

REMEMBERING THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MONROE NEWMAN

Andreas Theophanous

Professor of Political Economy and President of the Center for European and International Affairs of the University of Nicosia

Mike Newman was a remarkable man, an exceptional academic and professional with an admirable value system, very sensitive and with a great sense of humor. I had known him for over 30 years; throughout this period our cooperation, friendship and discussions were very valuable to me and I will always cherish them. I was very heartened and privileged that we spent some time together during my visit to Washington last Fall. He will be missed and he will always be remembered.

As a student I learned a lot from him; and I do remember that when he sensed that I had doubts about an issue he would take the time to further explore it with me.

I recall our long discussions about economic, political and social issues. And of course these included an exchange of historical and philosophical content and perspectives. From these I had learned a great deal about American history and politics; about the stakes of the different perspectives from the Civil War to the Great Depression and to the Cold War. We also discussed the possibilities and the opportunities created after the end of the Cold War and the frustrated hopes.

At the same time he took an interest to discuss issues of the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East as well as European Politics. Not surprisingly our starting points were different. And although on several occasions we maintained different positions he had a great respect for each other and our ways of thinking. Even on issues where he had a different perspective he would show a unique understanding for the opposite view. I recall that when he visited my hometown Alona – a small village in the mountains of Troodos in Cyprus - a village with a strong Orthodox Christian background, he wanted to come to church on Sunday morning to attend mass. I told him that this was not necessary but he insisted. I found this unique as Mike was not attached to any religious denomination. I remember we discussed extensively this experience.

Mike appreciated the European Union's role and was positive in the sense that following the end of the Second World War the policies pursued and the networks of cooperation that developed led not only to economic reconstruction and prosperity in Europe but also to a huge peace dividend. But he was disappointed and concerned with the recent record of the European Union in relation to the Eurozone crisis. Indeed, the policies pursued currently reminded him of the policies associated with the Great Depression in the US.

Mike Newman was also known for his reliability and consistency. And he was always there for his friends. Let me share with you only two incidences. I recall that in the spring of 1997 my first son, at the time two and a half years old, became seriously ill. I was deeply concerned – and I shared this with Mike. He took the plane to visit Nicosia, Cyprus and be there with us. Mike stayed for a few days and left when my son was much better.

And at the time of the discussion of a UN peace plan which was critical for the future of Cyprus in the period 2002-2004 I took a position and campaigned against it. Mike Newman came to Cyprus to see me and took an active interest in the issues at hand. I was heartened by his support and advice.

He very well knew the constraints and the difficulties of Cyprus as well as its multidimensional challenges. He warned me repeatedly about them but his encouragement and his insistence that I persist were and are still inspirational for me.

Monroe was a remarkable, indeed a unique, man who touched a great number of people and he will thus be greatly missed. May he rest in peace.