

Edn (1950) Department.

ns SERIES.

G.O. NO. 3245 Edn

Dated 6.12.50

[Despatch Abstract.]

Back Papers.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

From

The Director of Public Instruction,
Madras

To

The Secretary to Government,
Education Department,
Fort St. George, Madras.

Rc.No. 1231.K.2/50 dated 31.10.50

Sir,

Sub: Colleges - Government Colleges - Religious and moral instruction.

In enclosing herewith a copy of the letter No. A.2239 dated 20.6.50 from the Registrar, University of Madras addressed to the Principal, Presidency College, Madras on the question relating to Religious and Moral instruction in colleges and the later's letter to the Director Rc. 650/50 dated 18.9.50, I have the honour to state that so far as Government Colleges are concerned there would not seem to be any objection to accepting recommendations (1) and (4) of the University Education Commission. But recommendations (2) and (3) appear to fall within the scope of article 28 (1) of the Constitution of India, according to which no religious instruction can be provided in an institution which is wholly maintained out of State funds. I may point out that with reference to the article of the Constitution, the provision of Religious instruction in Muslim institutions maintained by Government and Local Bodies has been discontinued from the beginning of the current year. I consider that no exception need be made in the matter of Colleges maintained by Government. I request the favour of a ruling by the Government in the matter, which is necessary to make the position of Government Colleges in this regard clear to the Universities in the State.

Yours faithfully,

for Director of Public Instruction

GRD.1.11.

Copy of letter Rc. 690/50 dated 18.9.1950 from the Professor in charge, Presidency College, Madras to the Director of Public Instruction, Madras.

Sub: Religious and Moral instruction in Colleges.

Ref: Letter No. A. 2239 dated 20.6.50 from the Registrar, University of Madras to Principals of Colleges.

The Registrar's letter cited above was referred to a committee consisting of three Professors in the College for their opinion and the committee is of opinion that in view of article 28 (1) of the Constitution of India, no religious instruction can be provided in the college as it is "wholly maintained out of state funds. One of the Professors in the committee, however, is of opinion that when the Philosophy of Religion is a subject of study for the Philosophy Honours course and Examination, there can be no objection to instruction in religion and morals being imparted in the college. I request the favour of your ruling in the matter.

/True Copy/

for Director of Public Instruction



Copy of letter No. A. 2239 dated 20.6.50 from the Registrar of Madras University to the Principal, Presidency College, Madras.

Sub: Religious and Moral Instruction in Colleges.

On a reference from the Academic Council, the Syndicate appointed a Special Committee to consider and report on the question of religious and Moral Instruction in Colleges affiliated to the University. The Special Committee considered the subject in detail and "resolved to recommend to the Syndicate to encourage all Colleges to offer such Religious and Moral Instruction as the Managements find it possible and appropriate, and for any other action the Syndicate may await the report of the Indian Universities Commission". The Committee's report was duly placed before the Academic Council in September last, and the Council, while accepting the Report, resolved that the Syndicate be requested to decide on the further action to be taken after taking into consideration the recommendations of the Indian Universities Commission in respect of Religious and Moral Instruction in Colleges.

The Report of the University Education Commission has since been received, and the following summary of the recommendations of the Commission on the subject of Religious Instruction is reproduced:

"We recommend:

- (1) that all educational institutions start work with a few minutes for silent meditation.
- (2) that in the first year of the Degree Course lives of the great religious leaders like Gautama the Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Jesus, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Mohammad, Kabir, Nanak, Gandhi, be taught.
- (3) that in the second year some selection of a Universalist character from the scriptures of the world be studied.
- (4) that in the third year, the central problems of the Philosophy of religion be considered.

The Syndicate considered the Report of the Indian Universities Commission, with particular reference to the resolution of the Academic Council referred to above, and resolved that that the recommendations of the Universities Commission on the subject of Religious Instruction in Colleges and the report of the Special Committee appointed by the Syndicate and accepted by the Academic Council be forwarded to the Principals of Colleges for their remarks.

In communicating the above, I am to request you to be so good as to let me have your remarks on the reports at an early date.

/True Copy/

for Director of Public Instruction

9.11.50

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Q. No 34394 Cr
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Colleges - ^(X) Grant Religious and
moral instructions - Ordins ^G passed

第18.

From the DPI No. 1231 K2/50 of 31.12.50

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~~6.12~~

Order No 3245 Edn dated 6-12-50.

