

# THE LEAGUE ASSAULTS ON SATYARTHA PRAKASH

BY

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PUBLISHED BY

**THE NEW WORLD - ORDER PUBLICATIONS**

No. 17, MOHANLAL ROAD — LAHORE.

(Price As. -4/-)

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*Printed by Hari Krishan "Premi" at the Bharati  
Printing Press, 10, Hospital Road, Lahore.*

## PREFACE

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The Government of Sir Francis Mudie in Sind has done us an honour by banning in that Province the pamphlet entitled *The Sind Ban on Satyartha Prakash*, written by me and published in March, 1945, by the Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, Lahore. We thank him and his Government for it—not for the honour so much as for the instruction it imparts. The pamphlet was a rational exposition of the writings of Rishi Dayananda in his *Satyartha Prakash*, and contained absolutely nothing which by any stretch of imagination be construed as, amounting to, an infraction of any rule of law in any sphere whatsoever.

Thousands of copies of it were printed and published by the Sabha at the instance of its President, Mahatma Khushhal Chand Anand, and it enjoyed wide and unfettered circulation in Sind during the governorship of Sir Francis Mudie's predecessor-in-office. But it was banned sometime after he took over the reins of that Provincial Government. For all that we know from the several letters of approval and appreciation received from certain representatives of public opinion, including well-known leaders like Dr. (then, also, Sir) Gokal Chand Narang, himself a distinguished scholar or author, the pamphlet was a convincing and unanswerable argument, which, while it kept the so-called religious susceptibilities of the Musalman in tact, defended Dayananda's writings in the *Satyartha Prakash*, opposed the ban and demanded its immediate removal, if it all fair dealings were intended by the Provincial Government. And it was also in substance an appeal to H. E. the Viceroy for his personal intervention and exercise of his special responsibility in order to effect the removal of the ban. Because it was a clear case of jeopardising vital interests of an important minority community in that Province through wanton misuse of the centrally controlled Defence of India laws.

For one thing, "The Sind Ban on Satyartha Prakash" contained a few sentences of criticism of Sir Francis Mudie's conduct as Home Member of the Government of India during the Central Assembly discussion on the adjournment motion on the Sind ban, moved by Bhai Parmanand Ji. Of course we meant nothing personal against him, and could never persuade ourselves that a person of his status, attainments and responsibility could be so intolerant of such merited popular criticisms, or could view them with anything but with equanimity and large-hearted sympathy.

Sind has become a land of bans, and bans—a regular succession of them. If one ban obliges the ministerial party interests, there must be another which might serve to preserve certain outworn marks of gubernatorial prestige. That is but natural. Because one unjust measure or order cannot stand all alone. It perforce needs the constant support of other acts or measures of injustice. Thus injustices multiply. And so, vice spreads much more rapidly and with far greater ease than virtue.

An unjust act becomes indispensable if one must support an unholy cause, an evil. Wherever there is a conscious effort to suppress the truth, distort facts, prejudice reason, malign virtue, twist the law, abuse authority, or barter away the sacred freedom of exalted office, we must know, it is all for vicious propitiation of arrant, arrogant selfishness of this individual or that party's interests and for nothing else. It is proper to look in such quarters for the breeding-ground of all injustices and all other sub-human contaminating vices.

A Ministerial-gubernatorial co-operation, without which such bans as are imposed in Sind are impossible, and which serves as a nursery of multiplicity of injustices and sins, is certainly an unholy and unhealthy alliance, a serious misfortune which must be averted, if not soon eradicated. Bengal today experiences the effects of a climax in the working of a scheme of British-Muslim League alliance reached in India's constitutional march under the British aegis. It is not without its own bitter lessons to India. There is no security of life and property and of human honour for Hindus

in any Muslim League-administered Province, a situation which is not without its natural repercussions in the remaining parts of India.

There are three parties in India who will share between themselves the load of sin of unprecedented barbarity and blood-bath, of the unspeakable profanation and violations of womanhood, which Mother India experiences at the present moment—the Muslim League, the British Government-in-India and the Bengal Congress and Hindu Mahasabha leaders. The responsibilities of the British and the League in the matter are very well known, and needs no repetition here. But what have the others done? It is all very well for people to charge the British and the League for all that happened in East Bengal, with connivance, abetment or inaction, or with all these. Because with them rested the Governmental responsibility for ensuring the safety and security of the population in that part of India.

But there were the Congress and Hindu Maha Sabha “existing” and “functioning” in Bengal; there were reports of “meetings” and “preparations” going on in these areas days, if not weeks, before the actual carnage began, of which the Congress and the Sabha leaders and their workers could not have been quite unfamiliar. They had sufficient data before them, especially from causes which led to the Calcutta massacre, to warn them against undue reliance on the Provincial Government or the League Ministry in Bengal in the matter of preserving law and order and defending the innocent and the weak. They had their I. N. A. and other volunteer organizations. Could not the savage destructions in East Bengal have been averted, or at least the intensity and extent of it lessened, if the Congress and the Sabha had betimes acted with the requisite measure of earnestness and efficiency in the much-needed defence of the defenceless and undefended population? It adds poignancy to the misfortune.

For almost fifteen continuous days the people in East Bengal were left forsaken, so to say, to be ravaged and devoured by the wolves. They say, they were

“hooligans”. That surely they were not. They were guided under a thought-out plan. They worked more as a battalion of an organised band of civil-war leaders. And they were all “Musalmans”, let loose upon the “Hindus” !

When the “hooligans” had almost finished the job, then came one after the other, each punctuated by an interval of a few days between them, the three public statements from M. Abdul Kalam Azad, Mr. M. A. Jinnah and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. They must have amused many, Hindus *and* Muslims, we are sure. They all “condemned” alike the “hooligans” for their thousand and one acts of barbarity, and cruel violations upon humanity they were carrying on since several days. And they did so in the name of “Islam” and appealed to them to desist in the name of preserving the “honour” of Islam. Honestly, we are not convinced of the depth of their appeal. And as subsequent events showed they proved unavailing.

Suppose these “hooligans” had been at the very beginning, and before they had launched their attack, instructed, or had taken into their head, that what they were about to do was the real way, the one way with Quranic sanction, of preserving the “honour of Islam”,—that perhaps might be one reason why the appeals of these eminent Indian Muslim leaders did not prove helpful. And, further, there is yet another pertinent consideration that if these leaders had in their heart of hearts felt that the Muslim “hooligans” were killing and burying the honour of Islam, which they claim to love with everything most dear to them, including their very life, would they not have rushed to the spot the very moment they heard about it and prevented with their life-blood, if that was needed, such an injury to Islam ?

Here, again, the fundamental cause is psychological, mental prepossessions responsible for cherishing misconceptions of Islamic teachings in the Quran regarding other religions and their followers. That is the relevancy of our reference to East Bengal happenings in the present context. To expose the many fallacies of these misconceptions and bigotry, and to stimulate inquiry in the Musalman, in whom are ingrained the “beliefs” which are products of these miscep-

tions, was the purpose for which the criticisms of other religions in the *Satyartha Parhash* were intended.

If it is really and insistently claimed that these interpretations and beliefs of the Quran is the only meaning of its teachings and that no other interpretation of moral and spiritual basis, divorced absolutely from all clannish, racial, cultural and formal elements, prejudices and restrictions is neither valid nor possible, then these beliefs and the teachings responsible for them are really inimical and hostile forces against social security and peace and to human progress. From that standpoint viewed, the *Satyartha Prakash* is far, far less objectionable as a scriptural book than the Quran, as actual events in history show. To say that a "scripture" the religious beliefs of whose professed faithful followers have been, are and must continue to be a source of insecurity of life and woe to mankind in India or elsewhere, and not of Love and Truth that know of no theological and other prejudices and limitations; to say that such a "scripture" is a "Book of God" is to speak downright lie, rank blasphemy. It is immaterial whether the name of such a "scripture" is the "Gita", the "*Satyartha Prakash*", the "Bible" or the "Quran" or any other. The only important test is the pure Divine quality and truth finding direct, clear expression in it.

