***Upturning the Cyprus Economy – The role of Shipping***

***By John N. Faraclas***

***Good afternoon*** to all and hope you had a good start for this academic year here in UCLan; wish you best!

***Thank you Prof. Poutziouris*** for extending to me and all at [www.allaboutshipping.co.uk](http://www.allaboutshipping.co.uk) this invitation to speak on some home truths vis-à-vis real ways of sorting out the well being of the Cypriot people, and setting the pace for the generations to come! ***Thank you Chian compatriot Dr. Glyptis*** for supporting this event so whole-heartedly! We are indebted to both and to your esteemed Academia! Above all we tackle this issue that I am going to speak to you about as Islanders; Islanders are very much different from the people in the hinterlands!

Dear Students, Ladies and Gentleman, this is our second joint event with the University of Central Lancashire in Cyprus, the first one being last April in London on the **“The Development of Greek Shipping Dynasties: Succession across Generations”, which was conducted on 29th April, 2014 at the Hellenic Centre. An unforgettable event in many ways as there were pathos, organisation and technology offered at their best!**

**The PREAMBLE:**

***A.The situation so far:***

***1.The Cypriot Economy in tatters.*** No one can tell you when this mess will be over and the hefty “penalty”, the burden you all have to pay, and for how long, Correct? Moreover nobody will tell you how you will get out of this mess. You are below the 1 million mark population wise and yet…one way or another you must get out of this situation!

***2.Politics-wise,*** the trend so far is for the major powers “vested” interests in the region, not just the area. Greek, Turks, British, Americans, the Soviets and others are to blame for the situation but mostly the Turkish side, as we are still subjected to the Turkish despicable behaviour even blackmailing everybody in the world - the Turks are capable for…

Moreover, all the super powers have let down the Cypriots and in particular the Greek Cypriots. The island still divided with many consequences to come, unless....

***3.Political Ideology,*** if you like, same is not yet centred and directed in and for the real wealth of the Cypriot people. Centre Lefty policies, you know better than me, how much they have cost, and needless to say centre right policies that couldn’t take off… There haven’t been risk assessment plans for the rainy day!

***4.No real shipping infrastructure exists on the island.*** First and foremost where are the real marine academies to create cadets for deck, engine and cabin sectors for ships of any kind?. No shipyards and related businesses to the extent one expects to see in a maritime nation which ranks in the top teams/categories of IMO.

***5.What about Maritime Education, Shipping Studies on a scale to attract foreign students,*** as here in this islands exists a traditional good level of education with first class educators (teachers, tutors, you name it)

***6.Hydrocarbons etc, I mean Oil, Gas.*** Although they are ample, Turkey’s behaviour, supported by the behaviour of the super powers, has delayed the process and continues to be an obstacle harming the Turkish Cypriots too, if you like!

***7.The situation all around Cyprus is in a total mess*** (Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt with the extension to all northern Africa and Red Sea greatly influencing badly the Cypriot economy). Have any of you ever imagined the consequences of yet another closure of the Suez Canal?? You can now see and verify for yourselves on what this very moment takes place a few hundred miles away, so you can see why there wasn’t any clear mandate on Cyprus but a very hermaphrodite situation which of course led to all these troubles, all through the post WWII period and the usage of the island’s sovereign British bases today for the control, and policing of the Middle East area and beyond. The projection and planning of those who care for their nation’s’ business vested interests can be seen now in this war against ISIS and in general with the Middle Eastern problems over the last 66 years, going from worse to worse...

How many of you know or have heard about the Thermopylean Limit? This has to do with the time-limit in ending a pregnancy, wanted or unwanted one. That derives from the fact that the frontiers of the then Hellenic World, of Greece were in Thrace, yet Greece was defendable in Thermopylae. Equally the woman’s body and wellbeing, mental in particular, should be extend beyond the third/forth month of the pregnancy. Try to interpret this where and how Cyprus is totally defendable and where…

***8.Terrorism ante portas***

***9.World economy in tatters too***

And finally

***10. Still no real plans to make it viable, whilst, believe you me there is! There isn’t any CSR if you like in place!!! It’s all Blah Blah blah, accusations and contra accusations… and in this instance dividing Hellenism, but also creating an unfair situation… togetherness!!!!***

***B. Reality:*** I am not here to blame anybody, nor to nominate all those who one way or another brought this small nation to this big mess! Rest assured though, that Nemesis will strike them with a ferocity you cannot imagine even in your wildest dreams.

***C.The solution: Only Shipping***

Shipping is everything, not just anything; Shipping is everything you want and contains every aspect of every day’s life. What differentiates shipping from any other business is its real size. Incalculable! Just make some simple comparisons. It’s fascinating, it’s the volume: UNIQUE! Example? She the size of a container, a TEU as we call it; then imagine a traffic jam involving three different lorries and then compare this with a container vessel carrying 1 to 5,000 TEU;s etc

***What is Cyprus? What is Greece? What is Turkey, What is the USA? What is the United Kingdom?***

***Simply, People! People from hamlets, villages, towns, cities, countries and lastly nations!***

***People have to work to produce*** and earn their due, and circulate money to their benefit and that of their country.

***Cyprus’ people must turn to shipping to all intents and purposes.*** From Academia to Zoography – I will explain a bit later why. As you can see this is an A to Z route.

***All professions are and get involved in the shipping industry. The immediate ones which are missing are :***

***The Seafaring profession; Seafarers of any kind, From OS’s to Master Mariners*** with the option as real practitioners are needed with a bit of further education to join, as it happens over 150 years, companies offices (HQ/Agencies/Sub offices) some being spread world-wide. And the more the regulations, the more the jobs and skills needed. Man and Seaman = (equals) two different things.

