

To: **Ms Glee Johnson**, President of the State Board of Education (California)
Cc: Dr Ruth Green (Immediate Past President, SBE)
Cc: Mr. Alan Bersin (Secretary of Education)
Cc: Mr Paul Seave (Chief Counsel, SBE)

Date: 10 February 2006

Subject: Appeal from 64 California Parents/Grandparents to SBE in Support of Hindu Edits (of Vedic Foundation and Hindu Education Foundation) to correct Grade VI History textbooks

Dear Dr Glee Johnson,

We are writing to you as parents or grandparents residing in the state of California whose young family members attend public schools in our state. Professionally, our group includes teachers, lawyers, engineers, doctors and dentists, University employees, scientists etc. We are Hindus, Christians, Jews, Sikhs and Jains by religion.

We are not members of either the Vedic Foundation, or the Hindu Education Foundation but nevertheless, **we want to confirm** our support to the edits proposed by them. We believe that these edits are very modest, considering that the books are so defective and biased in dealing with ancient India in general, and ancient Hinduism in particular. The reasons for our support to HEF-VF edits are stated below:

1. Textbooks are Biased against Hindus: We note with deep concern that the proposed textbooks for Grade VI (covering Ancient India and ancient Hinduism) suffer from four defects:

- Factual errors
- Errors of Bias: Descriptions concerning India and Hinduism are marked by an excessive negative bias
- Errors of Disparity: The empathy and respect accorded to Abrahamic traditions is not extended to treatment of Hindu traditions.
- Errors of clarity: Hinduism and Buddhism are very different from Abrahamic faiths, but the former are presented in a jumbled manner by some textbooks that will not facilitate understanding by 11 year students.

The current SBE guidelines on corrections does not allow for a rewrite of the text.

We are shocked that the Board could have even considered these textbooks for adoption, considering that some books (such as the Glencoe) have unbridled hate-speech against Hindus. This reflects poorly on the competence of CDE and SBE officials.

2. Unfair Demonization of the Hindu American Community: We also note with deep concern that a group of academics, lead by a Harvard professor, is going out of the way to demonize members of a peaceful minority, labeling them as some kind of dangerous group adhering to divisive and violent politics. He is saying that they are in some manner related to sectarian murders in India!

We wish to confirm that we are Americans, and our children are born here and will live here. **Many (25%) of us who endorse this petition are not even Hindus and do not have Indian ethnicity.** We have no interest in Indian politics, and our support for these edits is solely derived from our concern that our children will not be subjected to harangue or ridicule by their classmates due to these defective and prejudiced narratives.

It is unfortunate that people opposed to Hindu textbook reform initiative of HEF and VF are focusing on alleged (=imagined) dangerous political affiliations of an illustrious minority, due to which a lot of uniformed and ignorant academics have also signed petitions that demonize them.

We also wish to place on record *our opposition* to any intervention by Professor Witzel in this matter, because he has a *track record of denigrating* the Hindu American community and their heritage. His behavior on this matter is also hate-speech against their community, in our opinion.

3. Dangerous Political Motives of Opponents: On the other hand, it can be demonstrated easily that many people objecting to the Hindu textbook reform initiative *are the ones* who practice divisive and hate-politics.

- This was apparent right from the start when Professor Witzel wrote his petition dt. 11-07-05 to Dr Ruth Green. This petition, co-signed by 46 others, **none of whom had read the textbooks or had read the edits beforehand**, merely contained unsubstantiated allegations and hate-speech and was completely devoid of academic content. The petition was *fraudulent* because it claimed that co-signatories were world class scholars in Ancient India. In reality, there were only three historians in that entire list (of which two are Marxist historians), and at least 15 other signatory scholars have nothing to do with Indian history, let alone Ancient Indian history. Significantly, hardly any scholar of Hindu religious studies signed the petition despite Professor Witzel's appeals on their professional lists, showing the clear-cut divide amongst scholars on this issue. Only one non-mainstream Indian archaeologist signed the petition. Professor Witzel himself is merely a linguist and a Sanskritist and his opinions cannot carry weight on matters of ancient Indian history or Hinduism, just as the opinion of a scholar of Latin cannot completely decide matters related to Christianity. Professor Witzel's links with Indian communists are well known. They support his divisive Aryan theories, and he provides them intellectual fodder for their hate-politics in India.
- Subsequently, **Dr Fosse (a Witzel petition co-signatory) approached right-wing Christian groups** and other anti-Hindu groups on behalf of Professor Witzel for soliciting support as revealed in an expose online. This may be confirmed from the website <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Bahujan/message/8893> where this letter is available.
- Since December 2005, the opposition to Hindu edits has been spearheaded by a shady group called *Friends of South Asia (FOSA)*, which is a political group affiliated to the *Federation of Inquilaabi ('Revolutionary') Leftists (FOIL)* and a highly political charity organization named 'Association for India's Development (AID)'. The FOSA website is registered under a Muslim name, and the organization has in the past

collaborated with Islamists who have carried out anti-India demonstrations (with placards saying “Allah will punish India”).