And them, are they "hooligans"? Who are these Musalman leaders who are today a source of many a retrograde problem in India, whether from within the Muslim League or from without it? They all have a Hindu ancestry, from the virtues and scruples of which they have made themselves completely free. The Musalmans who have massacred so mercilessly and brutally so many Hindu men, women and children, and defiled and violated the honour and life of womanhood of the world, through vigorous expressions of their "Islamic beliefs" in East Bengal, were all Hindus till a few years ago. And they have been made such cruel enemies of the Hindus! Is it to get things done this way that God sent His Religion? Is it to spread this "glory" of sinful profanation and destruction that the prophet preached the Quran? Will a

true Muslim leader in India please answer? The whole situation clearly points to the fact that there is absolutely no hope of India's salvation, national, social and political, except through open, sustained and effective work of moral and spiritual regeneration and reformation of India.

We have, however, honestly tried to present the Quran and its prophet in a most sublime light in the following pages. Strictly consistent with that position is our defence of Satyarth Prakash, which is equally honest and true. The Satyarth Prakash is a Book of religious teachings. It is strictly a religious scripture, and is no less sacred to the Hindus than the Bible is to the Christians, and the Quran is to the Mohammedans, as writes Mahatma Gandhiji in *Harijan* of the 3rd inst. The Sind Government has committed a most serious sinful crime by banning that sacred book and ordering the forfeiture of its copies. To say that the Hindus should be punished if they have with them a copy of their scripture is something most unheard of and cruel. We most earnestly urge the Sind Government to withdraw the ban immediately. The ban shall have to be removed, and that too very early.

We offer our respectful thanks to Shri Swami Prem Bhikshu Ji Maharaj, Mahatma Khushhal Chand Ji Anand, and Pt. Ram Gopal Ji Shastri for the very kind encouragements we receive from them.

Lahore,  $\frac{18-7-2003}{4-11-1946}$

C. P A R A M E S W A R A N



# THE LEAGUE ASSAULTS

ON

SATYARTHA PRAKASH

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It almost looks like that there is no end to the sinful violations and follies of the Muslim League leadership. Many are the seeds of evil it has sown in the past, and many it still continues to sow, in the political soil of India : but none so patently ominous of a luxuriant crop of malignant evil as its wanton assaults upon *Satyartha Prakash*, a religious book of India, of Hindus, written by Rishi Dayananda. The many beastly crimes and carnage which have swept over East Bengal, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Bombay and certain other places in India till a few days ago is primarily, if not solely, a harvest of the League-sowings in India's political field in the name of "Islam" and separate "Muslim" communal interests. But its assaults upon *Satyartha Prakash* are merely an outer expression of a planned invasion and attack without provocation upon the socio-religious foundations of Hindu life. To level attacks against them is to drive deeper the communal aggression far into India's life, which means nothing less than undermining and weakening the sources of India's power of resistance and survival. It is surely a most effective way of effecting India's disintegration and destruction. Therefore, beware ! The insistent assaults upon *Satyartha Prakash* are not merely a denial of elementary civil rights and liberties, which by itself is a serious violation. They have undoubtedly a vital national as well as international significance to India and the

world. Who can tell that, however innocent-looking these inroads may look at present, they are not a prelude to active revival of the "religious" wars which in history at one time spread destruction and ruination almost throughout the eastern hemisphere ?

The *Satyartha Prakash* was first published nearly seventy years ago. It never became a cause of communal clash all these years. The Muslim leaders at the time, who were no less lovers of Islam and the Muslim community, never approached Dayananda, its author, for deletion of the fourteenth chapter. On the other hand several of them had openly conceded to him the right to expound the truth as he honestly saw it for the good of humanity. There have been attempts then on the part of certain members of a non-Muslim section to institute legal proceedings against Dayananda in respect of the criticisms of their religious tenets and beliefs. But the Muslims, among whom could be counted persons of the importance and influence of Sir Syed Ahmed, did not think it proper or worth their while to make any such attempt even as a matter of protest against the fourteenth chapter.

### A RETROSPECT

The seed of which the "Muslim" League is the sprout is a seed of evil, anti-democratic and anti-human. It is a seed of evil of reaction and retrogression. The whole background and purpose of the League is to serve the idea of stemming the tide of national and democratic progress in India, for which the Indian National Congress was brought into being and functioned. If the Englishman who took the initiative for bringing into existence the Congress was a lover of democracy and of Indian humanity, the Englishman who took the initiative for effecting the birth of the "Muslim" League

was a false friend, if not an enemy, of democracy and Indian humanity. One cannot stem the tide of progress without being a reactionary, and a reactionary who plays the role of a friend is unavoidably a false friend, very much worse and more unscrupulous than an honest foe. The Englishman who inspired an *all-India* Congress is truly a man of self-denial, a great pioneer in the field of international amity and world-peace; while the Englishman, or whoever else he be, that inspired a particular *communal* League is necessarily a self-seeker, a war-monger and a veritable enemy of humanity and world-peace.

The policy of the "Muslim" League, true to its origin and past, is that of its inspirer, the self-seeker, who was a propagator of discords and strife and crimes. It is not a communalism born of love of humanity or India. Nor has it sprung from any love of *Islam*, which is fundamentally a teaching of man's self-denial and self-surrender for the establishment of Divine peace in the world. The talk of Islam and Muslim interests on the part of the League leadership, therefore, is the talk of the self-seeker and not of the God-lover. To this truth one must look if one must find the correct explanation for the phenomenon that the more popular the League becomes with the Musalmans the richer are the harvests of crimes against humanity which it gathers. If this is anybody's "religion", then the world, and India in particular, shall have nothing to do with it absolutely. And if that is not Islam, then all responsible Muslim leaders must openly say so and literally act up to that statement honestly and make proper amends for what has been already done. Lip-service, an expression of "regret" or of "horror" after the thing is done, is unavailing. It is no guarantee

against repetition of a centuries-old pursuit of barbarity and sin.

It is not right or proper, nor is it healthy, that anyone should run away with the false idea that the ban on *Satyartha Prakash*, twice imposed at the instance of the League's minions of the Sind Government, is a surface exhibition, intended merely to make the League's political importance and might felt by the non-Muslims throughout India. More than anything else, it is a thin end of the wedge : it is a "civilized" beginning of the revival in India of centuries-old barbarous practice which, though wildly cherished and followed by the Musalman invaders at one time, is directly opposed to the principles of Islamic teaching in the Quran and to the life-examples of Prophet Mohammed himself. The prophet had many good friends among the Jews and the Christians. He did not even touch with disrespect any one of their scriptures or any one of their copies. But, later on, it was the Arab Musalman invaders and their rustic or slave followers who started the heinous work of seizure and destruction of other people's books in direct defiance of Islam and the Prophet. And they did so in the name of Islam and its Prophet ! And what is still worse, that sinful act passes for service of the "faithful" in the cause of "Islam" and its Arabian founder in the opinion of the many. The act of banning *Satyartha Prakash* and seizing its copies is not without its own bewitching charm, which is supported by a tradition, however preposterous and unholy, for the unthinking Musalman intelligentsia and the misguided masses of the people. The sin fascinates and corrupts them and influences them to rally round the "Muslim" League flag. There are now in India Musalman scholars, with claim to

profound learning in Muslim theology, and having spread the teachings of Islam and "converted thousands," but none of them has so far ventured to smash down and raise to the ground this closely guarded citadel of anti-Islamic forces, this hot-bed of anti-Islamic ignorance and disobedience, which masquerade in a false garb of obedience to God and faithfulness to the prophet, within the Muslim community. The importance and seriousness of this crucial Islamic problem will be further clear to all those who remember that the Quran speaks of the prophet's agony of the soul as there were disobedient disbelievers even among his personal Muslim following during his own life-time. Charity, if it is genuine, begins at home. That is a lesson which the Musalman leaders and Musalman theologians have been systematically neglecting all these centuries.

