Kingdom, supported by Australia, was that this was a domestic matter, and not a matter for the United Nations.'<sup>26</sup>

Similarly the second Menzies period was shaped by the events of 1964: the Makarios proposed constitutional amendments (29 November 1963); the outburst of intercommunal fighting between irregulars and the breakdown of the first Cyprus Republic; the threat of a Turkish invasion (25-26 December); the British intervention and the establishment of the 'Greek line'; the Anglo-American plan for the stationing of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) peacekeeping force on the island; Nikita Khrushchev's threat to the United States, United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey; the establishment of the United Nations peace-keeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) by UN Security Council Resolution 186 on 4 March 1964; the Lyndon Johnson letter to Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inonu, (5 June 1964) warning Turkey not to invade Cyprus; the Acheson plan, etc.

After some initial hesitation and pressure by the Opposition, the Menzies Government, through a ministerial statement by the Minister for Defence Paul Hasluck,<sup>27</sup> acceded on 29 March 1964 to the request of the UN Secretary-General (UThant) to provide 'a contingent of 40 police' towards the formation of the UN Civilian Police in Cyprus.<sup>28</sup> Asked by Clyde Camero<sup>29</sup> whether the Australian Government had

'lodged any protest with the Turkish Government against Turkey's bombing and strafing of Cyprus ... and to have the matter raised before the United Nations?', Hasluck maintained a policy distance stating that Australia should not become 'a direct party' in the conflict.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, commitment of Australian police to Cyprus created an organic connection with the Cyprus issue. Their presence alone in Cyprus provided Australia with a second link (the first being the large Greek and Greek-Cypriot migrant communities in Australia) to the Cyprus problem and was reason enough to render on-going monitoring of developments in the island. If anything else, Australian police presence on the island secured reference to the Cyprus issue within the parliament through the need to renew the Australian force's mandate.

The events of 1974 heralded the third phase in Australian-Cyprus relations and catapulted the Cyprus issue into a new and more intense direction within the Australia parliament. Indicative of the severity of the issue is the fact that in the next 25 years, the House of Representatives has preoccupied itself 134 times with Cyprus in comparison to 44 times in the previous 19 years. Bilateral and diplomatic relations between the two countries were upgraded with the establishment of High Commissions in both Nicosia and Canberra in August 1975.<sup>31</sup> The immediate reaction of the Whitlam Government to the crisis of 1974 was in the form of providing direct food aid (canned beef, rice, etc.), free provision of the national airline carrier Qantas to transport quantities of food parcels and other items collected by volunteer organisations in Australia for distribution in Cyprus. In response to an appeal by the UN Secretary-General (Kurt Waldheim), on August 8th 1974 Australia offered to provide a military contingent of about 200 troops to join UNFICYP, but the offer was not taken up; the Australian Government had also taken a receptive approach to the admission of Cypriot refugees to Australia.<sup>32</sup>

On the policy front, two days after the coup d'état Whitlam (15 July 1974) recognised only Makarios 'as the president of Cyprus' and 'head of the constitutional Government of that country'. Although



Whitlam was not prepared to 'say that the government in Athens was behind the coup in Cyprus' he did state that 'Greek officers overthrew both governments - their own country's Government and the Government of Cyprus.' Furthermore, the Labor Government supported the British view that the Greek officers should be withdrawn from Cyprus.<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to note that in 1974 the Senate recorded 15 entries on Cyprus - in contrast to the House of Representatives' seven - and this was largely due to the fact that the foreign minister, Senator Don Willesee,<sup>34</sup> came from that chamber.

Willesee best outlined Australia's policy to the 1974 events on August 16th, when he deplored 'the renewed outbreak of very serious hostilities in Cyprus' and supported UN Security Council resolutions 353 and 360.<sup>35</sup> But Willesee also made the point that the Cyprus problem was a complex question and recognised that "in the past the Turkish minority on the island has been denied its constitutional rights in many respects. Moreover the Turkish-Cypriot minority is entitled, as indeed is the Greek-Cypriot majority, to guarantees of security, safety and constitutional rights."

