

PARLIAMENT OF CEYLON

3rd Session 1958-59

[Signature]
11. 11. 1958



Profane Publications Act, No. 41 of 1958

Date of Assent : November 3, 1958

Printed on the Orders of Government

Printed at the GOVERNMENT PRESS, CEYLON. To be purchased
at the GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS BUREAU, COLOMBO
Annual Subscription (including Bills) Rs. 25, payable in
advance to the SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS
BUREAU, POST OFFICE BOX 500, Secretariat, Colombo 1

Price : 10 cents.

Postage : 10 cents.

L. D.—O, 58/56.

AN ACT TO PREVENT THE WRITING, PRODUCTION, PRINTING, PUBLICATION, SALE, DISTRIBUTION OR EXHIBITION OF ANY PROFANE PUBLICATION.

[Date of Assent: November 3, 1958]

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Representatives of Ceylon in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the Profane Publications Act, No. 41 of 1958. Short title.

2. Any person who writes, produces, prints, publishes, sells, distributes or exhibits any profane publication shall be guilty of an offence and shall, on conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate, be liable to imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding one year or to a fine not exceeding two thousand rupees or to both such imprisonment and such fine: Writing, production, printing, publication, sale, distribution or exhibition of a profane publication to be an offence.

Provided that it shall not be an offence under the preceding provisions of this section to write, print, publish, sell, distribute or exhibit any fair comments on, or any fair criticism of, any religion or religious belief.

3. Except with the sanction of the Attorney-General, no person shall be prosecuted for an offence under section 2. Sanction of the Attorney-General required for prosecution.

4. (1) A police officer of any rank not below that of an Inspector may, with or without any assistants, enter and search any premises where he reasonably suspects that any profane publication is written, produced, printed, published, sold, distributed or exhibited, and any police officer may seize any such publication found with any person or in any place. Powers of the police in regard to profane publications.

(2) All profane publications seized under sub-section (1), together with a list thereof, shall be taken forthwith before the Magistrate's Court having jurisdiction in the place of seizure and shall be dealt with in such manner as that Court may order.

4. *Profane Publications Act, No. 41 of 1958*

Interpretation.

5. In this Act, " profane publication " means any newspaper, book, picture, film or other visible representation containing—

(a) any insult to—

(i) the founder of any religion,

(ii) any deity, saint or person, whether alive or dead, venerated by the followers of any religion, or

(iii) any religion or religious belief, or

(b) any ridicule of any figure, picture, emblem, device or other thing associated with, or sacred to the followers of, any religion.