#### SOME UN-ISLAMIC ASPECTS OF THE BAN

The foregoing background of mental survey of the past, brief and incomplete though, may, we trust, prove helpful to the reader in assessing the true significance of the Muslim League leadership. We have seen, and the world knows, that it owes its sprout and existence to a seed which is political reactionarism and *not* religious. We have seen, too, that its nursery is anti-Indian communalism of the imperialist self-seeker, who entertained neither love nor respect either for God or for man. Islam it exploits merely as a prop for its unholy existence and pursuits. The tree, however far-flung be its branches, however beautiful it may be in appearance, cannot be different from its seed in quality. And, as the Jesus had said, the tree is known by the fruit.

That is the League leadership which sees red in the *Satyariha Prakash*, and has enlisted the Sind Provincial

Government's support to ban it and seize its copies. It banned it twice, and twice it did so behind the back of those who regard it as a sacred book ever since it was first published in 1875. The first time it delivered an assault upon the Hindus by banning that book was in 1944. It did so then under the Defence of India Rules, a temporary war-time measure, intended purely to serve the purpose and the interests of the war. No man of personal integrity or moral worth would have consented to be party to this kind of nefarious prostitution of law and authority for the purpose of so openly and deliberately condemning a sacred book of other people and to humiliate them in the eye of the world.

And the League leadership did so without cause, without provocation. It continued the ban for a little less than two years, as long as the Defence of India Rules lasted. Some credulous Hindus were inclined to credit the Sind League Ministry with some measure of honesty of purpose. The Leaguers created the false impression by this surreptitious use of the Rules, and so these Hindus persuaded themselves to think, that the mere fact that the Government banned the book under the temporary war-time measure showed that the Sind Ministry, whether rightly or wrongly, in view of the peculiar conditions of war in that part of India, felt the need for such ban and that therefore the ban would automatically disappear for good with the disappearance of the Rules. The Defence of India Rules did disappear in time and so did with it terminate the ban on *Satyartha Prakash*. But some days thereafter the ban has been reimposed on that sacred book, thus holding the members of a sister community deliberately to open condemnation and ridicule for a second time.

This time the League-propelled Government in Sind has banned the book under the Criminal Procedure Code. This piece of legislation existed since 1898. It was in force during the war period. If it was un-Islamic, because it was unmoral and unrighteous, for the League representatives to rely on the war-time defence rules to impose the ban, and thus strengthen the popular impression that the ban itself was a war-time precaution, it was much more so for them to seek to re-impose and *perpetuate* the ban under the Code.

The fourteenth chapter of the *Satyartha Prakash* was never intended, as we shall see later on, to ridicule or as a challenge to the fundamental Islamic teachings in the Quran. Informed and cultured Muslims, whether in India or outside, had never considered it to be so. The fourteenth chapter has at no time in the past, during all these seventy years and more, been the cause of the mischief which the League representatives attribute to it. And there has been no attack, no provocation, by the Hindus to justify these repeated wanton assaults upon their sacred book and their honour. At no time in their long history, did the Hindus carry on any aggressive war against the religion of any country, people or tribe. The most tolerant people, the Hindus, they have been ever ready to lay the foundations of inter-religious harmony, inter-communal co-operation, world peace and human progress,—a great work which it was the heart's desire of Hazrat Mohammed to accomplish among the various religious communities of the Arab countries. In these circumstances, we ask in all seriousness which is that fundamental Islamic principle which the Muslim League representatives in the Sind Ministry have not defied and violated by their act of banning the *Satyartha Prakash* or any part thereof ?

We repeat in all humility that responsible members of the Muslim community, be they of the League or any other, will be doing a great service to the cause of God's Religion and humanity if they will declare forthwith which of the Quranic teachings of universal moral and spiritual truths the League representatives of the Muslim community have not, by their assaults in question, ridiculed and violated. The seriousness and depth of the un-Islamic nature of that sin will be realised when it is also remembered that it was Dayananda who for the first time in modern times made insistent efforts to bring about in India and the world at large intercommunal and international fellowship and brotherhood, based on the unity of religions, which is the ideal preached in the Quran. Rishi Dayananda selflessly and relentlessly pursued it because that is the Vedic, that is to say, the ancient Indian ideal. The Centre and the Substance and the Soul of that Ideal and Aim is God, Who is the Almighty Creator and Supreme Lord of *all*.

### THE BAN AND THE INDICTMENT

The Sind Provincial Government Notification, No. S. D. 321, dated 10th October, 1946, under the Criminal Procedure Code, says :—

“Whereas it appears to the Government of Sind that Chapter XIV of the book in Sindhi entitled “Satyarth Prakash” contains matter which promotes feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects :

“Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 99A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, the Government of Sind hereby declares to be forfeited to



His Majesty every copy wherever found of the book in Sindhi entitled "Satyarth Prakash", written by Swami Dayanand Saraswati and published by Professor Tara Chand D. Gojra, M.A. on behalf of the Pratinidhi Sabha, Sind, Karachi, and all other documents containing copies, reprints or translations of or extracts from Chapter XIV of the said book on the grounds that in the said chapter the author

"(1) ridicules some of the religious beliefs of the Muslims ;

"(2) misrepresents and reviles the teachings of the Quran ;

"(3) attacks and ridicules the authoritative value and character of the Quran ;

"(4) attacks and belittles the authority of Prophet Mohammed ; and

"(5) generally contains matter calculated to hurt and which hurts the religious susceptibilities of Muslims.

"By order of the Government of Sind,

(Sd.) A. P. Lemesurier,

for

Chief Secretary to Government."

We have no intention or desire to discuss here the legal merits or demerits of the above Notification. Such a discussion more properly falls within the province of experts who are well versed with the deeper technicalities of law and jurisprudence. Not merely that : such a discussion is not called for in a consideration of this kind, which is primarily intended to supply information and suggest lines of consideration which are morally warranted and tenable to the members of the general public, who are for a most considerable part lay minds that may not be able to grasp correctly

the subtleties of the law or of the lawyer. But at the same time it is important that they should know what the Section under reference says, so that they may form the moral view, the common sense view, of the justice and propriety or otherwise of the Sind Government Notification in question.

Section 99A of the Cr. P. C. runs :

“99A (1) Where

“(a) any newspaper, or book as defined in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, or

“(b) any document,

“wherever printed, appears to the Provincial Government to contain any seditious matter, or any matter which promotes or is intended to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty’s subjects, or which deliberately and maliciously is intended to outrage the religious feelings of any such class by insulting the religion or religious beliefs of that class, that is to say, any matter the publication of which is punishable under S. 124A or S. 153A or S. 195A of the Indian Penal Code, the Provincial Government may by notification in the official gazette, stating the grounds of its opinion, declare every copy of the issue of the newspaper containing such matter, and every copy of such book or other document to be forfeited to His Majesty, and thereupon any police-officer may seize the same, wherever found in British India, and any Magistrate may by warrant authorise any police-officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector to enter upon and search for the same in any premises where any copy of such issue or any such book or other document may be reasonably suspected to be.

“(2) In Sub-section (1) “document” includes also any painting, drawing or photograph, or other visible representation.”

