

Australia - a Contradictory Nation

DALMENY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA, October 22, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Australia is a modern nation with a future , but one of challenging contradictions. These are brought out by author Raja Arasa Ratnam in his book 'Musings at Death's Door.' The full title of the book is 'Musings at Death's Door: an ancient bi-cultural Asian-Australian ponders about Australian society.' It reflects more than six decades of experiencing, and interacting with, Australian society, as it matured from an all-white racist nation to a cosmopolitan one. The book is available as an ebook from amazon.com (and its associates) at \$US 2.99 (or its equivalent).

Pre-publication endorsement

"Raja Ratnam has lived a full life and made significant contributions to Australian life over six decades. His experience as an Asian in Australia from the time of White Australia to that of multiculturalism is unique. This book is a final distillation of the wisdom he has gained over that time. He provides insight into a wide range of areas from society and culture to religion. And even better, his insights reflect his unique experience. There is wisdom here and, like all of his work, this book is rich, intelligent and provocative. A major contribution to Australian culture." –Prof. Greg Melleuish, History & Politics, Wollongong University, Australia.

Review

Recommended by the US Review of Books:

"Before I leave this shell, my body, I need to recognise what it is that I have learnt from my turbulent but interesting life."

"This book is a commentary about how Australia has changed since the author first moved there in 1948. This work stands on its own merit; however his previous nonfiction work, *The Dance of Destiny*, describes the prejudices he, as an Asian from British Malaya, experienced. Those experiences are discussed in this latest book, as they relate to his observations of how society has reacted to different races, nationalities, languages, and religions.

Ratnam witnessed a change from White Australia to a multi-cultural, multi-lingual nation. During his years of public service, he achieved several high-ranking positions in areas of refugee settlement and migration, education, and humanitarian work. He was also denied positions because of his ethnicity. Even though he was well-known in his field, including serving as an advisor at government levels, he still faced racism from time to time. In the early 1970s, the country developed an official entry policy that was non-discriminating. Skin color was no longer an official issue. In fact, as more immigrants arrived from ethnically diverse backgrounds, more social workers were needed who could speak those languages and understand the cultures.

This well-written book flows easily from one point to another. It is excellent for anyone studying sociology, public service, immigration policies, and related categories. It is also a recommended read for those who are not necessarily students, but who are interested in how a nation went from being "very British" to one of diversity acceptance. To use the author's words, "Today's Australia is not the nation I entered in 1948."

RECOMMENDED by the USR

Significant societal contradictions

a) On governance

Even to a former colonial subject, who once had no voting rights, Western democracy is a sham. The political choice for voters is between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. And voters have no say as to who will represent them; policies sought by up 85% of voters are ignored.

With increasing immigration (seemingly because the supply of foreigners might run out), and an unending flow of foreign capital, the nation bumbles along quite comfortably; it is a pity that needed infrastructure is only talked about. What will happen when Australia is not worth buying into?

b) On subservience

The Anglo-Celt worker, a stand-tall fellow, worth emulating by workers in neighbouring nations, displays no subservience. In contrast, Australia's political leadership is seen as over-respectful to foreign capital, to foreign mining corporations, to Vaticanites, and to any industry which threatens a public campaign.

The next election is what matters.

c) On family and society

Fukuyama's depiction of societal deterioration in the USA is becoming matched in Australia. The family, the fulcrum of society, is breaking up. It is the children who suffer when the parents' rights override the needs of their children.

However, a burgeoning age of expectation (of receiving other people's hard-earned money through government) sustains those unwilling to provide for themselves. Australia is a very caring society.

Society, as a whole, is reminiscent of that frog sitting in a tin tub while the water is becoming imperceptibly warmer. Comfort is all!

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None

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