- **FOSA has verifiable links with Islamist terror groups.** A watchdog website (<http://aidindia.info/>) details the association of FOSA and AID with dreaded radical Leftist, Islamist and anti-Semitic groups. Another website (http://www.indiacause.com/columns/OL_050414.htm) details the operations of FOIL, and its links with FOSA.
- It has come to our light that *Dr Vinay Lal* of UCLA is projecting himself as a Hindu and is asking permission from the Board to intervene. We request the Board to reject his offer, because he is a radical and extremist ideologue whose name frequently appears in anarchist and ultra-Leftist petitions that have a distinct anti-American and anti-Hindu slant. He has written articles *apologetic of the Taliban*, and has signed more than 270 petitions till date! Never earlier has he acknowledged his Hindu roots, and therefore his claim is mischievous.

4. Non-Hindus appearing as Dalits: A further sinister twist was added by testimony of 35 or so people at a Public meeting at Sacramento on 12 January 2006, who wanted the word ‘Dalit’ to stay in the textbooks. We feel that this orchestrated event should not influence your decision on the edits for the following reasons:

a) There are sound **ACADEMIC REASONS** why present day politically loaded **terms** such as Dalits (with no history beyond 1972 as the name for a community) should be excluded from the Prentice Hall textbook. These academic reasons are detailed in **Appendix I**. Please save CA children from this injection of Indian Subcontinental politics.

b) A **false propaganda** is being carried out by FOSA (in order to incite fringe and highly vocal Dalit groups) that the HEF and VF edits are whitewashing history by removing references to Dalits. This is plain demagoguery and its falsity can be verified from some facts listed in **APPENDIX II**. Even if all HEF and VF edits are implemented, more than 80% of (anachronistic) descriptions of untouchability will stay where they are in the textbooks.

c) The event on 12th January 2006 was planned in a closed egroup (Dalits-International Yahooogroup). We are appending the relevant messages from that group (**Appendix III**) that indicates the following:

- *The performance on 12th Jan2006 was an orchestrated event.*
- *The speakers who projected themselves as Dalits were predominantly non-Hindu. They belonged predominantly to the non-Hindu ‘Neo-Buddhist’ sect that follows the teachings Dr Ambedkar (father of Indian constitution) and bears antipathy towards Hindus. The sect insults traditional Buddhist leaders such as the Dalai Lama and rejects traditional Buddhist teachings.*
- *The advisors to these people who presented their testimonies to the Board were non-Hindus.*

- *The organization strongly supporting these people is FOSA (Friends of South Asia) which is affiliated to FOIL (Federation of Inquilabi 'Revolutionary' Leftists). See also an appeal on the FOIL forum in **Appendix IV**.*
- *The opposition to HEF and VF edits by these speakers is motivated by their hatred for Hinduism, and is also a **spill-over of radical Left politics from South Asia**.*

d) To demonstrate that the people who have appeared in front of the board as Dalit Hindus, or have written to the Board as leaders of Dalit organizations, **are in fact non-Hindus**, let us present, as an example, a FAX that was sent to Dr. Ruth Green on January 4, 2006 from an organization called **Dalit Solidarity Forum, Inc.** and signed by Jebaroja Singh.

Although Jebaroja Singh wrote as a representative of Dalits, her organization 'Dalit Solidarity Forum, USA' **is run from St. Alban's Church** in Oakland, N.J. And Jebaroja Singh is wife of the pastor The Rev. Prince Singh at this church.

Now please take a look at the this FAX that is available at the following website of FOSA:
http://www.friendsofsouthasia.org/textbook/DSF_Ruth_Green.pdf

**Please note: at the bottom of Page 1 of the FAX, it reads (Upside down):
 Jan-04-06 11:52 PM St. Alban's Church 201 6519486.
 And the signature line on Page 2 says: Jebaroja Singh, Dalit Solidarity Forum in the USA, Inc.**

Now, take a look at the website of St. Alban's church at:

<http://www.stalbans-ofl.dioceseofnewark.org/>

The Rector (pastor) is The Rev. Prince Singh. The location details are given as:

St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 1 Church Lane, Oakland, NJ 07436;
 Phone: (201) 337-4909 Fax: (201) 651-9486 E-mail: stalbandsOFL@verizon.net

Note that the fax no. cited on the Church website is the same fax number cited (upside down) on the FAX sent to Dr Ruth Green by Jebaroja Singh.

Rev. Price's wife Roja, is Jebaroja (her full name) - who signed the 'Dalit Solidarity Forum' Fax sent to Dr Green on Jan 4, 2006! St. Alban's church is clearly a Christian Evangelical organization. See evangelical activities page:

<http://www.stalbans-ofl.dioceseofnewark.org/saprog2.html#Evangelism>

Likewise, **Dalit Freedom Network [DFN]** who also contacted you and sent volunteers for the 12th January meeting, is another Christian missionary group. If you call their toll-free number 1-866-921-1333, someone will answer the call from Colorado. Ask for their contact information in India, and you will be directed to the All India Christian Council [AICC]!