He continued by stating that he had hoped that the Geneva negotiations would have been given the opportunity to resolve these difficult issues. As far as the Australian Government was concerned, the collapse of the second Geneva talks was blamed on Turkey's Foreign Minister (Turan Guner) for issuing an ultimatum and placed the 'onus for the resumption of fighting ...squarely on the Turkish forces.'<sup>36</sup> After the Turkish invasion the Australian Government reiterated its support for the 'continued independence of Cyprus' and a solution to its problem 'without outside force'.<sup>37</sup>

Another major turning point in Australian-Cyprus relations occurred in November 1983 with the Turkish-Cypriot Unilateral Declaration of Independence. The declaration drew sharp bipartisan condemnation and support for the Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden's,<sup>38</sup> statement that 'Australia condemns this declaration and calls for it to be withdrawn.'<sup>39</sup> The event solidified bipartisan agreement on Australia's Cyprus policy. It also saw a renewed interest by Australia

in the Cyprus issue through the multilateral forum of the Commonwealth whose Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM) offered an opportunity for Cyprus and Australia to rekindle their relationships.

As seen in our charts, 1991 was another year with increased debate on the Cyprus issue in parliament. Immediately, after the Gulf War, parallels were drawn between Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, exposing the double standards adopted by the West and the United States, in particular, in intervening to rectify an injustice. The visit to Australia by the President of Turkey, Turgut Ozal, to receive the award of Companion of the Order of Australia created concerns amongst certain Labor parliamentarians. Hawke went to lengths to explain that the award was 'a personal award and it did not indicate in any way that there were no policy difference between Australia and Turkey' especially on the questions of Cyprus and human rights in Turkey.<sup>40</sup>

The final phase climaxed in 1995 and 1996 with two parliamentary resolutions on Cyprus. The first, a private member's motion, moved by McLeay on November 23rd 1995, was essentially an expanded version of the Australian Labor Party's (ALP) 1994 resolution on Cyprus.<sup>41</sup> However, it incorporated two new articles: one, noting the potential benefits of Cyprus joining the European Union for economic development and security and the capacity of bringing the two communities together; two, agreeing with the United States Congress's resolution of March 16th 1995<sup>42</sup> that 'total demilitarisation' of Cyprus would meet the security concerns of all parties and thus enhance the prospects for a peaceful and lasting solution of the Cyprus problem.<sup>43</sup> The motion materialized a week after the visit to Australia by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Glafkos Clerides, and was a tangible outcome of the triatic relationship between Australia/Cyprus/and the Greek and Greek-Cypriot communities. The Canadian House of Commons followed suit on 17 April 1996 with Eleni Bakopanos' private members' motion which stated that the:

"Government should support all measures leading to the demilitarization of the Republic of Cyprus in such a way as to enhance prospects for a peaceful and lasting resolution of the dispute regarding Cyprus that would benefit all the people of Cyprus and bring about an end to the more than two decades of division of the island."<sup>44</sup>

Similarly, on May 8th 1996, the New Zealand House of Representatives passed a motion on Cyprus which agreed with the 'United States Congress and Australian House of Representatives that ultimate total demilitarisation of ... Cyprus would meet the security concerns of all parties', enhance the prospects for a peaceful settlement and merited international support.<sup>45</sup>

The McLeay motion of 1995 was followed a year later on 9 September 1996 by another resolution on Cyprus moved by the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laurie Brereton.<sup>46</sup> The resolution once again received bipartisan support with Brereton stating that its aim was to 'reaffirm the place of Cyprus on the agenda of the Australian parliament'. Of special note was the fact that the resolution, for the first time, actually named the foreign troops of occupation by referring to the 'Turkish invasion of northern Cyprus'.<sup>47</sup> A point which pleased newly elected Liberal backbencher Petro Georgiou<sup>48</sup> who declared - in colourful language - that 'after all the House of Representatives is not a diplomatic garden party' and we 'are not negotiating a communique' so 'we can be plain spoken about the things that are clear to all'.<sup>49</sup> As stated in its first clause, the killing of two Greek-Cypriot protesters (Anastasios Isaak and Solomos Solomou) by Turkish security forces a month before had prompted the motion.