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The DPI is informed that while there will be no objection to providing for instruction in the philosophy of the several faiths in degree courses in Philosophy, the Govt are advised that action in the direction of compulsory meditation or religious instruction as recommended by the University Education Commission will offend Article 28(3) of the Constitution of India.

To
The D.P.
1876

$\frac{100}{29.11.80}$
 $\frac{100}{28.11.80}$

29/11/2021

Wm

C.No 34394 G
50

Colleges - Grant - Religious and
moral instructions

p 1 cl.

From the D.P.I No. 1231 K2/50 of 31.12.50

p 1 cl.

The D.P.I has solicited a ruling by the Grant on the recommendations of the University Education Commission on the subject of 'Religious Education' in order to make the position of Grant Colleges in this regard clear to the Universities in the State.

Under newspaper
cutting at (X)

2. The Senate of the Madras Uly has since approved the recommendation of the Syndicate that "all Colleges should be encouraged to offer such religious and moral instructions as the management find possible and appropriate, subject to the provisions of the Constitution."

3. The following is the summary of the recommendations of the University Education Commission:

- (1) that all educational institutions start work with a few minutes for silent meditation.
- (2) that in the first year of the degree course lives of the great religious leaders like Gautama the Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Jesus, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Mohammed, Kalidasa, Aurobindo, Gandhi, be taught.
- (3) that in the second year some selection of a universalist character from the scriptures of the world be studied.
- (4) that in the third year, the Central problems of the Philosophy of Religion be considered.

4. The Grant have already considered the above recommendations

[File in A section]

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And have passed orders. The views of the
Legal Deptt in the matter and the orders
in circulation are extracted at (1). It is
proposed to inform the Govt of India as at
X on p 3 of (1). The D.P.I. may be given
a reply on the same lines. Subject to
admin a draft ^{order} memo is submitted for
approval.

29/11/50 AS II / \$ / (MCCM)

30/11/50

DM LRA

AM

5/12



Extracts from 7th Section of the "Religious Education"
Legal Department

In paragraph 31 of Chapter VIII of its recommendations the Commission has stated that a short period of silent worship or meditation every morning before the class work starts may well become an integral part of college life. It is clear, therefore, that what the Commission contemplates is religious worship and not mere silent meditation, which has nothing to do with religion. Webster's Dictionary defines meditation as "a form of private devotion or spiritual exercise consisting in deep continued reflection on some religious theme". The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines meditation as exercising the mind in contemplation (especially religious). Webster's Dictionary, referring to worship says "the worship of God is an eminent part of religion and prayer is a chief part of religious worship". The Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 18, under the heading "silent prayer" at page 420 says "Finally in advanced religion at the point at which prayer is coming to be conceived as communion, silent adoration is sometimes thought to bring man nearest to God". Thus, it would seem that silent worship or meditation is religious worship. It is not something which has no religious significance. Religious worship is not necessarily the worship according to the practices of a particular religion. Any religious worship cannot be made compulsory and thus it would seem that the proposal of the University Commission to have a period of silent worship or meditation would come under the prohibition against religious worship.

If the reference had been merely to "silent meditation" it would have been difficult to maintain the view that a contravention of Article 28(3) of the Constitution is involved. But the reference to "silent worship or meditation" in para 31 of the University Commission's report, and even more, the

other sentiments expressed in that para clearly show that some sort of religious practice is intended. This, I am afraid, is not permissible under Article 28(3). There is a clear danger of the practice of "silent meditation" insensibly changing into some form of overt religious exercise. But, even apart from this danger, it seems to me that what the University Commn. recommends will be a contravention of Article 28(3). Besides, if the "silent meditation" is deprived of all religious significance, one can fairly ask, what is the use of it? It will certainly not give effect to the University Commission's recommendation.

K.V.R.
21-7-50

Edn.

Education Department (F)

This note deals with the recommendations of the University Commission appointed by the Govt. of India, on "Religious Education". The recommendations of the Commission are that all institutions should start work with a few minutes for silent meditation, that the lives of great religious leaders like Gautama Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi, etc., should be taught in the first year of the college course, that in the second year some selections of a universalist character from the scriptures of the world should be studied and that in the 3rd year, the problems of philosophy or religion should be considered. The Andhra University has no views to offer on this matter. The Annamalai University ~~has~~ welcomes the introduction of non-sectarian ethical and moral instruction. The Madras University however is of the view that the conclusion of the Commission is the exact opposite of what the Constitution of India prescribes in Article 28 of the New Constitution. This Department is of the view that if religious instruction is to be made compulsory, it would offend Article 28 of the Constitution, but that there could be no objection to silent meditation. Legal Dept. are of the view that the University Commission's recommendation will be a contravention of Article 28(3) of the Constitution.