We will in the first place direct our attention to one or two considerations which, according to competent and acknowledged writers on law, are fundamental and essential in respect of seizure and forfeiture under the above Section, before entering into a study of the grounds set forth in the Government Notification. There are certain elementary requirements which should be satisfied in order that action under this Section may be legal and proper. “Everything done which may have a remote bearing of promoting feelings of hatred or enmity will not be an offence” under this Section. The essential element is the *intention* to promote such feeling. “Again, feelings of enmity and hatred should be aroused between two classes of His Majesty’s subjects, that is to say, between two sections of the people”, where the basic theme is a fierce contrast, say, as between capitalism and communism. According to this authority<sup>1</sup>, it is not proper for any Provincial Government to use Section 99A and forfeit any newspaper, book or document in support or furtherance of its administrative, communal or any other *policy*. The sole and the only consideration with the Court is whether or not the book contains any objectionable matter “within the letter and spirit of this Section.” It will not be proper under it for any Government to hold that “the books bring or attempt to bring into hatred or contempt or excite or attempt to excite disaffection towards His Majesty or Government established by law in British

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<sup>1</sup>*The Criminal Court Manual (Imperial Acts) 3rd edition (1940) Vol. II, published by the Madras Law Journal Office.*

India when there is no intention directly implied, although it is possible that such writings may have the remote effect of causing some disaffection”.

Another and a latest authority<sup>1</sup> says :

“The Code of Criminal Procedure provides for a machinery for punishment and prevention of offences against the substantive criminal law. A penal statute must be construed strictly, that is to say, *nothing is to be regarded as within the meaning of the statute which is not within the letter or which is not expressly and intelligibly described in the very words of the statute itself.*<sup>2</sup> As a penal statute affects the liberty of a subject, it must be construed, in case of doubt or ambiguity in the language, in *favour*<sup>3</sup> of the subject. No liability should be held to attach and no penalty imposed by mere implication, and Courts should not extend or narrow down the scope or meaning of a penal provision by loose or strained construction.”

The same authority then proceeds to emphasize the rule that should guide the orders of forfeiture. In accordance with the terms of this Section two conditions are necessary (p. 468) :

1. “it must appear to the Provincial Government that the book contains any seditious matter”, and

2. “the Provincial Government must, by notification stating the grounds of its opinion, declare” such newspaper, book or document to be forfeited.

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<sup>1</sup>A. I. R., Third edition (1946), Vol. I, by U. V. Chitale and K. N. Annaji Rao, pp. 202-04.

<sup>2</sup> *Italics ours.*

<sup>3</sup> *Italics authors’.*

The primary object of a Criminal Procedure Code is to secure prevention of the crimes through provision of a machinery for the adequate punishment of offenders. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Act V of 1898) is no exception. Therefore the basic factor in respect of the Sind Provincial Government's action under Section 99A of the Code in the present case is the *commission* of the offence by the writer of the *Satyartha Prakash*, Swami Dayananda Saraswati. If he has not committed the offence "within the meaning of the statute", if the commission of the offence is not deliberate, actual and clearly perceptible "within the letter, or is not so direct as expressly and intelligibly described in the very words of the Section itself", as otherwise it will be serious interference with the lawful human rights and duties of Rishi Dayananda as a socio-religious reformer, then the seizure and forfeiture of the copies of the Sindhi translation of the *Satyartha Prakash* by the Sind Government is illegal and unlawful.

The statutory requirement that the Provincial Government should issue the notification regarding the seizure and forfeiture of the book, setting forth the grounds which led it to its decision, is a specific instruction of duty, obligatory on its part and not permissive or discretionary. It is a safeguard provided by the statute itself against any misuse, whether deliberate or otherwise, of the provision through unbridled executive decisions. From quite a common sense point-of-view, wherever the law-making authority invests the executive Government with fresh power to punish extra-judicially an offender against the law, it seems, the former expects the latter, for the purpose of arriving at the correct decision and exercising the penal authority conferred by the law, to put itself strictly in the position of the impartial court—

in the matter of the weighing of evidence, the ascertainment, examination and finding of all relevant facts, the construction of the language as well as the intelligent grasp of the spirit of the statute. If the Sind Government has failed to do so, as we consider it has undoubtedly failed to do so, and has banned the fourteenth chapter and the book without any moral or legal ground or warrant, and punished the innocent author for an offence he never committed, then the action of the Sind Government in the present case is unquestionably unjust, unscrupulous and immoral.

As observed already, the *Satyartha Prakash* was published in 1875. It was in the market ever since. The Criminal Procedure Code came into force in 1898. If Swami Dayananda Saraswati was really a sedition-monger and a communal war-monger, or his *Satyartha Prakash* preached or was intended to preach sedition and intercommunal discord and strife, and actually committed the offence "against the substantive criminal law", the authority of the statute would have been put in operation against that book and the crime prevented as soon as the Code found its place in the statute book, if not earlier. The fact is, it seems to us, that S. 99A does not and is not intended to cover cases of books or criticisms of the description of *Satyartha Prakash*, whose sole purpose, as it will be clear even to a most casual reader of the book, is to preach social reform in India, based on a principle of synthesis of beliefs and cultures and unity of religious teachings as well as the oneness of all religions. It is too late in the day for the Sind League Ministry to pick holes in that book in order to discover the criminal offence where none exists and where none is intended at all. We have no doubt that the Government Notification of the

seizure and forfeiture of *Satyartha Prakash* and the charges levelled against its revered saintly author are the noxious effect of a communally vitiated mental outlook or atmosphere, brought to bear upon the problems of the administration or of party-politics in total disregard of the sacred popular trust. It is a typical instance illustrative of how far, to what pernicious length, prostitution of ministerial authority can go under cover of provincial autonomy.

### CERTAIN VITAL FACTS EXAMINED

According to the Sind Notification, although in the view of the Government it is Chapter XIV which contains matter that offends against the statute, it is the whole book that has been expressly banned in that province. Any view that the ban is on the offending portion is not correct. From the standpoint of the author and the publisher, or from the standpoint of the Hindus, it would have made no difference at all if the Government had banned the fourteenth chapter alone. For, that chapter being an essential and inseparable part of the whole book, there can be no question of the book being the same *Satyartha Prakash*, written by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, with any of its essential parts separated from it and destroyed. With the fourteenth chapter removed the book must look scandalously incomplete. It will in that case lose the spirit of impartiality which otherwise it is its one beauty. In the several chapters, the author criticizes the current popular religious notions and beliefs of the various sections of the Indian society, of the Hindu, the Jain, the Christian, the Buddhist. And then, why not of the Muslim? Are all the religious teachings of all mullahs, maulvis and maulanans divinely pure and perfect, so pure and perfect that they have all come to the end of their

life's march of truth and perfection and reached, so to say, the blind-alley beyond which they cannot and need not go? Is no further change, no more purification and ennobling in their human, moral and spiritual values any more desirable or called for? If only one had the moral strength to do so, and also the requisite measure of pure love of God and His Religion so sustain and express that strength, one should have regarded the criticisms in the fourteenth chapter as a great eye-opener, as a stern emphasis on the pressing need of pure *Islamic* purification and exaltation of the Musalman community not only in India but throughout the world in the best interests of humanity and human progress.

It would have been scandalous to the pure truth of Islam of Dayananda's conception, to the Vedic truth of *Islam*, and he would have failed in his duty as a socio-religious reformer, if he had not written the present fourteenth chapter and made it an essential part of his *Satyartha Prakash*. Thus neither Dayananda, the author, nor any publisher of the book, nor anyone else, can destroy or separate that chapter from the book. Therefore a ban imposed exclusively on the fourteenth chapter would have meant virtually a ban on the whole book. But that is entirely a different matter. In that case, it would be the result not of any violation of the rule of law, not of any illegal and iniquitous exercise of the power to curtail or any other way interfere with the natural "liberty of a subject". In that case, it would be a result brought about by other causes. But the important consideration regarding the League-propelled Sind Government's ban is whether the principle of its decision and action for seizing and forfeiting the whole



book is sound, whether in law or in ethics. Is it right to punish the author for writing the thirteen chapters which, in the view of the Government, do not offend against the law, simply because the Government thinks that he must be punished because the fourteenth chapter is an offence under the statute? Is it right for the Government to deprive the reading public of the benefits which the inoffensive and unoffending thirteen chapters of the book confer in order to enforce its own executive decision in respect of its fourteenth chapter? Is it sane rule of law? Is it sound rule of justice? If it is not, then the purpose underlying the Notification is not respect for the principle and purpose of the law or for the liberty of the subject, which is the object of prevention of crime, but, surely, is something outside of all these. No Government has the right or the duty to convert the powers conferred upon it by a statute into, to borrow Mr. Justice Mohammed Sharif's recent phrase, an "engine of oppression", as the Sind Provincial League Ministry has with Criminal Procedure Code done in the present case.