You can see the example of Greece, just recently and in particular after the Greek civil war (1944-1949): Everybody more or less went to sea!!! Needless to say during the WWII. That alleviated the continuation of the political disputes, and whilst the world was on a rebuilt scheme, after the destruction brought by the Second World War, the seafaring life produced wealth for all, modest earnings, but sure, steady and secure jobs. The cruise ships today need thousands of seafarers as well as other skills. Example with the FOOD/Restaurants…. Entertainment. Cypriot Musicians are rated high up in the world of entertainment, services, you name it. Here is a chance!

There is a book written by the late Andreas G. Lemos - a Master Mariner, a Lawyer and a Shipowner) under the title; “A 20th Century passer-by tells his story” and he explains how the Greeks went to sea, how the Greek Shipowners employed “leftist” on board ships even upsetting the military and the ultra conservatives of the time! It happened – successfully! The examples here never end. It will takes us a day to talk on this issue.

***The Shipbuilding, Shiprepairing and Ship Conversions Profession.***

Why are there not any shipyards in Cyprus, say three drydocks at least to give jobs to locals, jobs of any kind – from accountants to you name it! To begin with many yachts and small ships can be built. Can you imagine the wealth? Repairs, conversions, emergency repairs, the lot. Given the urgent situation in the entire Middle East region and in the proximity, Cyprus’s’ business can flourish. In no way this for example can affect the Greek Shipyards et al, which suffer from bad unionism. The rest you read is nonsense!!

A proper port and terminal needs the full scale not only of intermodalism, but needs repair facilities too!

Here in Cyprus there are many International Shipping Offices which run their business. Only Singapore today is above in numbers and of course Athens and Piraeus. Cyprus can become a real Shipping Centre.

***The Fisheries***: Another important sector which offers a lot of jobs. Moreover building the fish trawlers in Cyprus would be great!!!

***The Maritime Tourism***: Sea-side ultra small villages, Cruises around the Island too; this in no way is a provocation for the northern occupants, to the point, a creation of new jobs.

Add, ***Religious Tourism:*** Another important sector.

***Cultural Tourism:*** Yet another major job creator.

***Trekking:*** A lot can be achieved here.

***The Regattas*** (sailing et al) that’s another incentive which creates jobs

***The Sea sports***

For the last two say one needs sports academies, to learn people sailing, rowing, swimming etc. etc. You can have dozens of Pagdatis’ in many sports. Recently you had the ISAF youth international sailing event!

***Boat Shows*** – A special one for the entire Middle East. Have you ever thought what this entails job wise? Earnings (people will come to stay etc. etc.

***Diving:*** another sector, another job creator…

***Conferences:*** The climate and the venues plus new ones to be built are very promising nearly all year round. You need people to run them. That creates JOBS!!!

***Light manufacturing:*** A business worth pursuing! Roaps, electronics and many more things much in demand these days!

***I am sure by now, you all get the message.***

Ofcourse you have now to attract investors and lenders willing to understand you, but all in all mostly can be done with good organisation! There is also an ace for Cyprus: Climate’s favourable Factor: The most industrial days and touristic days from all European Nations after Greece.

Earlier on I mentioned that “Cypriot people must turn to shipping to all intents and purposes , from Academia to Zoography…” Well, can you imagine a cruise ship with one thousand cabins? Each cabin has one original painting! One thousand paintings! How does one commissions all these paintings? And to whom? So painters, artists do make a lot of money! The examples never end. An in shipping we excel in excellence… All restaurants on board ships, do have excellent food, as otherwise the passenger doesn’t have another choice to go elsewhere and…jump to the sea… Did I hear you say entertainers? Well, you all go to tavernas, to bouzoukia and you must have experienced the bad market where the singers are out of work… Those who are clever join the ships as part of the entertainment group, and the job, money, the well being of his/her family are secured… The examples never end!

Now how many of you have heard of the book “***Tough Times never last but tough people do!”?***

**Very simply, I was going through a very difficult time in Spring of 1985 in New York being involved with the final stages of delivering a ship I have sold, and things went awful, when I found this book.** Simply, you name your problem, and you name your possibility!  That's the message in Dr. Robert H. Schuller's bestseller, *Tough Times Never Last, But  Tough People Do*! Dr. Schuller shows you in his book how to build a positive self-image, no matter what  your problem. Whether it's unemployment, poor  health, loneliness, fear or *anything  else* that blocks your success, you can turn your  negative into a positive. No matter how tough  times get, you have the potential to achieve the best  of life. Through Dr. Schuller's.

Dear students, its like in love; you will do anything it takes to, with all due respect, to…floor down the woman you want! You go for her. And vice versa. It’s when things go wrong you should not quit! Go for it and study shipping, and shipping related studies. Through Shipping Cyprus will get out of this mess. And in a few hours, the 34th International WISTA AGM and Conference will begin in the nearby city of Limassol. Log on and find out! Shipping connects, that . (dot) means a lot!

May I finally ask you what is the most powerful word?

(At this point one student paused and said: Success! With an emphasis whilst the other attendees applaud him) . No, sorry, the most powerful world is “Float”, deriving from the greek word “pleo”, from which the world Plutos comes; well young students, welcome to plutocracy, if I may say so. Did I hear oyu say Float the markets, I mean Flotation!!!

***THANK YOU. I can take now questions.***