As with Canada,<sup>50</sup> so too, the Australian Government appointed on 25 June 1998 its ambassador to France, John Spender,<sup>51</sup> as its Special Envoy for Cyprus. In the relevant press statement, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer,<sup>52</sup> stated that Spender's principal role was to assist the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and that he would conduct a series of meetings with Greek and Turkish Cypriot officials, the US Presidential Emissary, Richard Holbrooke

and the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, Diego Cordovez. After this consultation process, Spender would evaluate the situation and 'identify ways in which Australia can further assist the search for a settlement'. In concluding his statement, Downer suggested that Cyprus might benefit from the 'experience of Australia's multicultural model'.<sup>53</sup>

The Labor Opposition, although it supported the 'establishment of an Australian Special envoy for Cyprus', deplored the appointment of 'a broken down political feather-weight for such an important job'. In his statement Brereton criticised Spender as not having any previous 'interest or knowledge of the Cyprus issues' during his parliamentary or recent diplomatic career, and given the gravity of the job, doubted whether Spender was capable of making 'a real contribution to a resolution of this tragic conflict'.<sup>54</sup>

Indeed, after extensive consultation with interested parties both in Australia and overseas Spender submitted his confidential Report on the Cyprus situation to Downer at the end of 1998. Since then, Spender has continued with his role as Special Envoy with consultations in Cyprus and Turkey as well as briefing the government and interested parties in Australia of his findings.<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, Spender has been unable to consult with Australian groups and academics who seem to fall outside the conventional list of 'interested parties' in the Cyprus problem - most notably the Melbourne based Turkish-Cypriot alumni organisation: *Cypriot Graduates Association of Australia*.<sup>56</sup>

In conclusion, we end on a proscriptive note with a potent question: What, if any, is the future role of Australia in the Cyprus conflict? Can Australia become more involved in the issue?

Before answering these questions we should bear in mind that Australia does not constitute a primary or even a secondary power in the dispute. Cyprus is outside its immediate region of concern and influence (ie the Asia-Pacific region), and Australia has no military/trade/economic or political interest in the Cyprus triangle. Parallel to Canada's own foreign policy review of 1995,<sup>57</sup> Australia also

reassessed the parameters and strategic thrust of its own foreign policy that geared any international commitment towards its immediate regional surrounding. As stated in its 1997 White Paper, *In the National Interest*, the current Australian Government's foreign and trade policy is about 'the hard-headed pursuit of [its national] interests' which are perceived as lying in the Asia Pacific.<sup>58</sup> For example trade between Cyprus and Australia is very small with the value of Australian exports to Cyprus in 1998 totalled \$10.55 million while Cypriot exports to Australia for the same year were worth A\$1.43 million. Overall Cyprus ranks as Australia's 99th largest export market and 101st as an import source.<sup>59</sup> Similarly the commercial relationship between Greece and Australia, despite the extensive people to people links, is not significant with Greece ranking as Australia's 53rd largest trading partner.<sup>60</sup> By comparison, bilateral trade relations between Australia and Turkey have grown significantly in recent years with Turkey ranking 40th in Australia's total trade of goods.<sup>61</sup>

Given these restrictions, Australia cannot really play any significant role in the resolution of the substantial core aspects of the Cyprus problem. As previously mentioned, the strongest link between Australia and the Cyprus triangle (ie Cyprus, Greece and Turkey) remains the fact that - as Evans and Bruce Grant recognized - 'there is a strong human dimension to the bilateral relationships based on a very high rate of migration to Australia'.<sup>62</sup> Fundamentally and contrary to the other impediments of trade and security, that is the main reason why Australian politicians have preoccupied themselves with the Cyprus problem to the extent that they have. The bipartisan position that Australia has adopted since 1964 and 1974, more or less has reached a point where it is doubtful that it could be improved any further.<sup>63</sup>

However, there is scope for Australia to become more active in some of the 'lower' aspects of the Cyprus problem if there is sufficient political will and imagination. Under the right circumstances, Australia can make a positive contribution by undertaking initiatives on issues and projects that foster cooperation and reconciliation. For example - and wary of not getting over enthusiastic as some politicians have

tended to be with their proclamations - Australia can draw on its multicultural experience and be of some assistance in areas that relate to confidence building measures between the two communities.<sup>64</sup> Also given its extensive experience in peacekeeping, Australia can undertake a more prominent role in any extensive UN peacekeeping regime - although this is unlikely in the short-term given Australia's over commitment in East Timor; finally, drawing on its own constitutional and political experience, Australia can also be valuable in a consultative capacity in any future federal republic of Cyprus.<sup>65</sup>

Such an initiative would require that Australia upgrade its involvement in the Cyprus problem beyond its current level and engage itself in the domain of peace-making. It would involve a commitment of resources and a diplomatic pro-active approach that is both imaginative and serious. For example such involvement could be done in conjunction with other countries, such as Canada, who share similar traits in their historical experience with the Cyprus problem as well as a tradition of pragmatic realism in their international commitment.<sup>66</sup>

Note: This article is an expanded version of the author's conference paper 'The Cyprus Issue in Australian Politics, with Particular Reference to the Federal Parliament', delivered at the Fourth Conference on 'Cyprus, Ancient and Modern' (co-jointly organised by the departments of Hellenic Studies and Archaeology, La Trobe University, and held on 30 July-1 August 1999). The paper is also based on research that is currently under-way by the author for the National Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research, La Trobe University.