It is not merely relevant but it is important to remember that the demand for action against *Satyartha Prakash* originated not from the responsible custodians of the law and order of the Government, but from the League leadership. According to Nawab Siddiq Ali's declaration<sup>1</sup>, the Government's ban on the book under the Defence of India Rules in 1944 was a homage paid to the demand of the Karachi Session of the All-India Muslim League. Strictly, the homage was not by the Government. The resolution of the All-India Muslim League on the subject took the form of a directive to the Sind Provincial League Ministry, which obeyed it as a matter of duty it owed to its parent body. The actual basis of the Ministerial action against the book, it is reasonable to suppose, is political and communal party allegiance, and as such has far deeper affinity with the Ministerial "policy" than with the only relevant question of actual and direct commission of crime, impartial inter-

<sup>1</sup> *Vide the Central Assembly Proceedings, (November 7, 1944), of the Adjournment Motion moved by Bhai Paramanand.*

pretation and application of the law, protection of the innocent and punishment only of the offender. That explains the frantic efforts of the Ministry to ban *Satyartha Prakash* by clutching at the War-time Defence Rules at one time and the Criminal Procedure Code at another. In the light of these facts there is warrant for the presumption or suspicion that what the Government has done for banning the book the second time is to stretch S. 99A of the Code to fit in with the Procrustean bed of the All-India Muslim League demand, and that, therefore, the grounds set forth in the Government Notification are contrary to facts, malicious and false and unsustainable in law.

We have observed a little while ago, quite in a casual manner though, that Rishi Dayananda's object in writing the *Satyartha Prakash* was to expose the many fallacies and superstitions which were, and still are, eating into the vitals of the Indian society and undermining the foundations of its stability and strength and independence in the name of "divine religion". We have also observed that he was never unmindful of the fact that Islam preached also Vedic truth, great Divine truths, and he had on several occasions openly acknowledged that fact. There is therefore no question of his having reviled or misrepresented the Divine truths of Islam which the Quran teaches. What he has certainly ridiculed, denounced and condemned is certain racial, tribal and territorial mental prepossessions, un-Divine, unspiritual obsessions, mis-called 'beliefs', and soulless observances of rituals and ceremonials which pass for God's Religion. If we turn the pages of human history we will find that all reformers who were worth their salt, all teachers of mankind worth the name, have done the same work. It is a gross misstatement of fact, nay, it is blasphemy, to say that their intention in doing so was to promote "feelings of enmity or hatred between the different classes" of the population.

As we have stated above, the fourteenth chapter is an essential and inseparable *part* of the book, and therefore it should not be treated independently of the other parts of the book. The fourteen chapters are the chapters of the book, each dealing with a specific subject which serves the central

theme and purpose of the book. That theme and purpose is the service of humanity by the service of the truth : to uphold the cause of Divine truth and to attack and eliminate the citadels of religious falsehood, error, jobbery and corruption from the Indian soil and from the world. In doing so he has spared almost none. Sri Sankara, the great and revered founder of the Order to which Dayanand himself belonged, has in the same book come in no small share of his "attacks". Let us now see what he himself says of his aim in writing his *Satyartha Prakash*.

"My chief aim in writing this book",<sup>1</sup> he says in his general Introduction to the whole book, "is to (help) unfold truth as truth and error as error. The exposition of error in place of truth and of truth in place of error does not help the unfolding of truth.

"To speak of, write about, and believe in, a thing as it is constitutes truth. He that is prejudiced tries to prove that even his error is truth, while the truth of his religious opponent is error. He cannot therefore know what the true Religion is. Hence this alone is the bounden duty of the truthful and learned men : to (help) unfold the true nature of truth and of error before all men (mankind) by writing and by lecturing, who, after having ascertained what promotes their (human) welfare and what is prejudicial to their (human) interests, should embrace what is true and reject what is false, and thereby enjoy (true) happiness. Though the human soul possesses the capacity for correct apprehension of truth, yet through self-interest, obstinacy, wrong-headedness, ignorance and the like, it renounces truth and (therefore) inclines towards untruths. And we have not done such a thing in writing this book, nor has it been our object to hurt anyone's susceptibilities or harm anyone. On the other hand, our aim has been to further the advancement and good of mankind (as a whole), and to help all in the ascertainment of truth, whereby they could (own and) embrace the (Divine, universal) truth and reject (all) falsehoods ; for there

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<sup>1</sup>Translation by Dr. C. Bharadwaja, (3rd Edition, 1927).

is certainly *no other way* of (ennobling and) uplifting the human race.

“All errors and omissions”, Dayananda proceeds to observe, “(which may be found in the book) on being pointed out to us will be rectified, but no heed will be paid to whatever said or written through prejudice or ‘in a spirit of fault-finding. Any suggestions made with a view to benefit mankind, on being found to be such, will be most acceptable. *There are undoubtedly many learned men among the followers of all religions.* Should they free themselves from prejudice and accept (only) universal truths—*i.e.*, those truths that are to be found alike in all religions and are of universal application (to the welfare, unity and progress of mankind)—and reject (unreservedly) *all things in which they are at variance* (with those Divine truths), and treat one another with (true) love, it will greatly be to the advantage of the (whole) world; for, difference among the learned create bad blood among the ignorant masses and breed all sorts of sorrows and sufferings and destroyed their (true) happiness.” Alas ! but how true !

Then sounding a serious note of warning to his critics, he says ;

“It is our firm belief that all those acts (and thoughts) that lead aright to the attainment of knowledge and build up of (high ethical) virtues, (of lasting benefit of mankind) are (to the common man) like poison to begin with, but like (the sweet) nectar in the end.

“*We have incorporated into this book whatever is (Divinely) true in all religions and is in (Divine) harmony with their (fundamental) teachings*, but we have refuted whatever is false in them. We have exposed to the view of all men—learned or otherwise—all evil observances, (all obscurantist practices, faiths and prepossessions), (adopted) whether secretly or openly. This will help them all to mutually discuss these things and lovingly embrace the *One True Religion.* Though we were born in Arya Vartha”, continues Dayananda referring to himself, “and live in it, yet just as we do not

defend the evil doctrines and practices of the religions which came into existence in this country, but, on the other hand, we expose them properly, *in like manner* we deal with the other religious denominations. *We treat the people of other countries in the same way (as we do) our own countrymen as far as the elevation of the human race is concerned.* It behoves all men to do likewise. Had we taken up the advocacy of any one of the "religions" (which now pass for *the Religion* in India), we would have been doing the same thing (for it) as the sectarians do (for theirs), *viz.*, glorify and defend everything theirs', and (thus) become a hinderance to (the peace and) progress (of mankind). *But such things are beneath the dignity of man*".

Dayananda by way of further elucidation of the purpose underlying the work observes :—

"We have given a brief summary of the Vedic Religion. Whoever will read this book with a biased mind will naturally fail to understand what the author has aimed at. There are four essential conditions which every reader, (be the reader "Aryan" or non-Aryan"), has to satisfy in order that he (or she) may know the sense of a passage completely and truly. (And they are): (1) *Aakaamksha*; (2) *Yogyata*, (3) *Aasakti*, and (4) *Taatparya*.

