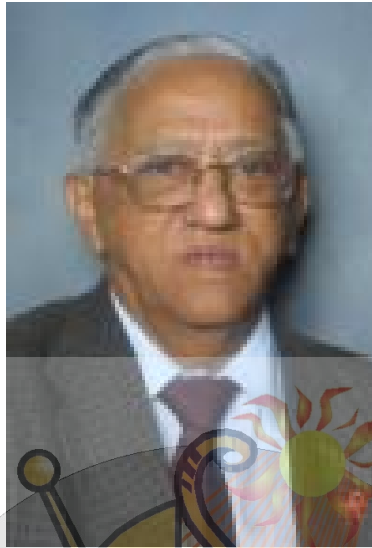


RAM SALOJEE



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is solemnly assemble to pay tribute to a gallant son of our beloved land. As his mortal remains are lowered into the warm embrace of mother earth, a void and a sadness descends on all who love freedom and justice. No more will his vital presence bring comfort to an aged mother; no more will his living strength give security to a loving wife; no more will his parental zeal give protective reliance to two fatherless children; no more will his overpowering influence give guidance to those that saw hope in his courage. It is given to but a few to taste the glory of martyrdom. Such an honour has fallen on Mr Steve Bike. In the silence of his being and in the knowledge of his ideals will live the spirit of life, that will burn bright in the minds of all men that love justice and peace. In the memory of his conduct and the spirit of his dedication, to the cause of the deprived and denied, all of us can capture the vibrant breeze of hope and fulfillment. Because never in the history of human existence has the flame of human dignity and self-respect, ever allowed the forces of repression to indefinitely overpower its spiritual support and moral intensity.

The colossal of ethical human conscience may have its relapses, but in the inner force of man's purity, it has reserves of resources, no guns or brutality can ever extinguish. Thus as we commemorate the passing of a Steve Bike, a multitude of gallant heroes of eons gone by, flash through our memories; that for every such loss there as an army of dedicated disciples of justice, waiting to join the struggle. The search for the Nirvana of justice, freedom and peace is endless. Even as we bury one, there are nestling in the bosoms of unsuspecting mothers and germinating in the intimate organs of women everywhere, the sons and daughters, that will replenish the regiments of these millions that thirst for equality and justice. Thus, let us mourn the passing of a courageous son of our soil, but despair not, because the treasure house of equity is not bare. Let the memory of his ideals and commitment strengthen ~~to~~ your resolve to bring to fruition, that highest of human ideal - our human worth and our human heritage. In the spirit of martyrs, lie the fervour, that reminds men of the valour and courage of sacrifice. From it springs the urge to overcome. This spiritual spur courses through the veins of unsuspecting new leaders - a transfusion that eventually must lead to victory of right over wrong. When the Prophet of Humanity, Muhammed (PBUH) succumbed to the inevitable cycle of life and death, Hazarat Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam, strode into the concourse of the benumbed Muslims and declared:

"O People, be as for him who used to worship Muhammed, Muhammed is dead. But as for him who used to worship Allah ' Allah is alive and dieth not."

"I am not sorry, I am not sad. It leaves me cold", so spake the authoritarian voice of a mortal man, who holds our lives, "God-like" in his arbitrary hands. To add insult to injury, even laughter floated through the verkrampte minds of his party faithfuls. What heartless insensitivity? What merciless humanity?

Is this the response of a Christian authority or is it the expression of a power-bronched hierarchy? Has human compassion become so dulled, that the gift of precious life, extinguished in one's captivity, become a plaything of power politics. Will man not learn, that for his own survival, he has to let others survive as well. What was the crime of a man, who even those that disagree has dubbed as moderate and peace-loving? A man who even the courts had failed to convict. By what standards of justice and morality did he find himself, in the situation, in which he died?

Is this the road of evolution we are regimented to follow? Can we accept the fact that it is necessary for a system that can detain and incarcerate, a system that convicts before one is found guilty. If this is the type of evolution we must surrender to, then give us the light of that revelation, that will promote justice, love and fellowship, between man and man. A revelation that will teach us to care for the weak, help the needy, share with our fellow-men, restore honour and dignity to every human creature, regardless of his colour, religion, social status, ethnic origin or national character. If evolution means that there is to be discrimination in exercise of justice, then we want to be reminded and fellow, in the words of the Koran:

"O ye who believe 'stand firmly for God, as witness to fair dealing, let not the hatred of others to you, swerve you to wrong and depart from justice' or again

"O ye who believe, be ye staunch in Justice, witnesses for Allah, even be it against yourselves or (your) parents, or (your) kindred, whether the (case be of) a rich or a poor man, for Allah is nearer unto both (than you are). So follow not passion lest ye lapse from truth."

If evolution means bulldozing of shelters of sustenance and security; if it means the whisking away of defenceless citizens at the dead of night; if it means a violent transgression against the spiritual being of man, then no peace-loving, no justice trusting and no merciful person can go without protesting against such a system.

Since the dawn of man, he has fought and stood steadfast to defend justice and promote freedom. Since ageless eons man has immortalised the martyrdom of men who stood for the emancipation of the artificially shackled spirit of God's favoured creation. Neither time, nor history will ever deal kindly with those that obstruct the simple rights of his fellow-being. Their fate is ignobly buried in the burning desert sands of contempt and disgrace.

"God, The Lord of the Universe, in his wisdom has warned against even compulsion in religion - thus undermining belief in his own authority. He has given man the choice of even disbelieving in Him. Yet puny man imposes sanctity in ideologies, which run counter to the basic human values of love, unity and brotherhood. Which then is the greater force. Surely God and not man.

BILCO DEATH.

Raf