

## Sophacles Andreades

I was born in Cyprus and I came here from Cyprus in 1938. Unfortunately I was so poor I had to borrow money to come and I remember it was roughly £10, my expenses to come here. I came here because there was no work in Cyprus, Cyprus being a small Island and it was so neglected by the government that there was no work at all to sustain the population so quite a lot of us came to England to work and support ourselves and also our relatives. At the time when I came over here England was a very sophisticated country in comparison to Cyprus because it was almost primitive in comparison with England. It was highly populated, street lights which I never saw before in my life. And really I was confused when I was going out in the streets. I came especially to London because I had some relatives who were going to support me until I learned some English and also until I find some work.

At the beginning of course it was so strange living in England because I couldn't speak English and if you don't speak the language of the place where you are living it makes life very hard. It took me, of course I could speak a few words here and there and I could say to my customers "how do you like your hair cut?" and be able to work but to converse freely I couldn't, and therefore wherever I would go I would be silent all the time and I made it my purpose to study English as soon as I could because without the language you couldn't appreciate the life.

After a year I was in England where I learnt a bit of the language and began to read books and I began to appreciate very much the freedom of the country that you had to speak and say what you liked within the law and also the orderly manner the English people were going about. For instance to catch a bus you couldn't run and go in any old how at any time you wanted, you had to wait in the queue. And this orderly way of the British people remained so impressed in my mind that from that moment onward I began to love this country. Later on when I studied law and the British constitution, England was the top, there was no other country in the world to beat England for me.

I learnt to love England because of this freedom they give and the order they possess the people. This standing in the queue you won't find anywhere in Europe. The strongest will go first, now I hate that, I like order. And because I like order and observe nature if you observe nature there is order in nature. That's why I became a philosopher. All these things were conducive toward me becoming a freer person and being not afraid to express myself, not afraid to tell the truth. And it developed my character. On the other hand I was also criticising England because of various facts that are undeniable. For example they neglected that Island there, Cyprus, it became stagnant and we had to leave the country so that we were able to live somewhere else. They were milking the Island but they were not doing much to develop it and of course when you have an Empire that's what you do. You milk the people and this is a fact. If they don't like it some people, well then they can lump it. These are the facts of life.

Now fortunately the British people are realising that because they haven't got the Empire any more and they realise it will take a little more time but they are more free now to criticise what they have done.

Another thing which I admire about the British - various countries of Europe especially, had colonies. When they left their colonies they didn't leave us administration and justice and therefore either they had to struggle very much to teach themselves this administration and justice or they became dictatorships or they were being exploded by other people. Where as England the administration of the British, the British people at least, although they were milking the counties they were reigning over, yet when they left they left some administration and some justice. And that's why although they were very much against England because they wanted to be free, yet they will never forget the British because no other country left those good points behind. So at least a British, although he may be blamed for many things, at least he will be thanked for what they have done to these countries.

To be able to appreciate a country you must be also find the good points and the bad points. If they are good points accept them, adopt them and make them part of your life. If you see that certain things are not good, they are against justice especially, then criticise them. So that by your criticism and other peoples criticism, the people of the country will take stock of it so that gradually by discussion and freedom of expression and all that, improve themselves. That's my life, that's how I lived and I couldn't care less if I was practising law and making money or whether I was a hairdresser or what. It's the education that I got that matters to me. It opened the whist of things to me and that's what I live.

The British people at first, to a person that came from the Mediterranean, they looked a bit cold but when you stay a little longer and know about their ways you take away that impression. I found that British people are not any different from other people in the world, they're human beings. They respect order and justice in the same way as I do. They go about their own way without disturbing other people. That's why to us, the middle Eastern people, we think that they are cold. They just don't want to interfere with other people. Where as in the middle east everybody knew somebody else and wanted to put his nose into somebody else business. Now again this sort of coolness that the English have is something which appeals to me again. There are so many things that I came to like about England that it takes a long time to talk about them. It's through observation, first of all think of the person as an individual, not what colour he has what nationality he is, then speak to him or her and see how he thinks about the things that you think. Then judge him on those things and not be prejudice from the beginning. Prejudice is the scorch of human society. People who are prejudice they are unhappy people and if that prevails in the whole of the country instead of going forward, that country will go backward.

I am what I am, I was born with certain characteristics to love justice and order and that is why I changed so quickly to the rhythm of British life. Unfortunately all the people are not born to have those characteristics of justice and order like I have, therefore they need quite a lot of coaching, nature is stronger than nurture, you've heard of that expression. It takes time to develop and perhaps other people may come along to help or by the Cypriots remaining here for more than one or two generations they may by observing the people and by reading books and educating themselves and all that develop in such a way that they will discard injustice, discard megalomania discard avariciousness, which is a scorch unfortunately for the majority of my people because as I have said before if you have all of those vices you can't develop, you can't progress. I've done my duty, history will judge me, that's all I can say.