

# Michael Costa calls it quits

*Dumped NSW treasurer Michael Costa has resigned from parliament, two weeks after he set off a series of bombs about the state's finances. Mr Costa reportedly faxed his resignation to Governor Marie Bashir.*

It is understood that he followed the practice of his former frontbench colleague Reba Meagher by resigning without first informing the Premier Nathan Rees.

Mr Rees faces his first question time as premier today and is under pressure over the state's finances and transport problems.

The Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell said the depth of unhappiness in NSW Labor can be seen by Mr Costa's decision overnight to tell the governor in a fax he was quitting politics without even letting his party know.

Mr O'Farrell said he would test the unity of the new government with a no-confidence motion in parliament today.

Mr Costa's resignation - which comes after he was

sacked as Treasurer by former Premier Morris Iemma - follows a spate of resignations following premier Mr Rees's reshuffle.

It is also understood that Mr Costa will have to wait another three years for a parliamentary pension.

Mr Costa reportedly said that he was ending his seven-year parliamentary career in the manner of all Greek tragedies - in failure.

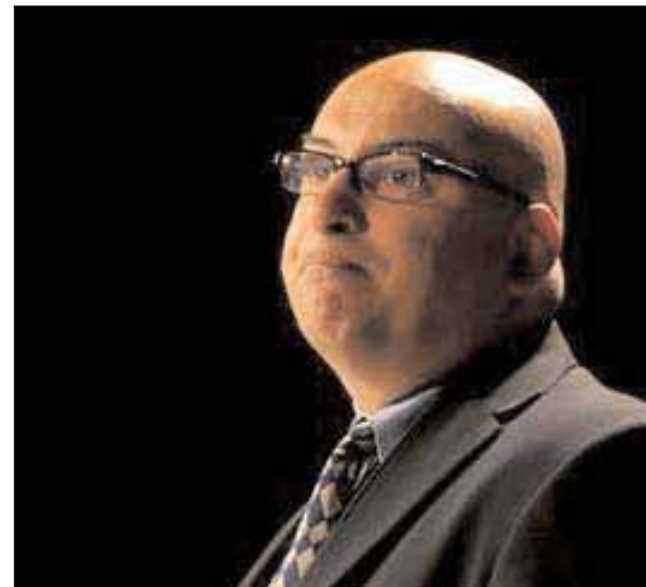
"I've always said politics was a modern Greek tragedy, it always ends in failure...and I can say my career has fulfilled that adage," Mr Costa was quoted as saying.

"I measure what I achieve by the amount of stupid decisions I stopped and the public will never know what they are, thank goodness."

Mr Costa's upper house seat will be filled by a Labor candidate.

In a bizarre twist yesterday, it emerged that Mr Costa had offered his nemeses on electricity privatisation, the Unions NSW secretary, John Robertson, and the Electrical Trades Union secretary, Bernie Riordan, his upper house spot. Both have declined.

Mr Robertson said yesterday he would not even



contest the 2011 election for state Labor, let alone run for Parliament earlier.

Article from Sydney Morning Herald

## Protesting Greek airline workers walk onto runway

*ATHENS, Greece: Hundreds of protesting Olympic Airlines workers walked onto the main runway of Athens International Airport Tuesday to protest plans to sell the troubled state-owned airline.*

The employees, including pilots, air stewards, technicians and support staff, stopped planes from taking off or landing there for about 30 minutes, but the airport said flights were diverted to a second runway and not disrupted. "There is no impact on the flights, all are using the western runway," airport spokeswoman Marina Papageorgiou said. The government says OA has accumulated total losses of around €2.7 billion (\$3.85 billion). The European Union last week approved a government plan to privatize the Greek carrier next year. Olympic's 8,100 staff are not guaranteed jobs when the airline is sold, but about 4,600 salaried employees will be offered public sector jobs as part of a compensation package worth €1.2 billion (\$1.74 billion). "Olympic Airlines is a national matter, it is the flag of the Greeks in the skies, and we will never, as simple workers and citizens, accept that this company stops flying," said Manolis Patetsos, head of the Civil Aviation Trade Union Federation, who was part of the protest.

## Italy returns long lost Parthenon fragment to Greece

*ATHENS (AFP) — Italy has returned to Greece the 'Palermo fragment', a marble piece of the Athens Parthenon missing for nearly 200 years, officials said Tuesday.*

The sculpted fragment of the ancient Greek hunt goddess Artemis, part of the eastern Parthenon frieze depicting the twelve gods of Olympus, had been in the collection of the Antonio Salinas Archaeological Museum of Palermo.

Greece had sought to secure its return for 13 years, the Greek culture minister said.

The fragment depicts the goddess' right foot and part of her long robe.

"For the first time in nearly two centuries, a



valuable fragment of the Parthenon's sculpted decoration returns to be embodied where it belongs," Culture Minister Michalis Liapis told reporters.

The fragment was brought back on loan by Italian President Giorgio Napolitano, who is on an official visit to Greece, and will be restored to the frieze on Wednesday.

It had been removed by Lord Elgin, the 19th century British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire occupying Greece at the time, and given to the British consul-general of Sicily in 1816, Napolitano's cultural advisor Louis Godart told reporters.

Elgin also took to Britain a large collection of sculptures from the iconic 5th BCE temple known as the

Parthenon Marbles which Greece has campaigned to have returned from the British Museum in London for decades.

"Greece aspires to bring back the Parthenon Marbles, so you can understand the contribution and importance of such a gesture," Greek President Karolos Papoulias told reporters after meeting with Napolitano.

The British Museum has long refused to repatriate the friezes but the Greeks have lately had more success in securing claims from other museums and collections, including the J Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Shelby White collection in New York.

A number of these items are part of a landmark exhibit of over 70 Greek and Italian antiquities reclaimed from foreign museums and collections in recent years which Napolitano will inaugurate on Wednesday.

"This is the first time these antiquities are seen abroad after going on display at the Quirinale Palace (last year)," Godart said.

Two more Parthenon fragments held by the Vatican will return to Greece on October 8, he added.

The joint exhibit at the New Acropolis Museum runs to December 31.

## Jennifer's Lopez plans for Kostas Martakis

*Kostas Martakis made a photoshoot with Jennifer Lopez, while in Greece for her concert, for Hello magazine. Kostas is the only Greek star to be photographed with the international diva. Marc Antony commented that "Fila me"/Kiss me (sung by Kostas before JLo's appearance) is a very melodic song. Jennifer and Kostas talked about their future plans, while she didn't exclude the possibility for Kostas to make the support at her concerts, when she heard how much popular Kostas is at the Balcans and the Eastern Europe.*