Another Dalit website www.dalitistan.org is banned in India and many other countries because it preaches violence and hatred. Numerous 'Dalit' publications such as the 'Dalit

Voice’ propagate anti-Semitic literature such as ‘Protocol of the Letters of Zion’ and this can be verified from a simple google search.

We would, therefore, urge the Board to be aware of the true identity people who appear in front of the Board mis-identifying themselves as Dalit Hindus. It helps certain Christian groups in doing their prosyletization. But the California Board of Education should not be a party to the Christian prosyletization propoganda.

5. Conclusion: Contrary to the propaganda and demonization of an American minority community by a group of Hindu-hating academics being lead by Professor Witzel (or being mislead by him due to their ignorance), we are determined to work for the welfare of impressionable sixth-grade school-going children of CA so that they use factually and historically accurate education materials that also conform to the CA State Law [Education Code 60044(a) and Subsection (b)], leading to the “Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content (2000 Edition)”:

- “1. Adverse Reflection. No religious belief or practice may be held up to ridicule and no religious group may be portrayed as inferior.”*
- 2. Indoctrination. Any explanation or description of a religious belief or practice should be present in a manner that does not encourage or discourage belief or indoctrinate the student in any particular religious belief.”*

We believe that without these VF-HEF edits, the textbooks violate the above criteria. We cannot be silent spectators to acts of prejudice which may affect our children adversely in school classrooms. A list of people who have endorsed this letter is attached below.

Sincerely,

[Signature removed]

List of Endorsers to this letter [Note: The contact information is removed from this online version so as not to subject the signatories to harassment and calumny by opponents of HEF/VF edits]

	<u>Name</u>	<u>CA city of residence</u>	<u>Email or telephone</u>
1	Vishal and Dimple Agarwal	Santa Rosa	
2	Karthik Kalavai Venkatramani and Kamatchi	Sunnyvale	
3	Kasturi Rangan and Sandhya	Sunnyvale	
4	Marlene Roeder	San Rafael	

5	Mark Heidrich	Santa Barbara, CA 93117	
6	Michael Attie	Los Angeles	
7	Mr. Ajay Shah	San Diego	
8	Mr. Rohit Iyer	San Jose	
9	Mr. Srivats Iyer	San Jose	
10	Aruna and Sushil Batra	Sacramento	
11	Mr. Kaushik Patel	Windsor	
12	Prakash and Bimala Jain	Sacramento	
13	Mr. Susheel Deshmukh	Santa Rosa	
14	Ms. Rajani Shailendra	San Jose	
15	Alan Cain	Greenbrae, CA 94904	
16	Uma Reed	Greenbrae	
17	Lila Jacobs	Sacramento	
18	Ms. Ira Dave	Daly City	
19	Satinder Trehan and Alka Trehan	Tustin	
20	Mr. Natesan Elango	Santa Rosa	
21	Anita and Hemant Agarwala	Sacramento	
22	Florence Klein	Santa Barbara	
23	Diana Rogers	Berkeley	
24	Kelly and Ranu Miller	San Francisco	
25	Bhavna and Kaushik Bhatt	Sacramento	
26	Navin and Ulupi Patel	Sacramento	
27	Ram Gupta	Granite Bay	
28	Sham Goyal	Davis	
29	Anjali and Dipul Kansaria	Del Mar	
30	Vinita Wadhvani	Sacramento	
31	Ram and Shashi Gupta	Sacramento	
32	Mohini Jain	Davis	
33	Bilbul Kadakia	Fair Oaks	
34	Yashwant Vaishnav	Pleasanton	
35	Jesal Mehta	San Jose	
36	Geoffrey Gordon	San Francisco	
37	Asha and Kaushik Desai	El Derado Hills	
38	Sonal and Narendra Shah	Sacramento	
39	Sudesh and Surender Singhal	Sacramento	
40	Aditya Raina	San Jose	
41	Manish Jani	Fremont	
42	Pankaj Patel	Thousand Oaks	
43	Ramesh Goswami	Sacramento	

44	Amitabh Misra	San Jose	
45	Vikash Gulati	Sacramento	
46	Bill Higgins	Los Angeles	
47	Tej and Rajni Pandey	Sacramento	
48	Ashok and Sudha Jain	Folsom	
49	Rajesh Goswami	Fullerton	
50	Ashok and Sudha Gupta	Elk Grove	
51	Ajay Setya and Archana Setya	Mission Viejo	
52	Shyam Shukla	Fremont	
53	Ms. Sandhya Ramanujan	Santa Clara	
54	Gurjeet Singh Saund and Nimisha Saund	San Jose	
55	Anil and Sharda Grover	Sacramento	
56	Joanne Baughan	San Rafael	
56	Randall Reel	Los Angeles	
57	Darshana Thaker	Santa Monica	
58	Marilyn Pranno	Novato	
59	Carolyn Ross	Santa Barbara	
60	Hall Ross	Santa Barbara	
61	Seshagiri Singaraju	Pleasanton	
62	Mohan Raj Goyal	San Jose	
63	Yogesh Joglekar	Fremont	
64	Bruce Margolan	Hollywood	
64	Ravikumar Meenakshisundaram and Nivedhitha Gopal	Pleasanton	