## NOTES

1. See Michalis S. Michael, 'The Role of the Greek Community in the Determination of Australia's Attitude to the Cyprus Problem', **Australian Journal of International Affairs**, vol. 45, no. 1, May 1991, pp. 98-108; and, Andrew C. Theophanous and Michalis S. Michael, 'The Greek Community and Australian Foreign Policy: with Particular reference to the Cyprus Issue', in Dimitri C. Conostas and Athanassios G. Platias, eds., **Diasporas in World Politics: the Greeks in Comparative Perspective**, London, Macmillan in association with The Institute of International Relations, Panteion University, 1993, pp. 88-106.
2. James N. Rosenau, **Diasporas in World Politics ...**, *ibid.*, pp. xv-xvii.
3. Michael (1991), *op. cit.*, p. 98.

4. Gareth John Evans, Australian Labor Party (ALP), Senator 1978-1986, Member for Holt (Vic.) 1996-1999; Minister for Foreign Affairs from 24.3.93 to 11.3.96.
5. Gareth Evans, 'Internationalising Australia', Address by the Senator the Hon. Gareth Evans, QC, Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Rotary Club of Melbourne, 18 May 1994, p. 4.
6. Adam Cobb, **Cyprus 1998: Crisis or Stagnation?**, Parliament of Australia, Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group, Background Paper 17, 6 April 1998, p.8, <http://wopablu.e.parl.net/library/pubs/bp/1997-98bp17.htm>.
7. Robert James Lee Hawke, ALP, Wills (Vic.), 1980-1992; Prime Minister from 11.3.1983-2012.1991.
8. Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, Official Hansard (hereafter referred to as Hansard ), 1 December 1983, p. 3164.
9. Leo McLeay, ALP, Grayndler (NSW) 1979 to 1990; Watson (NSW) 1993; Speaker of the House of Representatives 29.8.89 to 8.2.93.
10. **Hansard** (HR), op. cit., p. 3217.
11. Edward Gough Whitlam, ALP, Member for Werriwa (NSW) 29.11.52-31.7.78; Prime Minister from 5.12.1972 to 11.11.1975; Minister for Foreign Affairs from 5.12.1972 to 6.11.1973.
12. Gough Whitlam, **The Whitlam Government, 1972-1975**, Melbourne, Viking, 1985, p. 126.
13. See B.A. Santamaria, 'New home not old battleground', **Weekend Australian**, 19-20 March 1994; see also reply by Michalis S. Michael, 'Moussaka ain't all', **Australian**, 30 March 1994.
14. Author's statistical analysis of the 1998 federal election results based on data supplied by the Australian Electoral Commission.
15. Progressive Party of Working People (the Communist Party of Cyprus). AKEL was formed in 1941.
16. National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (1955-59).
17. Herbert Vere Evatt, ALP, Member for Barton (NSW) 21.9.40 and Hunter (NSW) 22.11.58 to 10.2.60; Attorney-General and Minister

for External Affairs from 7.10.1941 to 19.12.1949; Opposition Leader from 20.6.1951 to 9.2.1960.

18. Robert Gordon Menzies, United Australian Party (UAP)/Liberal Party of Australia (LP), Member for Kooyong (Vic.), 15.9.34-17.2.66; Prime Minister 26.4.39-29.8.41 and 19.12.49-26.1.66; Leader of Opposition 23.9.43-19.12.49 (LP from 1944); Attorney-General and Minister for Industry 12.10.34-20.3.39.

19. Richard Gardiner Casey, UAP, Member for Corio (Vic.) 19.12.31-30.1.40; LP, Member for La Trobe (Vic.) 10.12.49-10.2.60; Treasurer, 3.10.35-26.4.39; Minister for External Affairs, 27.4.51-10.2.60.

20. **Hansard** (HR), 16 May 1956, p. 2079.

