

CASE AGAINST MR. C.D. NAYAGAM AND SWAMI SHANMUGANANDA

Madras, Nov. 13.

Mr. N. Danadapani Pillai, gave evidence for the defence at the resumed hearing of the case against Mr. C. D. Nayagam and Swami Shanmugananda for abetment of picketing in front of the Premier's residence in Theyagaroyanagar in connection with the anti-Hindi agitation in June last, before Mr. Kunnikrishna Nair, Third Presidency Magistrate, Egmore, on Wednesday afternoon (9-11-38).

Examined by Mr. S. G. Ranganamanujam, Counsel, witness stated that he had known Accused—3 (Swami Shanmugananda) belong to the Congress party, to which, he (witness) belonged. A-3 was a Sanyasin, and therefore, the whole world was his children. Witness was an expert in "Satyagraha," because, he had gone to jail along with Moulana Yakub Hasan Sait, (now, a Minister) in connection with Congress Satyagraha. The word "satyagraha" did not imply harm to any one. The word "Satyagraha" did not mean "marial." Some Satyagrahis held that "marial" was one of the methods of "satyagraha," so long as it was non-violent. He had never heard the accused making use of the word "marial" in the course of his speeches. The accused said that they should represent their grievances to the Ministers in a satyagrahic way. Witness had never heard the accused referring to the "Prime Minister's house." Witness was opposed to the introduction of compulsory Hindi and the accused held the same view. Further the accused had stated that he had no objection to Hindi being taught to those who were desirous of learning it as an optional. Even if it were to be made compulsory, some of those who did not want to learn it should be exempted. Witness's son was reading in the Hindu Theological High School and was asked to learn Hindi. Witness asked for exemption, but, it was not given. None from the audience which attended the meetings at which Swami Shanmugananda addressed, has picketed so far. Witness knew it, because, he had been in the public field for over twenty years. The speech of the accused was not such that those who listened to the speeches delivered by the Swami should go and picket. If that were to be the case, witness said, he would have offered

to come and attend that conference. The speaker also asked whether the conference of the ladies held that day was "Indian" or not. Personally, he was of opinion that that the agitation was not yet successful, because, the womenfolk had not participated in it to the extent they should have done. History showed many instances where women had played a no mean part in refashioning and reforming their country's destinies. Women, he said, should come forward in large numbers and go to jail. Then only, Mr. Achariar would climb down from his stubbornness.

Mrs. Meegambal Sivaraj, speaking next said that a group of women should go with their children and settle themselves in front of the Premier's house, and teach him a very good lesson.

Srimathis Ramamrithammal, P. Kannammal, Kamalambal, C. Saraswathi Ammal, Neelajakshiammal, Pushpavathiammal, Narayaniammal, Saroja, Kunjammal Swami Arunagiri, Pandit Tirugnanasambandam and Swami Shanmugananda and others also addressed the gathering.

After a few concluding remarks from the chair, and a vote of thanks, the conference came to a close with shouts of "Long live Tamil" and "Down with

satyagraha and gone to jail" (laughter).

Continuing, witness said that the Non-Brahmins regarded Swami Shanmugananda (accused) with great respect, even more than the Brahmins respect Sankaracharya. Sankaracharya lived, and worked for his own men, whereas Swami Shanmugananda worked for all irrespective of caste or creed.

Cross-examined by Mr. Ratnaswami Iyah, Prosecuting Inspector, witness deposed that formerly, he was the editor of a paper styled as "Desabaktha." He had attended many meetings addressed by the accused. He would have attended about ten meetings addressed by Swami Shanmugananda. He could not give the dates on which he attended the meetings. Had he known that he would be called upon to give evidence in the case before the Court, he would have made a note of the dates. (laughter). Witness used to be present throughout at some meetings. Witness had not gone to the Anti-Hindi headquarters. He knew that it was erected and later removed. He would have gone to Mambalam, but he had not seen picketing. He had passed by the Premier's house and Mint Street. Witness remembered to have seen picketing in front of the Hindu Theological High School on one day. The word "satyagraha" meant making known one's grievances to the opponents in a true manner by non-violent means. That was the definition given by Mahatma Gandhi who was instructed in turn by Mr. Rajagopalachariar. (Laughter). None from the audience of the accused ever picketed. He knew more than a lakh of people in Madras. Dr. Dharmambal, N. Danadapani Pillai, M. S. Viswalingam Pillai and others were among those whom witness knew. He knew those who heard the lectures delivered by the accused. They had not picketed. The meeting held at Moolakothalam was attended by about 700 people and later swelled into 2,000 people. He knew all those who attended the meeting.

Prosecuting Inspector: It is for Your Honour to believe this gentleman's evidence.

Proceeding witness said that on June 1st, he did not attend the meeting held at Nungambakam. He did not know what took place. One June 2nd, a meeting was held near Basin Bridge, which he attended. Witness had not taken notes of the proceedings of the meetings, he had attended.

Re-examined, witness said that those who picketed in front of the Hindu Theological High School did not attend the meetings at which the accused addressed. The picketers did not belong to the city of Madras.

With the examination of this witness, the defence has concluded. Swami Shanmugananda was asked by the Magistrate whether he wished to say anything.

Swami Shanmugananda's Statement

Swami Shanmugananda then filed a statement in Tamil, of which the following is the English rendering:—

I may be permitted to submit this my humble statement by thanking your Honour, and the Prosecution for the uniform courtesy and kindness shown to me during this long drawn trial. It is my intense love for Tamil, my mother tongue, that, has brought me before your Honour. If love for Tamil is a crime in this country where a so called National Government is holding the reins of Government, I must plead guilty, and I rejoice in the thought that I was one of the first two victims. But lest it be thought I am pleading guilty to the charge framed against me let me repudiate it with all the

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force that I can command. I have not sinned against the law and the Law cannot have any rigorous for me.

I have been a Congress-man for many years and I have undergone several terms of imprisonment in obedience to the call of the Congress. I have, with Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, fought many a battle for the country. If to-day Congress has come to power, I am proud to say that I have contributed my humble quota to that end.

As a nationalist I have throw myself whole-heartedly into the Anti-Hindi movement. One who does not love his mother tongue intensely cannot be a nationalist. I am a Sanyasi and I have dedicated my life to the service of my country and countrymen. A Sanyasi should come forward to serve humanity. When a great danger threatens the very existence of one's mother-tongue, a Sanyasi like myself cannot sit idle inside an Ashramam without doing his duty. Tamil is an ancient and superb language which had a wealth of literature even in the pre Christian era. It has managed to live to the present day as a spoken language. The introduction of English in Schools has already had its adverse effects on Tamil and if Hindi is also introduced in Schools and if in course of time it is made the Court language. I fear that Tamil will gradually become extinct. I do not want that such a catastrophe should overtake my beloved mother tongue. I have delivered many lectures exhorting Tamilians to protect the Tamil language. I do not think I have done anything wrong, except my duty as a Tamil Sanyasi. I hope and appeal to my Tamil brethren and sisters will come forward in their thousands and thousands to do their duty. Long live Tamil!

Madras, Nov 16.

Messrs. S. G. Rangaramanujam and K. C. Subramaniam Chettiar, addressed arguments yesterday morning at the resumed hearing of the case against Mr. C. D. Nayagam and Swami Shanmugananda for abetment of picketing in front of Premier's residence in Theyaga-roya-agar in connection with the anti-Hindi agitation in June last, before Mr. Kunnikrishnan Nair, Third Presidency Magistrate, Egmore.

Orders will be passed tomorrow morning.