

Australia's Early Culture Shocks

DALMENY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA, October 30, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The bilateral culture shocks were seismic. It happened in post-war Australia from the late 1940s. In 1948, Australians (previously British Subjects) became entitled to citizenship. The nation also set out to collect needed able-bodied European workers to build its infrastructure. They had to be white and, preferably, Roman Catholic in faith.

Then arrived young Asians, educated in British colonial territories, speaking clear English (but obviously with an accent), well-dressed, well-behaved, and well-imbued with their ancestral cultures.

In the century and a half since settlement, Australia had out-grown Britain's eugenics program. This had progressed from the placement of social undesirables in riverside hulls, then to America, and then to Australia; petty thieves, vagrants, and other socially unwanted were transported to the Antipodes to face a harsh existence.

In time, the diversity of the British people had blended to form the Australian people (but split by sectarianism). Because the nation was only for whites, no man would reject any kind of work. And the ideal of the 'fair-go' (equalitarian treatment) evolved (except perhaps for women and the sprinkling of non-whites in the nation. The indigene was, of course, beyond the pale.

When the author (Raja Arasa Ratnam) of 'Destiny Will Out: the experiences of a multicultural Malayan in White Australia' left Singapore, his luggage had been carried onto the vessel by workers. On arrival in Sydney, he had to handle his luggage; even taxi drivers watched and waited while he loaded the vehicles. It was d.i.y (do-it-yourself) from then on. No one could disdain their own responsibilities!

The author's culture shocks, and those of his fellow-Asians, were perplexing. Many Australian voices were unnaturally gruff; service providers seemed reluctant. There were also other indications of a pervasive antipathy. He was the last to be served in shops, except when other customers indicated his priority; that is, not all Australians lacked civility. Advertised accommodation would not be available when he was sighted; his 'British' accent had obviously been misleading. Adjacent seats on trams remained empty. At all times, the Asian youth were clean, well-dressed, and courteous.

He was nonplussed on the first occasion he was shouted at in public: 'Why don't you go back to where you came from, you black bastard?' For the record, he is a light tan. Yet, when he worked as a tram conductor (what a shock that was to some) and in factories, there was no display of rudeness – except once, when he was addressed as Rastus. He socialised freely, thereby acquiring necessary colloquialisms, and adapting to the quaint Australian accent. Once he was patted on his upper back and told, "You are OK for a black bastard." So, there were two kinds of bastards.

Some white fellow-students became upset at the sudden influx of apparently middle-class (and surely superior) coloured youth. A survey at his university asked 'Would you like your sister to marry an Asian?' Ironically, the Asian youth had been warned by their parents not to get too close to white girls; the experience of students in Britain coming home with white wives was clear: there were far too many cultural differences.

A white wife asking for a steak in a Hindu home is just unbelievable. When an Asian male gets up to

get his wife the glass of water she wants, in a home where his mother is queen, one can only imagine the consequences. In a traditional Asian home, the wife's mother-in-law had precedence.

This is a perennial issue: Whose cultural practices should prevail – that of the visitor or the host? Should European cultural practices apply in Asia; or vice versa?

The author noted that white colonialism-tainted superiority and its derivative, colour and cultural prejudice, diminished when the oldest generation died. While coloured children born in Australia did experience the expected spate of ignorance-based disparaging epithets initially, education, socialisation, and habituation progressively dissolved white superiority significantly. Only the (apparently) illiterate, ignorant-white exercises a new-found right to express some un-thought verbiage! Racial legislation is a waste of intent, except for supporters of Israel.

'Destiny Will Out' recounts not only the author's identification of the culture shocks pervading Australian society in those early years; he also comments on the political scene, the economic environment, the societal patterns he observed, and the attitudes of politicians and the media towards the newly-independent Asian nations.

Most usefully, in his narrative, the author draws upon his considerable knowledge of the wide range of settlement policies with which he had been involved. He is proud of the way immigrant workers were treated, thus preparing the way for eventual integration into the nation. Through his annual inspection of policy implementation throughout the nation, he could also foresee the youth of the nation merging successfully, irrespective of origins.

He believes that there is an innate tendency (clearly manifest by little children) for humans to reach out to one another.

'Destiny Will Out' is available as an ebook with Amazon at \$US 2.99 .

Raja RATNAM
None
02-4476-7655
email us here

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.

© 1995-2015 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.