APPENDIX I: Academic Reasons for deletion of the word ‘Dalit’ from Proposed Textbooks

1. The word Dalit is not used as a self-referential term by ‘untouchables’ except for a fringe of politicized activists of the community who are largely non-Hindu. This has been demonstrated by the research of prominent academics such as Dr Ramdas Lamb at the University of Hawai who may be consulted by SBE on this issue. In most states of India, the ‘Dalit’ identity is non-existent and many of us who have lived for many years in India can confirm this from our own direct experience.
2. It should be noted that according to many scholars, there is no cognate in any Indian language for the term ‘untouchable’ and all Indian equivalents have been recent translations of the English word¹.
3. The pre-eminent leader of the community, namely Dr B R Ambedkar, himself never used the word Dalit as a proper noun. The most eminent community leader today namely Ms. Mayavati uses 'Bahujan' instead of ‘Dalit’. According to some scholars, the word ‘Dalit’ was coined in 1972 by a militant group called Dalit Panthers Party²
4. It should be noted that the textbooks **end their narrative at 550-600 AD, and before this period, untouchability was a very marginal phenomenon restricted to a few groups such as Chandalas and Pulkassas**, who were ostracized due to their lifestyles by the society³. It would be therefore out of place to use a modern word and relate it to a practice that was marginal in ANCIENT India and Hinduism.
5. Modern caste relations have much more to do with developments in the subsequent medieval period⁴. For this reason, it is more appropriate to refer to ‘Dalits’ in high schools books that cover later periods of Indian history. We are not opposing the use of this term in High School textbooks that cover modern India.
6. The very few references to untouchables in ancient India are found uniformly in Hindu and Buddhist texts. But Hinduism seems to be singled out in these textbooks. Hindu scriptures do not advocate this practice, and this argument was used by Mahatma Gandhi to fight the practice in our own times.
7. Dalit is a derogatory term meaning ‘broken people’. Indian tradition itself uses more dignified words such as Harijan (‘children of God’), which was used for untouchables by Saints such as Ramanuja in 1200 AD, Saint Kabir in 16th century and most importantly **by Mahatma Gandhi** in our own times.

¹ See: Robert Deliege. *The Untouchables of India*, translated from French by Nora Scott, Berg Publishers, 1999, pp. 10-12.

Also, Shashi Sharma’s *“Imagined Manuvaad”* (Delhi 2005) collects all relevant references.

² Joshi, B.: *Untouchables! Voices of the Dalit Liberation Movement*, pp. 141-147

³ See the following standard work (in passim): R.S.Sharma ‘*Sudras in Ancient India*’. Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi, 2002

The following standard work again confirms that untouchability was marginal in ancient India (and is not a part of Hinduism): Jaiswal, Suvira (1998). *Caste: Origin, Function and Dimensions of Change*. Manohar Books: New Delhi

⁴ K. S. Lal. *‘The Legacy of Muslim Rule in India’*, 1992. Aditya Prakashan: New Delhi

8. The Government of India itself uses the term 'Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes'.

9. By use of this word in the textbook by Prentice Hall, Hinduism is being singled out to relate contemporary social evils to ancient religion. Corresponding chapters on other religions do not relate modern social evils to their ancient religious roots. Thus, for instance, the chapter on Islam does not say that Saudi Arabia values life of an infidel at a fraction of the life of a believer.

APPENDIX II
ARE VF AND HEF EDITS TRYING TO WHITEWASH HINDUISM?

Consider the following facts:

‘History Alive’ (page 145) by Teacher’s Curriculum Institute, has a whole section on untouchability but HEF wants only one sentence (edit 93) removed because it relates the past to the present unnecessarily. This is called ‘presentism’ by competent historians and is a flaw that professional historians like to avoid.

Prentice Hall book (page 182) titled **‘Ancient Civilizations’** also has a short paragraph on Untouchables but HEF edit #86 asks only the word Dalit to be removed to avoid back-projecting present terms into ancient India.

Page 387 in the book published by Harcourt School publishers has a para on untouchables but no edit is proposed by HEF or VF

Pages 252-253 in **California Vista- Ancient Civilizations’** by **McGraw Hill McMillan** has two paras on untouchables and HEF edit 52 asks for deletion of one of these paras. **Even Witzel lead CRP approved its deletion. Likewise, Michael Witzel lead CRP approved many other HEF-VF edits related to untouchability.**

Similar examples can be cited from other books. For instance the Glencoe book has a longish paragraph, completely negative, on the caste system and untouchability but HEF and VF edits do not impact it to any substantial extent.

