



**SANTA'S HOUSE CALL:** Santa Claus came early for members of the House of Representatives this year. Bearing a striking resemblance to Akel MP Yiannakis Agapiou, he entertained deputies at yesterday's annual House Christmas party following the final session of the year. Pictured enjoying the fun are (l-r) Nicos Anastasiades and Yiannakis Matsis of Disy, Akel's Andreas Christou and Diko Chairman Spyros Kyprianou.

## Fun and games at the House Christmas party

**By Lonias Efthymoulou**

MPs had a different kind of party in the House of Representatives last night as lawmaking and electioneering were put aside and deputies from all sides came together in a spirit of goodwill for their annual Christmas festivities. Like any good (non-political) party, this one had lots of people, plenty of laughter, good food and drink.

After the last parliamentary session of the year, MPs, party leaders and representatives, presidential candidates and their wives, the entire House staff and lots of friends gath-

ered at the bar to celebrate Christmas.

The House's own staff choir, with strong and enthusiastic accompaniment from many MPs, entertained with Christmas carols before the arrival of Santa Claus, Akel MP Yiannakis Agapiou, doing his annual party piece of satire and jokes at his colleagues' expense.

He noted, for example that with the inclusion of Christodoulos Veniamin in Akel's ranks, "we have managed to rejuvenate our parliamentary group. On average, thanks to the New Forces," he said, "our

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age has gone down to 70."

Amid laughter, he turned to Disy's Deputy Chairman Panayiotis Demetriou and quipped: "Don't laugh, Demetris, yours is 80, but you've

been keeping quiet about it!"

Agapiou poked fun at Marios Matsakis, saying that "there isn't a single committee that he doesn't poke his nose into, he speaks at every House session, and then in between he climbs hills and gets lost in

the Akamas."

On the subject of the presidential elections, he suggested that the candidates should form a seven-a-side football team before describing Spyros Kyprianou as "the most popular politician around. Nobody

wants him for president, but everyone wants him as a partner. As Vasos Lyssarides said: "They all flirt with us but none wants to marry us."

Agapiou had his audience in stitches as he told them how as far as praising Kyprianou is concerned, "the best of all is Glafcos. 'You're great, Spyros', he tells him, but for four and a half years he forgot that Spyros was even in Cyprus!"

Referring to Akel General Secretary Demetris Christofias, he told MPs that "I hear that he's bought an icon of Saint Spyridon, set it up at home, and spends most of his time on his knees, praying to the saint to keep Spyros well so that he doesn't change his mind in favour of Glafcos."

"Santa" Agapiou ended by predicting that next president of Cyprus will be the candidate who has the letter 'r' in his name and who is married to a foreign woman. This, of course, applies to several of them.

More entertainment was provided by impressionist Loucas Constantinou, who kept the audience laughing with his "conversations among the presidential candidates" in which he made perfect and hilarious imitations of their voices, gestures and mannerisms.



**HOUSE HARMONY:** For once, MPs from all sides were in perfect harmony as they enjoyed Christmas carols during yesterday's House Christmas party after the final session of 1997.