*Aakaamksha* is to enter into the spirit of the author or doer;

*Yogyata* is fitness to comprehend (the truth), and the capacity for harmony of expression;

*Aasakti* is maiatenance of order and sequence, *i.e.*, to preserve the continuity and harmony of the underlying principle and the language employed in its exposition so as to bring it home to the common reader; and

*Taatparya* is to give precisely the same shade of meaning to the words of a writer or speaker as he intend them to convey".

And then the author concludes the general Introduction with the following memorable words :—

"Just as we studied the Jain and Buddhist Scriptures, the Puranas, the Bible, and the Quran with an unbiased mind, and have accepted what is good in them, and rejected what is false, (i.e., what is not of eternal universal truth and value for man's development and perfection), with a view to ensure the betterment of mankind (as a whole), it behoves all good men to do likewise; it does not become of wise men to mislead people (for whatever reason or advantage). The ignorant, (the misguided), are sure to misrepresent what we say, (but) because (we are sure that) *the wise will realize what our aim is* in writing this book we consider the labour amply rewarded. We consider it to be *the first and foremost duty of man to express the (Divine) Truth only*, without fear or favour. May the Omniscient, Omnipresent, Supreme Soul, Who is the Personification of (all) existences, consciousness and bliss, by his Grace, infuse this (Divine Truth into all mankind) and give it permanency!"<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary, and it is also proper, that we should cite here a few more passages from Swami Dayananda's writings in the *Satyartha Prakash*, so as to enable the impartial reader to understand aright the *author's intention* in writing the book and the object he had in view in advancing these criticisms. Besides the general Introduction, from which we have quoted above, he has written also special Introductions to some of the chapters. We will now proceed to quote from them. In his Introduction to Chapter XI, the author says :

"Whatever has been written in this book in advocacy of the true Religion and in refutation of the false has been done with the sole object of the enlightenment of all. We have thought it right to lay before the public what opinion we have formed of these four religions,—(the Pauranic, the Jain (Buddhist), the Christian and the Mohamuedan)—, according to our understanding and knowledge after a thorough study of the books on which they are based, as lost knowledge cannot be easily recovered. All impartial readers of this book will come to know which religion is true and which false.....The merits and demerits of the Pauranic

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<sup>1</sup>*Italics ours.*

religion, whose follower's are divided into many sects that have sprung up at different times in this country, called *Aryavarta* (India), will be briefly discussed in the Eleventh Chapter. Should the readers not consider it an act of public good, they would not at least bear an ill-will towards us, *since it has never been our object to do anyone harm or entertain hostile feelings towards anyone*; on the other hand *our sole object is the ascertainment and propagation of truth*. In like manner, it is extremely necessary for all to act justly. *The aim of human life is to find out truth and to preach it to others*, and not to wrangle in any spirit of hostility. Unbiased learned men can very well know how many undesirable results have accrued, and are likely to accrue (still), in this world following from this wrangling on the part of chismatics and sectarians. There will be no peace and good-will among men till their wrangling ceases. Should we all, especially learned men amongst us, having freed ourselves of jealousy (and bigotry) and hatred, try (honestly) to ascertain what is right and what is wrong, desire to embrace the (Divine) truth (alone) and preach to others (only) our honest convictions, and reject all falsehoods, it would not be found impossible for us to do so. It is certain that mutual dissensions among the learned have been the cause of mutual hatred, discord and strife among the masses. If all these men were not immersed in selfishness, and were truly longing to further the interests of all, it is very likely that all mankind may have one common religion.....May the Almighty, All-Pervading God, inspire all mankind with the spirit of establishing One Universal Religion."

In his Introduction to Chapter XII, the author declares :

".....The perusal of this chapter by the Jaines, the Buddhists, and other people will engender in them the spirit of enquiry into the truth and prompt them to take their part in their defence, and (so) study (afresh) the subject for this purpose. *So long as the parties to the debate do not maintain and the discussions are not carried on in a spirit of dispassion and love it is impossible to arrive at any conclusion as to the correctness or otherwise of a belief*. It is only when learned men do not act in this spirit that the ignorant masses are

thrown in utter darkness (and confusion) and made to suffer extreme misery.....It is believed that this chapter, which treats of the Buddhist and Jain religions will be of immense help to the followers of other religions and will considerably add to the stock of knowledge, because the followers of the Jain Religion do not let anyone else read or copy out from their religious books. By dint of great efforts made by the author, and especially also by Shri Sevak Lal Krishna Das, Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bombay, certain of their books were obtained.....This, however, is patent to all : that there are many people in the world who cannot see their own faults, but they are ever ready to spot out the short-comings of others. This is hardly just, for one should find out and remove one's own short-comings before one proceeds to discover and remove the faults of others".

Referring to his criticism of the Christian Religion in Chapter XIII, the author of *Satyartha Prakash*, in an Introduction to it, says :

".....There are many *Bhasha* and Sanskrit translations of the Bible done by well known Missionaries. The perusal of these has given rise to many doubts in our mind.....Our sole aim in writing this chapter is to further the cause of truth and eradicate error, and not to injure the feelings of others or do them harm or bring false charges against them. ....It will also make it easy for all men to examine the tenets of Christianity and make a comparative study of them (with the teachings of the other religions). It will further augment the knowledge of men concerning religions and thereby make it easy for them to discriminate between right and wrong, between desirable conduct and undesirable conduct, and to embrace *truth* and practice virtue, to disown error and shun vice. It behoves all men to carefully study the Books of all religions before they give or publish their opinions for or against them.....No subject can be mutually discussed if the parties to the discussion are not well acquainted with each other's religion. The ignorant are apt to fall easily into an abyss of superstition and falsehood. It is in order to (avert that calamity and) save them from such a consequence that we have briefly



discussed all the prevalent religions.....*All that is true and (therefore) worthy of acceptance to all is alike in all religions...*"

<sup>1</sup>The Quran, which is in the Arabic language", writes Swami Dayananda Saraswati in an Introduction to Chapter XIV of the *Satyartha Prakash*, "has been translated into Urdu by distinguished Mohammedan scholars. This translation was rendered into Bhasha and transcribed in Devanagari script and then got again corrected by eminent Arabic scholars (who knew the Hindi as well). Anyone questioning the accuracy of our translation should first prove the translation of these Mohammedan scholars to be incorrect before they seek to find fault with us. *The object aimed at by this criticism is to contribute to the elevation of the human race and to enable all men to sift truth from falsehood by furnishing them with some (definite) ideas of the teachings (beliefs)-of the various prevalent religions, since this will afford opportunities for friendly (sympathetic) discussions—so useful and helpful to men in discovering their defects (where defects really exist) and appreciating their merits (where the appreciation is rightly due).*

"It is not our purpose", continues the author, "to falsely condemn this or any other religion. On the contrary, *what we aim at is that whatever is true should be recognised as such, so that no one should be in a position to palm off untruth for truth or hinder the progress of truth.....* Good men will in all cases; as they come to understand the merits and demerits, imbibe the good qualities and reject bad ones, and eradicate bigotry and prejudice wherever found. Who does not know something of the prodigious fund of evil that has been wrought (in the world) by bigotry? The truth is that it is unworthy of a human being to injure others and to throw away his (legitimate) chance of happiness in this uncertain and transient life. In case the good reader comes across in this criticism anything contrary to facts, it is hoped, he will point it out to us, and we shall make the suggested changes if they are called for, since this criticism is designed to diminish bigotry, abstinacy, jealousy, malice, hatred, (love of) wrangling, and not to promote all or any of

these vices. It is the first and foremost duty of us all to avoid injuring each other as well as to promote each other's well-being. We offer this criticism of the Mohammedan Religion to all lovers of truth in the hope that they, after having carefully studied it, accept what appeals as true to their reason and common sense and discard what is repugnant to them."