21. 'Dorothy dixer' is an Australian colloquialism which means 'a question asked in parliament specifically to allow a propagandist reply by a minister'. The term originated from the pen name, **Dorothy Dix**, of American columnist Meriwether Gilmer (1870-1951) who gave advice to people's emotional problems and was believed that she wrote the more intriguing letters herself. **The Macquarie Dictionary**, Sydney, Macquarie Library, 1981, p. 543.

22. Philip Ernest Luccock, Country Party. Member for Lyle (NSW), 23/3/1952-19.9.1980.

23. **Hansard** (HR), 25 May 1955, p. 1045.

24. **Hansard** (HR), 14 March 1956, p. 805.

25. Arthur Augustus Calwell, ALP, Member for Melbourne (Vic.), 21.9.40-2.11.72; Minister for Information (21.9.43) and Immigration (13.7.45) until 19.12.49; Leader of the Opposition 7.3.60-8.2.67.

26. **Hansard** (HR), 29 March 1960, p. 640.

27. Paul Meernaa Caedwalla Hasluck, LP, Member for Curtin (WA), 10.12.49-10.2.69; Minister for Territories, 11.5.51-18.12.63; Minister for Defence 18.12.63-24.4.64; Minister for External Affairs, 24.4.64-11.2.69.

28. **Hansard**(HR), 6 May 1964, p. 1567.

29. Clyde Robert Cameron, ALP, Member for Hindmarsh (SA), 10.12.49-19.9.80; Minister for Science and Consumer Affairs 6.6.75-11.11.75.



30. **Hansard**(HR), 11 August 1964, p. 16.
31. **Hansard** (HR), 4 November 1975, p. 2773.
32. **Hansard** (HR), 19 August 1975, p. 235; also see **Hansard** (Senate), 16 August 1974, p. 1061.
33. **Hansard** (HR), 17 July 1974, p. 272, and **Hansard** (Senate), 17 July 1974, p. 200.
34. Donald Robert Willesee, ALP, Senator for WA 22.2.50-11.11.75; Minister for Foreign Affairs 6.11.73-11.11.75.
35. Resolution 353 (UN S/11350, 20 July 1974) called for a cease-fire, respect for Cyprus's sovereignty and territorial integrity, an end to 'foreign military intervention' and the withdrawal of all 'foreign military personnel' from the island. In regard to the mode of mediation, Resolution 353 called upon the three guarantor powers to conduct negotiations, which led to the failed Geneva Talks. The call for a tripartite conference was reiterated in subsequent Resolutions 357 (UN S/1446/Rev.1, 14 August 1974, para. 3) and 360 (UN S/11450/Rev.2, 16 August 1974, para. 3) - which, although omitting the direct naming of the parties, referred to them by recalling Resolution 353.
36. **Hansard** (Senate), 16 August 1974, p. 1061.
37. **Hansard** (HR), 31 October 1974, p. 3162.
38. William George Hayden, ALP, Member for Oxley (Qld.), 9.12.61-17.8.88; Governor-General of Australia 1989-1996; Leader of Opposition 22.12.77-3.2.83; Minister for Foreign Affairs 11.3.83-17.8.88; Minister for Social Security 1972-1975; Treasurer 6.6.75-11.11.75.
39. **Hansard** (HR), 16 November 1983, p. 2780.
40. **Hansard** (HR), 7 May 1991, p. 3070.
41. See **Australian Labor Party Platform, Resolutions and Rules as Approved by the 40th National Conference**, Hobart, 1994, Canberra, ALP National Secretariat, 1994, pp. 159-160.
42. US Congress, Concurrent Resolution, H.Con. Res.42, 104th Congress, 1st Session, 16 March 1995, F:\FD\SUS\HC42.SUS.
43. The full text of the motion resolved: 'That this House - (1) reaffirms its total support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of

