

KYTHERIAN WORLD HERITAGE FUND

“Life in Australia”

In December, the Attorney General of NSW, the Honourable John Hatzistergos was the guest of honour at the launch of the seminal Greek-Australian books, *Life in Australia*, in both Greek & English. What ensures is an account of his involvement in proceedings, including the speech he delivered to launch the book.

Introductory remarks to the 350-strong audience, by Master of Ceremonies, George C Poulos.

Ten years ago, on the 26 May, 1999, when our very distinguished guest, the Honourable John Hatzistergos made his maiden speech in the NSW Parliament, he made reference to a book entitled *All Too Human*. The author of that book is a Greek American, George Stephanopoulos, a well-known former adviser to United States President Bill Clinton. In the book Stephanopoulos evokes what it meant to be a Greek immigrant in America, in the following terms:

“Greeks came to America from dozens of islands and hundreds of villages but here they formed a single clan, united by heritage, language, and a need to achieve. Those of us in the second generation understood that honouring the sacrifices of our parents and grandparents – the labourers, cobblers, waiters and cooks - meant getting a good education, and putting it to good use - as doctors, lawyers, professors and politicians.

Assimilation for Greeks didn't mean blending in; it required standing out.

The rules were so clear they didn't need to be said. Make your name, and don't change it. Make us proud and don't forget where you come from”.

All these insights are equally valid in Australia.

You all might think that you have been invited here this evening, just to launch two books, *Life in Australia* in Greek & *Life in Australia* in English. But ladies and gentleman, that has been only a pretext for inviting you here. No,

we are gathered here today for a much higher purpose; we are gathered to celebrate Ellinismos, the Greek spirit, not only in Australia, not only in Greece, but in all other parts of the world, as well. By the end of this evening, we will have made you feel exceedingly proud to be an Ellinas, and a Phillellinas, and we will fulfil the second of the Stephanopoulos rules – we are going to ensure that you won't forget, and that you don't forget where you come from. We will reconnect you with your very precious Hellenic heritage.

If that is all we achieve this evening, Angelo Notaras, fellow administrator of the Kytherian World Heritage Fund, and I, will be well rewarded.

Introducing & Inviting The Hon. John Hatzistergos to speak, and to launch the books.

The Hon. John Hatzistergos is, a Member of the Legislative Council, and the Vice President of the Executive Council, in the NSW Parliament. He has



been a Minister in the NSW Labor Government since 2005. He is a member of the Cabinet, Attorney General, (the highest law officer in NSW), & Minister for Industrial Relations, and Vice President of the Executive Council. He is also the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council.

He was bought up in Redfern where he was fortunate enough to attend two illustrious inner-city schools - Bourke Street Primary School and Cleveland Street Boys High School. Today he is returning to his alma mater, the University of Sydney, where he gained

his Bachelor of Economics in 1982, Bachelor of Laws 1983, and Master of Laws 1994. He was a solicitor in private practice from 1983 to 1987. He then became a Senior Legal Officer with the Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions from 1987 to 1989. He has been a Barrister since 1989.

In the same inaugural speech that I referred to previously in my introduction, John reminisced about his Greek heritage. This is John Hatzistergos speaking:

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Ο ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΣ, ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ ΔΗΜΑΡΧΟΣ, ΤΟ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΤΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ,
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