That Deptt. also holds that the "silent meditation" ~~will not be made compulsory~~ ^{be religious meditation and cannot} vis a vis Article 28(3). The Central Advisory Board seeks to modify the recommendation by vesting discretion apparently in the managements to provide or not for "silent meditation". In these matters even if instructions are issued by Govt. in the manner approved by the Central Advisory Board, the managements are likely to mistake the instructions as mandatory.

We may inform India that while there will be no objection to providing for instruction in philosophy of the several faiths, in degree courses in Philosophy, Govt. are advised that action in the direction of compulsory meditation or religious instruction as recommended by the Commission will offend Article 28(3).

H.M. (E. & L.) and H.C.M. may see.

N.V.S.
25-7-50

Our legal experts have held that even silent meditation will offend against Art. 28 of the Constitution. India may therefore be informed as at X above.

S.A.I.
28-7-50

H.M. (E. & L.) K.M./ 31-7-50

H.C.M. P.K.R./31-7-50.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN COLLEGES

Madras University Senate approves Syndicate's recommendation

MADRAS, Nov. 17.

THE Senate of the Madras University today approved the recommendation of the Syndicate that "all Colleges should be encouraged to offer such religious and moral instruction as the managements find possible and appropriate, subject to the provisions of the Constitution." The Senate considered the Syndicate's views on the recommendations of the University Education Commission. Dr Sir A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor presided.

MR S. GOVINDARAJULU moved the resolution that "the Senate is generally in favour of the report of the Syndicate on the recommendations of the University Education Commission." He said that the view of the

Referring to religious instructions, he said, "The Syndicate's view is that religious instruction is not permissible in State Colleges. So far as private Colleges are concerned, it is their concern. I plead for a little liberty in these things."

On the subject of religious education, the University Commission had recommended "that all educational institutions start work with a few minutes for silent meditation; that in the first year of the Degree course, lives of the great religious leaders like Gautama, Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Jesus, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Mahomed, Kabir, Nanak and Gandhi be taught; that in the second year, some selections of a universalist character from the scriptures of the world be studied; and that in the third year, the central problems of the philosophy of religion be considered."

Minimum religious instruction necessary

MR K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI moved that there should be at least the minimum moral and religious instruction, and that it should be supplemented by a course of lectures on the basic truths, which were common to all religions in a spirit of tolerance and goodwill.

He said he did not think that the recommendations of the University Education Commission were contrary to the provisions of the Constitution.

MR KEDARI RAO seconded the resolution.

MR ARAVAMADU AYYANGAR said his experience of the religious and moral instruction classes was that most of the students looked at them with amused tolerance, and that only a small percentage was really interested in the lectures. He was of the view that to teach universal religion the best place was not the class room.

MR V. I. MUNUSWAMI PILLAI supported the amendment, while Mr Ramalinga Reddi opposed it. Mr Reddi asked what would be the position, if religious instruction was in the hands of one who denied the existence of God.

MR E. N. SUBRAMANIAM stressed the need to teach students the fundamental unity of all religions.

Practical difficulties

THE REV. FR JEROME D'SOUZA said that while he sympathised with the spirit behind the amendment, he wished to point out the practical difficulties of giving effect to it in different institutions. The attempt to formulate the barest substratum of truths acceptable to all might not succeed.

The least that the University should do was to show an attitude of encouragement, and sympathy for the ideal of religious education, without going into the specific manner of teaching it, and leave it to the different institutions to carry out their particular way of giving religious instruction. If in course of time, a small common syllabus could be agreed upon, it would be a happy day. But it would not be safe to formulate a resolution, and make it obligatory on all.

MR RAMA AYYAR said he was not happy about religious instruction as such, which, he said, might do more harm than good, especially when students noticed the difference between profession and practice in those who taught religious instruction.

MR PADMANABHA PILLAI said there was more recrimination than agreement among people in matters of religion and that they could not expect agreement on fundamentals.

The amendment was put to vote and lost, and the Syndicate's recommendation was approved.