the Republic of Cyprus as the only legitimate authority on the island; (2) reaffirms the position that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Cyprus; (3) applauds the contribution of Australian peacekeepers since 1964 in maintaining order and stability on the island; (4) expresses its deep concern that after more than two decades of division on the island, there is still no lasting political settlement in sight and its strong belief that the status quo on Cyprus is unacceptable; (5) reaffirms its support for the United Nations Secretary-General's long-standing efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem in a just and viable manner; (6) notes that the prospects of Cyprus joining the EU offers potential benefits for the economic development and security of the whole island and the chance to bring the communities in Cyprus closer together; (7) urges all parties involved in the Cyprus question to demonstrate goodwill and a new resolve to work actively towards a lasting and peaceful political settlement based upon the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular resolution 939 of 1994; (8) agrees with the United States Congress that ultimate total demilitarisation of the Republic of Cyprus would meet the security concerns of all parties involved, would enhance prospects for a peaceful and lasting resolution of the dispute regarding Cyprus, would benefit all of the people of Cyprus, and merits international support; and (9) encourages the United Nations Security Council to consider alternative approaches to promote a resolution of the long-standing dispute regarding Cyprus based upon relevant Security Council resolutions, including incentives to encourage progress in negotiations.' Hansard (HR), 23 November 1995, p. 3635.

44. **Debates of the House of Commons of Canada (Hansard)**, 35th Parliament, 2nd Session, 17 April 1996, p. 3893.

45. The motion was tabled by Labour MP, Annete King, (Miramar); New Zealand, House of Representatives, **Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)**, 1st session, 44th Parliament, vol. 555, 8 May 1996, p. 12418.

46. Laurence John Brereton, ALP, Member for Kingsford-Smith from 24.3.90; Member of NSW Legislative Assembly for Randwick 1970-71 and for Heffrom 1973-1990; NSW Minister for Health, Roads, Public Works and Employment 1981-84; Federal Minister for

Industrial Relations and Transport 1993-96; Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs from 20.3.96.

47. The full text of the motion declared: 'That the House - (1) deplores the recent tragic outbreak of communal violence in the UN buffer zone in Cyprus; (2) applauds the efforts of the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus, including officers of the Australian Federal Police who continue to make a vital contribution to its operations; (3) recognises the terrible humanitarian cost that the continued division of Cyprus imposes on the communities of the island; (4) deplores the fact that more than 22 years after the 1974 Turkish invasion of northern Cyprus, Cyprus remains artificially and tragically divided and that there is still no lasting political settlement in sight; (5) expresses its strong belief that the status quo on Cyprus is unacceptable and that the continued division of Cyprus, including the presence of Turkish troops in northern Cyprus, has no place in an international climate of reconciliation and cooperation; (6) reaffirms its total support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus as the only legitimate authority on the island; (7) reaffirms Australia's support for relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 939 of 1994 which calls for a solution to be based upon a sovereign, independent and unified Cyprus comprised of a bi-communal and bi-zonal federal republic free of foreign interference; (8) reaffirms the position that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Cyprus; (9) commends the efforts of the UN Secretary-General to resolve the Cyprus dispute in a just and viable manner; (10) calls on the international community to take urgent action to overcome the deadlock in negotiations to restore justice for Cyprus and to bring about a long-term resolution to Cyprus' problems; and (11) urges the Government to take the lead in insisting that the international community, and members of the UN Security Council in particular, take immediate steps to promote a just resolution of the Cyprus dispute, based on relevant Security Council resolutions, including incentives to encourage progress in negotiations.' Hansard (HR), 9 September 1996, p. 3677. The motion was passed on 16 September 1996. (p. 4324)

48. Petro Georgiou, LP, Member for Kooyong (Vic.) since 19.11.1992.

49. **Hansard** (HR.), 16 September 1996, p. 4315.

50. On 18 April 1997, Canada's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, announce the appointment of a special ambassador, Michael Bell, as the Canadian envoy in Cyprus. In his announcement to the House of Commons he thanked his colleagues Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley, Liberal), Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Liberal) and John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Liberal) for 'working actively over the last several months to develop an initiative for Canada to assist in the reconciliation of the problem in Cyprus'. Canada, **Hansard**, 18 April 1997, p. 9938.

51. John Michael Spender was the LP Member for North Sydney (NSW) from 18.10.80 to 24.3.90; he served as Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs from 14.8.87 to 12.5.89; he is qualified as a practising barrister and became Queen's Counsel in 1974.

52. Alexander Downer, LP, Member for Mayo (South Australia) since 1.12.84; Minister for Foreign Affairs from 11.3.96; Leader of Opposition 23.5.94-30.1.95; Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs 31.1.95-11.3.96.

53. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Cyprus: Appointment of Australia's Special Envoy', **Media Release**, ref. no. FA 85, 25 June 1998.

54. Laurie Brereton, MP, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Australian Special Envoy to Cyprus: Wrong Man for the Job', **News Release**, ref. no. 47/98, 25 June 1998.

55. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Special envoy for Cyprus to Continue Consultations', **Media Release**, ref. no. FA 80, 20 July 1999.

56. The Cypriot Graduates Association of Australia (**Avustralya Kıbrıslı Üniversite Mezunları Derneği**) was formed in late 1997 with the prime purpose of organising 'the tertiary qualified graduates of Turkish Cypriot origin in Australia and encourage a high level of communication, cooperation and solidarity amongst them'. It is committed to the principles of multiculturalism, human rights and an academic approach in dealing with community issues both in Australia and in Cyprus. One of its main stated aims is to promote Cyprus as a Multicultural Island and establish bicomunal cooperation. The

CGAA has established a home page on the Internet (<http://adcom.com.au/cgaa>) and has engaged in dialogue throughout the world with Cypriots and non-Cypriots interested in the Cyprus problem. As would be seen at n. 60, CGAA has been the principle Turkish-Cypriot group in recent rapprochement attempts.

57. See Government Statement, **Canada in the World**, Ottawa, February 1995.

58. Commonwealth of Australia, **In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy**, White Paper, Canberra, 1997, pp. iii & 1.

59. Australia Foreign Affairs and Trade, **Cyprus Country Brief: Bilateral Relations**, 14 September 1999.

60. In 1998 Australian exports to Greece amounted to A\$59 million whilst imports totalled A\$94 million. However, the DFAT considers certain areas of opportunity for Australian exports to Greece especially in the maritime sector and infrastructure projects. Australia Foreign Affairs and Trade, **Greece Country Brief**, July 1999.

61. Australia's annual exports to Turkey in 1998 was valued at A\$558 million whilst imports amounted to A\$108 million. Australian Foreign Affairs and Trade, **Turkey Country Brief**, July 1999.

62. Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, **Australia's Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990s**, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1991, p. 291.

63. Indicative of this bipartisan position by the ALP and the LP, in addition to the two parliamentary resolutions of 1995 and 1996, are resolutions by the two major parties at their respective national party forums. In particular the ALP continued its long tradition of resolutions on Cyprus at its 41st National Conference in Hobart on 22nd January 1998 moved by the Leader of the ALP in South Australia Mike Rann and seconded by NSW federal MP Anthony Albanese. For full text see **Australian Labor Party National Conference 1998**, Conference Resolution-Cyprus, Chapter 14: Securing Australia's Place in the World, Resolution No. 273R, page 104. The LP also for the first endorsed a substantial motion on Cyprus at its Federal Council in Brisbane on 15th moved by Parliamentary Secretary Trish Worth, MP, and second by NSW MLC Jim Samios (see Trish Worth, Member

for Adelaide and Parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Health and Family Services, 'motion Shows Continuing Commitment to Cyprus', **Media Release**, TW 7/98, 24 March 1998).

64. For example, Australia can become the venue for rapprochement between its own Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. Unlike the United Kingdom and the United States, there has not been much systematic contact between moderate elements of the two communities in Australia. Recently, there appears to be some attempts by Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriots in Melbourne and Sydney to open up a dialogue. Although in its embryonic stage, several initial meetings have borne out two joint projects such as a Bicomunal Cultural Festival and a conflict resolution workshop. Also for the first time, a joint Greek and Turkish Cypriot delegation met with Australia's Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Philip Ruddock, in June 1999 who gave a positive response to their requests for assistance in the promotion of reconciliation projects and not to perceive the two communities as divided.

65. Whilst in New York for the UN General Assembly session, Downer with his Cypriot counter-part, Ioannis Kasoulides, to brief him about on development in East Timor as well as Australia's initiative on Cyprus. Kasoulides supported Australia's action in East Timor and offered to contribute police personnel to any UN force there. Finally, Downer reiterated his offer 'to the parties and to the UN the services of an Australian judicial expert who could assist in designing a federal model for Cyprus', Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Cyprus Foreign Minister Welcomes Australian Initiative', **Media Release**, ref. no. FA 110, (Canberra) 8 October 1999.

66. Costas Melakopides in his Martello Paper, **Making Peace in Cyprus: Time for a Comprehensive Initiative**, Ontario, Centre for International Relations, Queen's University, 1996, pp. 91-92, ponders on an enhanced role for Canada as a 'reliable mediator or facilitator for peace in the Greek-Turkish-Cypriot triangle' parallel to Norway's mediation in the Israel-PLO dialogue.