In summary, you can see that HEF and VF had not many any attempt to whitewash history in our opinion, and in the case of the McMillan book, even Michael Witzel agreed with them.

APPENDIX III: Digest 868 of Dalits-International Yahoogroup

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Dalits-International@yahoogroups.com
To: Dalits-International@yahoogroups.com
Date: 11 Jan 2006 23:10:12 -0000
Subject: [Dalits-International] Digest Number 868
There are 12 messages in this issue.

Topics in this digest:

1. Re: INSIGHT Magazine
From: "anoop kumar " <anoop_kheri@rediffmail.com>
2. Re: INSIGHT Magazine
From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>
3. to KP singh sir
From: "anoop kumar " <anoop_kheri@rediffmail.com >
4. Re: to KP singh sir
From: "Dr.KP Singh" <jaybheem@yahoo.com>
5. Stop the Injection of Hindutva Ideology into California History Text books
From: ra ravishankar <ravishan@uiuc.edu>
6. For US Residents only/pass it on if you know anyone who may qualify
From: JOYSINGHC@aol.com
7. International Conference on Peace and Justice in South Asia
From: yogi sikand <ysikand@yahoo.com>
8. Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate
From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>
9. Request for info on book by Gail Omvedt
From: Sugrutha R <sugrutha@yahoo.com>
10. Re: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate
From: Sugrutha R <sugrutha@yahoo.com>
11. Re: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate
From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>
12. Re: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate
From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>

Message: 5

Date: Tue, 10 Jan 2006 18:58:17 -0600
From: ra ravishankar <ravishan@uiuc.edu>⁵
Subject: Stop the Injection of Hindutva Ideology into California History Text books

Please forward widely!

⁵ Please note that Ra Ravishankar is an active member of the Federation of Inquilabi Leftists (fn added by HEF)

Dear Friend,

As you may! be aware, a major effort is underway in California, in the guise of multiculturalism and minority rights, to inject narrow sectarian versions of Hinduism and Ancient India into Grade 6 History-Social Science text books. (For background information and talking points, see <http://www.friendsofsouthasia.org>). We need your urgent help to turn back the Hindutva assault on our text books, before they are adopted by the California State Board of Education (SBE).

If you are among those who:

- * Believe that school curriculum ought to be based on scholarly and factual information, and encourage class discussions on links between history and contemporary social issues;
- * Wish to prevent California from being used as a laboratory for a Hindutva view of history, which has been rejected by Indian policy makers (via NCERT books); and
- * Want the SBE to know that a majority of Hindus and Indians DO NOT subscribe to the supremacist, and often violent, ideologies of Hindutva groups

Then here is what you can do:

1. Let the SBE know by fax or email or by telephone that:

- * Ancient Indian history belongs to ALL the communities from the subcontinent, not just to some "practicing Hindus" (as defined by some sectarian groups) based in the United States.
- * You have serious reservations about the edits submitted by the Vedic Foundation (VF) and the Hindu Education Foundation (HEF), and that you would like the SBE to adopt the edits submitted by the Content Review Panel of scholars appointed by the SBE.
- * You reject the demands of the VF and HEF, who posture as aggrieved minorities when their cohorts in India make a mockery of rights for religious minorities, Dalits, Adivasis, and women.

Contacts at the CA Department of Education:

- * President Ruth Green -- (916) 319-0827. Fax: (916) 319-0176.
Email: Jack O'Connell joconnell@cde.ca.gov, Tom Adams tadams@cde.ca.gov
- * Deputy Supt Sue Stickel, Curriculum & Instruction Branch -- Phone: (916) 319-0806. Fax: (916) 319- 0103 Email: ssstickel@cde.ca.gov;
- * Assembly member Jackie Goldberg; Chair of the Education Committee -- Fax: (916) 319-2145 Goldberg@asm.ca.gov;
- * Secretary Alan Bersin -- Fax: (916) 323-3753; kheinrich@ose.ca.gov;
- * Chief Counsel Karen Steentofte -- Fax: (916) 319-0176 ksteento@cde.ca.gov

2. Write to your local South Asian newspaper expressing your views about this ongoing controversy.

India Abroad: editorial@indiaabroad.com ; Fax: 212-727-9730
India West: news@indiawest.com ; Fax: (510) 383-1155
Indian Express, North America: info@iexpressusa.com Fax. (212) 594-8848

Thank you for caring.

Volunteers at Friends of South Asia (FOSA)
mail<at> friendsofsouthasia.org

Message: 8

Date: Wed, 11 Jan 2006 01:04:28 -0800

From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>

Subject: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate

Folks,

It has just come to my notice from Yogesh Varhade , President of the Ambedkar Center for Justice and Peace, that the California State Board of Education is meeting on 12th Jan at 9.00 AM in their premises to discuss and finalise the recent Hindutva based changes to the Grade 6 textbooks .

It is important that we register our protest to the Board and also thru our local representatives who may influence the board. I encourage all california dalits to register their protest by calling /faxing /email 'ing their local Congressman.