What do these many declarations and re-affirmations mean? Are they really the language of a man, a bigot, whose intention it is to force upon others his own ideas or beliefs even at the risk of promoting "feelings of enmity or hatred between the different classes" of followers of the various religions? Do they warrant the presumption, nay even a suspicion, that they come from a mind bent upon playing one section of the Indian population against the other, with no manner of scruple for violations of accepted principles of morality or law, increasing thereby the fund of human suffering and misery in India? Is there any rational ground for any fear that these criticisms may intensify or stimulate intercommunal conflicts and strife in the country? —although such a fear, if at all it existed anywhere in the League circles, will not be a *proper ground* for forfeiture of the book under the Code. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the "attacks" on beliefs in the book are "attacks" on *the whole Indian society*, and not on any particular class.

There is absolutely no warrant for the view, or for any suspicion, that the book is likely to foment inter-communal enmity and hatred, for two vital reasons. The one is that, according to *Satyartha Prakash*, there are four important religions prevalent in India—the Pauranic (the Hindu), the Jain (Buddhist), the Christian and the Mohammedan. When the followers of *all* these religions are given and receive *equal* treatment, when the book strictly maintains that they all are sailing in the same boat, which one of these religious communities can any legitimate grievance against any or all of the rest? The common "religious" teachings and beliefs of none of these four classes have escaped the effect of the author's pruning knife. There is not a sensible man who will deny the

fact that all the same five "grounds", as are set forth in the Sind Government Notification, No. S. D. 321, October 10, 1946, the same Provincial Government can repeat bodily in respect of the XI, XII and XIII Chapters as well, by merely substituting such word as the "Hindu", the "jain" or "Buddhist" or the "Christian" in place of "Muslim" and the name of the Muslim scripture as the case may be, and then ban the book for that reason in Sind with as much moral propriety and legal tenability and validity as it has done in respect of the XIV Chapter. This position is irrefutable. That being so, there is absolutely no basis, moral or legal, for the Sind Government's claim that XIV Chapter of the *Satyartha Prakash* "appears" to it to contain matter which promotes feelings of enmity or hatred between Musalmans on the one side and any or all the non-Musalman communities on the other.

Thus the factual foundation and the whole edifice upon which the forfeiture of the book has been built up is, to put it most mildly, vicious and illusory. And it is not without its own meaning either that the Sind League Ministry has chosen to ban the book in respect not of any Chapter which "attacks" the religious teachings and beliefs of a minority community, but of the chapter which "attacks" those of the Musalmans, who form the majority community in Sind. It is, therefore, fair and reasonable presumption, warranted by the logic of communal and political events in India generally and in Sind in particular, and also by the many-sided implications of the resolution of the Karachi Session of the A.-I. Muslim League, referred to above, that the ban on *Satyartha Prakash* is basically a League Ministerial act of communal jobbery and favouritism, intended, perhaps, to further seduce and corrupt the Muslim masses by playing upon feelings of bigotry and fanaticism and thus serve the unmoral, that is to say, *un-Islamic*, political ends of the League leadership.

There may be perhaps also other objects in view. But we are not concerned with them just at the moment. What indeed is of vital importance here is the considera-

tion that, since the ban appears to be a veiled show of the mailed fist of the rank, open League communalism, the grounds enumerated in the Notification is likely to be anything but genuine, that they are all malicious and false. As the whole basis of the Notification and the "grounds" therein enumerated is thus disingenuous, malicious and false, the entire origin and direction of the proceedings and consideration, in respect of Rishi Dayananda's writings in that book, in respect of the construction and application of the law and the exercise of the powers conferred upon the Government by the statute can hardly be said to be anything but vicious, spiteful or prejudiced and mischievous.

The ban on the *Satyartha Parkash* is therefore an open fraud upon the statute. It is a deliberate and ominous violation of every known principle of morality and religion. Is that act consistent with any fundamental *Islamic* teaching in the Quran? Is that the guidance which the Quran gives to the Muslim regarding his disposition and conduct towards his neighbours and other fellow-beings? To quote Danananda: such a violation against the permanent interests of the human soul is "*beneath the dignity of man*".

The second reason why there is no warrant for suspicion that *Satyartha Parkash* is likely to promote intercommunal enmity or hatred is that it has not promoted it during the long years of its existence in the past. The years from 1875 to 1946 marks a period which is longer than the life-existence of the Muslim League from its conception and birth to this day. To compare the number of Hindu-Muslim riots, and the extent and volume of the orgy of savage violence, resulting in an enormity of sub-beastely bestiality and crimes, by which Mother India has been made to suffer during this period, as a result, whether directly or indirectly, of the preachings and work of those that constitute the League leadership in India, is death to compare and contrast between the virtues and worth of Dayananda's writings in the *Satyartha Parkash* and the current "religions teachings" and "beliefs" in the Quran, as they are understood by its

followers. The events proclaim that his exposures were innocent and done without malice or prejudice, and, therefore, the bore in them no seeds of evils or of any other crime against either mankind or its Maker.

The *Satyartha Parkash* was incapable of breeding inter-communal hatred and strife in the past, because it really contains no seed of hatred or strife. That again is the reason for its continuing to remain incapable of "promoting feelings of enmity or hatred" in the present and in the future. It is pertinent to remember that one of the objects of the author in writing the XIV Chapter, as he himself declares in the special Introduction to it, is to expose, for the purpose of their eradication, bigotry and other pernicious vices of mental prepossessions, which wrought many a dreadful sin and misfortune and growing misery in the life of mankind in the past. That curse upon humanity, the causes of which Dayananda wants to expose in that chapter, is a solid fact which recorded history corroborates and which no sane person can afford to ignore. And no sensible Muslim will ever entertain the idea that "attacks" upon bigotry and such other moral evils are really attacks upon *Islam* or the preacher of *Islam*.

Bigotry with all its allied vices is not a monopoly of any one particular tribe or sect. It is an evil common to the generality of the followers of all the "prevalent religions," which, therefore, according to the saintly author, are no better than degraded, compartmentalised schools of thoughts, walled arenas of conflicts and clashes of outer forms and conventions, customs and traditions and shows, divorced from the pristine eternal Divine truth, which is the substratum of all basic religious teachings. This is what the author says in the *Satyartha Prakash*, and this is the moral background of his criticisms of what he calls the "prevalent religions." Is it any "attack" upon *Islam* and its great preacher to expose bigotry when it is found in the Musalman and to seek its eradication ?

Again, according to Dayananda, his exposures in Chapter XIV are intended to serve as a means of stimulating in the Musalman a fresh re-examination, a much deeper self-

examination and inquiry, about his own "beliefs" of God and the expressions of His truth in creation, and also of the sense which he has formed and cherishes about the fundamental teachings of the Quran. No sensible person will deny that one rational way of bringing about this result is to make quite apparent, in quite an undisguised form, the fallacies of such beliefs to the mental view of the common man. We trust no informed Muslim will be so foolhardy as to characterise it as "attacking" Prophet Mohammed or the "*Ancient Religion*" which he preaches in the Quran.

Humanity has an inherent right to demand every class of its members, including the Musalmans, to purify and transform the bases of their susceptibilities, the springs of their emotional stimulus, wherever these bases or springs have been found to act as China Wall to the moral and spiritual advancement and social freedom and well-being of humanity as a whole, —wherever their natural disposition and character have been known to work as forces of violence, carnage, depredation, profanation and reaction. What makes the Quranic teachings look like ridiculous really is not the attacks which are aimed at the transformation of these anti-Divine bases of so-called Muslim susceptibilities, but the misunderstood spirit of the *religious* teachings in the Quran, the readiness of the average bigoted mind to seize upon a Divine teaching in order to taint it with the low prejudices and passions of itself; to misunderstand a teaching of comparatively secondary or extrinsic import and then uphold it as the all-important, to the studied, systematic and total disregard and neglect of the intense fundamentals.

