

EUROPE DAY RECEPTION
Wednesday, 21 May 2014
The Greek Club, Brisbane

Hosts:

Mr Jim Raptis OBE, Consul-General of Greece in Queensland

Mrs Elfi Massey-Vallazza, President of the Australian Council for Europe

V.I.P. GUESTS

Mr Anthony Shorten MP, State Member for Greenslopes, representing the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier.

His Excellency Mr Sem Fabrizi, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union in Australia

Cr Peter Matic, Councillor for the Toowong Ward and Chairman of the Public and Active Transport Committee, representing **The Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Cr Graham Quirk**

Mrs Jane Prentice MP, Federal Member for Ryan

Senator Claire Moore, Senator for Queensland

Cr Vicki Howard, Councillor for Central Ward, Deputy Chairman Neighbourhood Planning and Development Assessment

Cr Donna Gates, Deputy Mayor of the Gold Coast City Council and Councillor of Division 1

Mr Neville Newnes, Dean of the Consular Corps of Queensland and Members of the Consular Corps

Presidents of the various Greek Communities and Parishes in South East Queensland

Board Members of the Australian Council for Europe.

The Speech Notes prepared for Mr Ian Kaye MP, State Member for Cook and Deputy Government Whip, representing the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, who conveyed his late Apologies, and asked Mr Anthony Shorten MP, to represent The Premier of Queensland, Hon Campbell Newman, in delivering the address at the celebration of Europe Day in Queensland, on Wednesday, 21 May 2014 at The Greek Club, South Brisbane in commencement of Paniyiri Greek Festival 2014.

SPEECH AT EUROPE DAY RECEPTION

(Delivered by Mr Anthony Shorten MP, State Member for Greenslopes, representing the Hon Campbell Newman the Premier of Queensland, and the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier).

Good evening:

Ambassador and Head of Delegation for the European Union, His Excellency Mr Sem Fabrizi and Mrs Rebecca Fabrizi;

President of the Australian Council for Europe, Mrs Elfi Massey-Vallazza and Mr John Vallazza;

Consul-General of Greece in Queensland, Mr Jim Raptis OBE and Mrs Helen Raptis;

Justice of The Supreme Court of Queensland, Hon Justice Anthe Philippides

My fellow Federal, State and Local Government colleagues;

And distinguished guests.

Welcome to this celebration of the 28 countries which comprises the European Union and those statesmen whose vision it was to create political cooperation in Europe.

I am honoured to be with you tonight representing the Honourable Campbell Newman, Premier of Queensland, and the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, who were unable to attend and extend their apologies.

Europe Day is an annual celebration around two dates in May which mark the first movements towards the current European Union. On the 5th and the 9th May, this cooperation of nations was ratified through the establishment of the Council of Europe, and the Schuman Declaration respectively.

Namesake, and then the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, had the vision of creating an institution that would pool and manage coal and steel production; today this institution represents the largest world economy and the first global development aid donor.

In Australia, much of our social, economic and cultural development can be attributed to our strong relations with, the migration of people, from all over the world, including Europe.

In fact, according to the 2011 Australian Census, approximately 340,000 Queenslanders reported being born in Europe, and more than three million claim to have a European heritage.

Therefore, it is special occasions like Europe Day that provide Queenslanders, and all Australians for that matter, with the opportunity to reflect on this remarkable history and celebrate its strong connection with Queensland's cultural diversity.

By gathering here tonight, we pay our respects to those European visionaries whose cooperative vision for peace and democracy have encouraged a history of migration that has enriched the diversity of our great state, and without a doubt, has made it a better place.

The Queensland Government greatly values our relationship with the European Union and looks forward to continuing this friendship in the coming years. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to join this celebration and trust that many stories, both old and new, will be shared between good friends tonight.

In conclusion, I would like to propose a toast to the enduring vision of Robert Schuman and the European Statesmen who have followed. To the President of the European Council and Former Prime Minister of Belgium, Mr Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Commission, Mr José Manuel Barroso, the European Union and its 500 million citizens.

Salute!