I have enclosed few templates and information guidelines on how to lodge the protest.

Incase you wish to email them here is the list of email addresses of the assembly men. Click on the "bio" link for each rep that will guide to fax numbers , Phone numbers , addresses etc.

<http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset7text.htm>

Meanwhile I will try to contact the State senate members and let them know my concerns.

I also plan on attending the meeting and lodge my protest. If anyone is willing to join , then we can carpool together from San Jose/Sunnyvale.

SUBJECT: California State Board of Education Debate to revisit Indian History & Culture for middle school study in the state.

BACKGROUND:

Please refer to the attached document explaining our concern in detail; read through both part A and B. *<CaliforniaEducationBoardDebate.doc >***

Part A: Explains impact of caste system on India

Part B: Explains how history is being manipulated by Hindus in USA who are attempting to influence Californian textbooks with historically inaccurate data.

ACTION PLAN:

As we all know it is extremely important for the future of the California children that they learn the true history of India and not a sanitized version. So please contact the California legislators and express the concern about historically inaccurate changes in the textbooks.

Use the following template to express your concern ***by phone, email or fax.***

*** ***

***[1] PHONE: CALLING UP THE LEGISLATORS**

The attached document ***<CaliforniaLegislators.doc >*** lists phone/fax numbers of the legislators in California.

Each of them has two phone numbers Sacramento & district office. ******

Please call all of them on their Sacramento offices. The conversation script is given below -

when your call is picked up:

1. Greet the receptionist kindly and ask to speak with the aide or staff member that works on education, South-Asian politics, or minorities issues.
2. When the aide picks up: give your name and mention one or a combination of the following
 1. You are a concerned constituent (if you are); sometimes they ask for the zip code of your area.
 2. You're a concerned parent, student, educator, or resident of California.
 3. If you are not a constituent, identify yourself as someone who is concerned with education in California, and are contacting the legislator because s/he is on the education committee
3. Mention that you're concerned about
 1. The attempt of Hindu sectarian groups-- the Vedic Foundation and the Hindu Education Foundation-- to influence Californian textbooks
 2. Ask if the aide has heard about the issue, and if not, point them to the ambedkar.net website or tell them you will follow up

with a fax and get their fax number.

3. If the aide has not heard about it, give a quick synopsis:

the history textbooks are currently up for review; these sectarian groups have now proposed edits into textbooks; these edits have been accepted by the Curriculum Commission on the advice of a contracted expert suggested by the sectarian groups, Professor Shiva Bajpai.

4. Express your concern that

- i. the groups are Hindu supremacist groups
- ii. they do not represent all Hindus, leave alone all south Asians
- iii. the changes in the texts are historically inaccurate
- iv. they will marginalize the histories of many communities in South

Asia

v. the person that the State Board of Education hired to evaluate the proposed edits was apparently suggested by one of the sectarian groups and was not selected in a transparent manner by the State Board.

vi. the changes proposed by the scholarly committee (Content Review Panel) of Witzel, Wolpert and Heitzman--supported by 47 well-renowned Indologists and 130 scholars of South Asia were not accepted by the Curriculum Committee

1. Choice words like: appalled, shocked, dismayed, disappointed, outraged, and unacceptable would help-- something to make the call stick out in their mind.

2. Ask the aide if the legislator has taken a stance; if so, what is it and why? if not, ask the legislator to

1. please look into the matter and
2. take a public stance opposing the proposed changes by HEF/ VF and ask for the acceptance of the CRP changes
3. express their concern to the SBE

3. If you have any special information about yourself that you'd like to mention: that you're an educator, a student, a parent, a scholar of South Asia, etc., please mention that as well.

4. Make a note of the date, time and the person you talked to. Plus any general impressions from the conversation.

**

*[2] EMAIL: SEND YOUR CONCERN BY EMAL/FAX TO ALL LEGISLATORS IN CALIFORNIA

*The attached document *<CaliforniaLegislators.doc> *lists email addresses of the legislators in California.

Please express your concern by sending a piece of email to all of them or send a letter by fax. Use the words from the above mentioned conversation script.

--

Rama Krishna Bhupathi
1347 Aberford Dr
San Jose CA 95131

408-937-0690(Home)
408-542-2358(Office)
408-439-7726(Cell)

[This message contained attachments]

Message: 10

Date: Wed, 11 Jan 2006 09:57:50 -0800 (PST)
From: Sugrutha R <sugrutha@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate

Dear Bhupathi,

One request. My feeling is that just protesting by name-calling will not work. The HEF and VF have so far suitably impressed the board that they are not propogating any extremist views through their suggestions. The only way is to address the contents itself. Please review the course frame-work, HEF edits and also the text-books if possible, because this will be the one chance to rectify any other wrong interpretations from dalit perspective in the text-book, which are not featured in the HEF list. I am especially worried about the representation of tribal (or so-called 'smaller traditions') in these text-books that HEF might have given a miss to.