There is an Islamic tradition, which every good Muslim cherishes. It says, in effect: The prophet is great; the Quran is greater than the Prophet; Islam is greater than the Quran; but God is greater than Islam and is the Greatest of all. We have not as yet heard of a conscientious Muslim who subscribes to the view that a devotee of God, however true he might be in his devotion to God, will not be admitted to the Paradise, to the Divine Presence, except through personal mediation of the Prophet of the Quran. That is, in a nutshell, the sanctity and truth which Islam,

pure Islam, assigns to man's relationship with God, the natural relationship of the creation with the Creator. It is a Parent-child relationship. That, again, is a Quranic statement of the Vedic position. And, further, the Islamic prayer that the followers of the Quran may be led in the virtuous path of Abraham and the emphatic teaching that Abraham was a Muslim—these point to the pristine catholicity of Islamic spirit and outlook, yielding thereby a vast field and scope for building up inter-religious harmony and unity of mankind, through successive readjustments in all spheres of life, which are to be determined by the needs of progressive moral exaltation and spiritual enrichment of mankind. By virtue of these teachings it is the Islamic duty of every true Muslim to look upon every virtuous devotee of God as a "Muslim," as a true follower of God's Religion, although the person concerned may not care to call himself by that Arabic name.

The Quranic teachings in their essential fundamental are Vedic teachings. The supreme emphasis which the Quran places on man's absolute duty of devotion and surrender to God and upon the unity of all "prophets" and the inviolable oneness of God's Religion show the identity of the Quranic fundamentals with Vedic teachings. It is true that to the author of the *Satyartha Prakash* the supreme object of veneration among the scriptures of the world is the Veda. Since the Veda is the most ancient scripture of all, the first and foremost of all scriptures to preach the supreme Almighty Truth and Majesty of God and of His Religion that coexisted with His creation, and also since Dayananda has honestly and consistently throughout his life, and to the complete satisfaction of some of his hostile critics in the West, maintained that polytheism is a violation or a distortion of Vedic teachings, his special veneration for the Most Ancient Scripture is not hostile or alien to the spirit of the Quran, which preaches against polytheism and speaks in high veneration of the Most Ancient Religion.

Thus it will be seen that the central theme in the *Satyartha Prakash* is not a fierce contrast between two or more distinct and irreconcilable religions or ideologies with

inherent and irremediable causes of mutual opposition and conflicts in them—is might be the case with capitalism and Marx's communism. There is a fundamental harmony, clear and understandable, between the two. If, according to the Leaguers, Dayananda has “rediculed the authoritative value and character of the Quran” and “attacked and belittled the authority of Prophet Mohammed” by his exposures of bigotry and such other vices in Chapter XIV, is it not also clear to these Leaguers that he, by his repeated emphasis upon the Vedic devotion to God, Vedic way of exalted moral and righteous life and the Vedic teachings of One God, the Supreme Creator and Lord of all, One God's Religion and One God's humanity, has “extolled the authoritative value and character of the Quran” and “supported and heightened the authority of Prophet Mohammed” who preached substantially these same teachings in the Arabic language ?

We have heard the other day the story of a very learned and eminent Indian nationalist Musalman leader, who said some years ago that any Musalman, though he be the most degraded, is a much better man than “your Mahatma Gandhi”, who, though he may be a saint, is not a Musalman, but a Hindu. We hesitate very much to fully believe this story, although we do not regard it as utterly false. Because, we know, it is on all fours with the current popular “beliefs” of Quranic teachings among many sections of Indian Musalmans. And so also, the lesson of what happened during Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's recent visit to the Pathan areas of India is a most significant one. According to their own admissions, the Khan brothers were completely powerless against those who attacked “the Pandit” and his party,—not because the former were actually resourceless or otherwise incapable of effectively dealing with them and putting a complete end to all those attacks, but because all these attacks, which varied from black-flag display to gun-fire combat, came from “their own men”, the Musalmans. During the whole period of Pandit Ji's stay with them, their one and only thought and effort, before which all else melted and disappeared, was how to avoid, whatever be the cost, conflict and class between themselves and these “their own



men." The rational implication of this innate voluntary disposition and effort, supported also by their candid admissions, is that the personal honour and safety of their distinguished guest, who was not one of "their own men," not a Musalman, but a Hindu, and a caste-Hindu at that, were with them matters of subordinate importance. The consideration of their having been together, worked together, suffered together, glorified and exalted each other, journeyed together and delighted together for many years in the past as members of the same Indian National Congress was simply irrelevant. It was not at all a question of right or wrong, of virtue or vice, of God or satan, but was of Musalman or non-Musalman, right or wrong, fair or foul, true or false. Of course, we do not mean that there are no exceptions. We know really there are very noble exceptions. But they are *exceptions*, which do not find their proper place in the actual scheme of things at the present day. That is really a most unfortunate situation, which has unnecessarily entangled the whole of Indian humanity in many mazes of complex and complicated political, social and national problems and conflicts, which otherwise need not have, and would not have, arisen at all.

Who is primarily responsible for this deep misfortune of India? Not the Quran which preaches the principle of the One God and One Religion, of course; not the Prophet who pleads in the Quran for large-hearted human sympathy, for catholicity of outlook and a spirit of human forbearance on the part of every one of his true followers: no, not even the British Government, as some people seem to maintain. The primary responsibility for it rests with the man who, though he is a most degraded man, thinks that he is, by the mere fact of his being a formally enlisted member of the Musalman community, a much better than and superior to the saint who, though he leads a life of devotion to God and service of humanity, is not a member of that community. And his number is legion. Therein lies the primary seeds of all the countless pursuits, struggles and fights of profanation, destruction, communal supremacy and domination.

Those who are acquainted with the Muslim history know that these errors and prejudices and fights can have no end. They multiply and continue in countless succession, wherever they are allowed to strike roots. Even during the early periods of Muslim history, as "beliefs" grew and prejudices increased, differences multiplied, due, of course, more to secular than to any spiritual or moral causes among "the followers of the same Quran", and distinct sects under distinct leaderships sprang up. These sects had soon begun the practice of characterising each other as unbelievers, infidels—each sect arrogating to itself the sole monopoly of the pleasure-hunting rights of entry into the paradise, and was ready to commit any and every barbarous crime and sin, make any sacrifices and to die in "defence of that right". But that is a different matter, into which we need not at the present moment enter deeply. But, all the same, that is a historical fact which should warn India of the serious dangers that lie ahead, of the stern actualities of the Indian situation, which are the pure products of the deep and long cherished "beliefs" of fundamental misconceptions, mental prepossessions, prejudices and bigotry about the Quranic religion and its teachings. And it is important to remember that the other non-Muslim communities are not entirely free from similar vices, though in a far less aggressive form. It is not therefore at all a matter of secondary importance or interest that every true reformer, every saint, who graced the Indian humanity with his guidance and teachings after the advent of this "Islam" in India have been contributing their valuable share to bring about complete elimination and eradication of the source of these pernicious evils. And the central theme of the examples and precepts Sri Guru Nanak Dev and his illustrious successors was no other.

Dayananda, the great seer that he was, also found in the general state of psychological errors and confusions which were prevalent in his time the main root from which sprout out all other causes and problems of evil, which effectively hinder and retard India in her march towards purity, unity, strength and freedom. Thus it was necessary for him to expose this root-evil clearly

to the public view. The XI, XII, XIII and XIV Chapters were, therefore, conceived in the best interests of the religions concerned, in a spirit of selfless service to the cause of ascendancy of the One God's Religion and development of unity of mankind, and also to the reconsolidation of India as a single united and unified whole, mentally as well as socially, to be dedicated effectively to the Divine cause of entire humanity. That alone is the intention of the saintly author of *Satyartha Parkash* and that alone is the purpose of that book.

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