It is good that the "Ambedkar Center for Justice and Peace" has gotten involved directly. If necessary, please ask for more time from the California Board for review of materials by the Ambedkar Center saying that you were not aware that the text-books were being reviewed.

Please remember that if this just becomes a political battle of various Indian organisations playing out in their meeting, the result might be that they will just dump all the edits and say 'no changes' or they might just accept the edits as is. I think neither is good.

Metta,
Sugrutha

Message: 11

Date: Wed, 11 Jan 2006 10:42:53 -0800

From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate

Ms Surutha,

We will do whatever we can and whatever means available. The hindu groups are powerful and we cannot match neither their resources and lobbying strength. From our end some work has already been done by the Friends of South Asia , which it the most active group fighting for this cause, , the Dalit Freedom Network and few others..

In this case we are the underdogs. Tomorrow we will be attending a meeting (as part of the general public) with the Board Officials . We will also get an opportunity to personally interact with the key assembly men involved with this issue. That is the opportunity we are looking for.

Regards,
RamaK

Message: 12

Date: Wed, 11 Jan 2006 10:34:27 -0800

From: Rama Krishna Bhupathi <bhupathi@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Appeal: Express your concern - California State Board of Education Debate

Folks,

Here is the venue and timings for the event. Those who attend the meeting will have a chance to speak up and convey your view and register your protest. Incase you plan on attending and speaking here is the procedure to follow.

- 1.By Fax: send a fax immediately to 916-319-0175. Address the fax to "Rebecca Parker" and say "request to be placed on the public comment speaker's list for item #2".
2. Sign-up in person just before the meeting on the 12th. Ask for the "speakers' list" when you get there.

General points: the speaking order is first come, first served. you are restricted to 2 minutes each, and everybody who is signed up will get to speak.

WHERE: 1430, N street, Sacramento (1st floor, Room #1101)
(at the intersection of N st. & 15th st.)

WHEN: Thursday, 12th January, 9 a.m.

WHAT: Item 2 portion of the meeting of the State Board of California

Anyone interested can join me and carpool with me if they wish to.

Regards,
RamaK

APPENDIX III (contd): Digest 869 in the Dalits-International Yahoogroup

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Dalits-International@yahoogroups.com
To: Dalits-International@yahoogroups.com
Date: 13 Jan 2006 01:52:50 -0000
Subject: [Dalits-International] Digest Number 869
There are 8 messages in this issue.

Topics in this digest:

1. Re: Re: to KP singh sir
From: Rahul Sherwal <r_kumar70@yahoo.com>
2. Re: Re: to KP singh sir
From: Rahul Sherwal <r_kumar70@yahoo.com>
3. Re: Give Hindus a fair chance
From: "Thamizh Selvan.JM" <selvan@isac.gov.in >
4. CA Education Debate
From: "ben.marsh" <ben.marsh@comcast.net>
5. Fw: Request to send message for Get Together ...Urgent
From: "Mulkiat Singh Bahal" <bahal@costumedesigns.fsbusiness.co.uk>
6. Re: Partying with a mission-CBP
From: Laxmi Berwa <lberwa47@gmail.com>
7. Re: CA Education Debate
From: darity@email.unc.edu
8. Re: CA Education Debate
From: darity@email.unc.edu

Message: 3

Date: Thu, 12 Jan 2006 11:48:01 +0530
From: "Thamizh Selvan.JM" <selvan@isac.gov.in>
Subject: Re: Give Hindus a fair chance

My Dear Mike,

Can they oppose the caste system and untouchability also?

Hindutva and their allies, Yes, they have been given 5 years rule min INDIA.

During this period what they have done to eliminate caste & untouchability?

Did they passed, or at least wanted pass a law to Ban caste system?

Did they wanted to pass a law, to 'Marriages within caste groups are punishable

by capitol punishment?⁶ or wanted to pass a cover-up law to hold the caste, called 'Uniform civil code?'.

Where the Social inequality & untouchability, social pain and torture, exists in full swing, the Uniform civil code' invariably remove the protection given by the law to the suffering untouchables across the country!

It is up to you to you judge the intention of the so called HINDUTVA!

Mr.Mike, please bring out more details about you, and your view and sympathy towards this forum.

Thanks!

Thamizh Selvan.JM

Quoting Mike Ghouse <MIKEGHOUSE@aol.com>:

- > All the "presumed" Hindu Fascist groups have an opportunity to clean
- > their slate, and an opportunity to tell the truth about them. It
- > should be very easy to make this part of their manifesto.
- >
- > That they believe in India.
- > That they treat every Indian with "full" dignity.
- > That they will un-subscribe to the extremist ideology.
- > That they don't believe in supremacy of any Indian over the other.
- > That they will oppose any idea that treats any Indian less than their
- > own friends like Mr.Modi.
- >
- > Let's allways keep on mind that Hindutva has nothing to do with
- > Hinduism. Hinduism is the universe that India is, Hindutva has
- > members who are Hindu, but they coflict with the Pluralist ethos of
- > Hinduism. Same as the fundamenatalist Christians or Muslims, who do
- > not represent Islam in general.
- >
- > Mike Ghouse
- > DallasIndians@yahogroups.com
- > FoundationforPluralism@yahogroups.com
- >
- >
- > --- In india-unity@yahogroups.com, su204@a... wrote:
- >>
- >> In a message dated 1/11/2006 12:03:47 P.M. Eastern Standard Time,
- >> sugrutha@y... writes:
- >>
- >> In india-unity@yahogroups.com, su204@a... wrote:
- >>>
- >>> All hindu organizations who do not support Hindutva or violence
- >> or
- >>> caste-based discrimination should be considered moderate.

⁶ Note the grotesque suggestion (fn added by HEF)

>>> Ubaid
>>>
>>
>> Now. Ubaid, the term 'Hindutva' is becoming more and more ambiguous
>> by the day. Today, it would almost seem that every practicing
> Hindu
>> is a Hindutvavadi. Or at least every Hindu that reveres the Vedas
> is
>> a Hindutvavadi.
>> Now Sugretha,
>> You dont believe that, do you?. You must be kidding right?
>> How can every Hindu believe in the vile supremacist belief
> of :Hindu, Hindi,
>> Hindustan or support pogroms and gang-rapes.
>> If I were a Hindu I would be insulted by your statement, even if
> you say it
>> as a joke.
>> As for what the various Indologists are saying, that is immaterial
> to me. I
>> am an Indian and dont need any Indologist to tell me what is good
> for me, my
>> community, my country or my world.
>> Ubaid
>>
>>
>>
>> Meera Nanda, in a recent article, has slammed everyone from
>> Vivekananda to Vandana Shiva, with lots of people like Raja Ram
>> Mohan Roy and Homi Baba thrown in between, as having provided
>> overt or covert input and support for the ideologies of 'Hindutva'
>> or the 'nationalist hindus'.
>>
>> Meera Nanda is now therefore a very much loved lady by all the
>> Indologists and their supporters. A great acquisition this is. A
>> native, who has hit the nail on the head, much beyond the
>> precision they themselves never thought achievable.
>>
>> So unless the organisation passes the litmus test of Meera Nanda,
> it
>> will be labelled Hindutva by default by the Indologists and their
>> faithful, sincere and loyal followers. And we will all be told so
> in
>> unambiguous terms.
>>
>> So Bhaskar Dasgupta should really ask Meera Nanda for a list of
> non-
>> Hindutva Hindu organisations.
>>
>> Regards,
>> Sugrutha
>>

Message: 4

Date: Thu, 12 Jan 2006 10:35:54 -0500
From: "ben.marsh" <ben.marsh@comcast.net>
Subject: CA Education Debate

All,

I want to reemphasize some points that Sugrutha made on the CA issue - please be sure to stay on point and be very specific about the changes. Only use history to emphasize points and be very direct. In my dealings with translating the Dalit situation to American politics, it is importance to emphasize the history of slavery, rape, economic disenfranchisement, and other abuses that are underreported in American textbooks. Unfortunately, few in the US know of Ambedkar and his work, so you will not gain any traction by bringing him up. Also, do not dwell on Indian organizations and the role they may or may not have played. Most do not know the words RSS or Hinduthva, so you will have to explain the violence of caste in ways US politicians can understand. One helpful comparison is the one between slavery in the US and the Caste system.

Please note that none of this is intended to tell you all what to say or how to say it, only to offer suggestions based on a couple of years of dealing with this issue in Washington, DC.

Benjamin Marsh
Washington Director, Dalit Freedom Network

APPENDIX IV: Campaign letter in Federation of Inquilabi 'Revolutionary' List

December 30, 2005.

>

> "From RAJA SWAMY

>

>

> Quote:

>

> Dear comrades,

>

> Few days ago I forwarded a note from FOSA urgently calling on folks to

> please write to the Indian American media (addresses, phones below)

> with regard to the California textbook issue. So far only three

> people have bothered to act. Is there a reason why members on the

> Forum of Inquilabi Leftists are sitting on their hands? At this

> crucial time? The fascist bastards are mobilizing, organizing,

> regrouping, and we... hmm.. we the left, the inquilabis, the

> revolutionaries .. we're hesitating. Why?

>

> Let us take the fight to them folks, this is an issue deeply tied to

> the struggles we typically engage in - fascist forces are on the run

> thanks to small efforts by collectives that emerged from FOIL, yet

> they are consolidating while this little chaotic oasis of resistance

> nods off into slumber. WAKE UP COMRADES! It is time to FIGHT! Every

> letter counts, every phone call, every action call forwarded to

> allies, every effort to engage, strategize, sharpen our efforts --

> these are invaluable. So please don't move on to your next email

> message before doing your bit to represent the voices of the left in

> the Indian American media. Else, I will have to start offering free

> beer with my next naglet! We dont want that do we!?

>

> aaaarrghghgh!

>

> raja.."

>