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To: Sue Stickel, Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Branch, Ruth Green, State Board of
Education, Dr. Rebecca Parker, Mr. Tom Adams and to the Members of the Curriculum Commission, Members
of the Content Review Panel (CRP), and the California Department of Education (CDE)

Miscarriage of justice in the Curriculum Commision/SBE review process; Item 11 A. Review of Ad Hoc Committee Edits

Ref: Memorandum of Nov. 22, 2005 submitted to Curriculum Commission members from Thomas Adams,
Executive Director, Curriculum Commission (Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials
Commission)

Subject: Item 11A. Review Ad Hoc Committee Edits and Corrections for History-Social Science Instructional
Materials as Directed by the State Board of Education

<http://www.hindueducation.org/newchanges.pdf> This URL contains the Final recommendations of CFIR/CRP
(Witzel, Wolpert, Heitzman).

I want to bring to your notice a serious miscarriage of justice in the review process. Review of Ad Hoc
Committee Edits has been carried out by a group of biased, unscholarly group whose expertise and motivations
are suspect and whose 'Final recommendations' are factually inaccurate apart from being politically, religiously
motivated and certainly not 'scholarly'. The elaborate process which has been gone through cannot be allowed to

be overturned by a last minute injection of a super-CRP whose membership includes a group which had earlier written a scurrilous letter with defamatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations. Members from such a letter-writing group should not have been engaged as CFIR/CRP.

The 'Final recommendations' of such a super-CRP should be rejected IN TOTO, in fairness and good faith.

I hope the miscarriage of justice will be corrected IMMEDIATELY so that the children are not allowed to become pawns in the academic games being played out, in the guise of 'scholarly' opinions.

I had earlier submitted a letter complimenting the SBE for the fairness with which the review process has been undertaken and the compassion with which the representations made by hindu parents and organizations have been carefully evaluated. As a grandparent of children studying in US schools, I am naturally concerned that SBE should ensure transparency in the due process and ensure that the review process is carried out with compassion keeping the needs of children's self-development, self-esteem as paramount considerations. Ultimately, the process should result in textbooks and resources which will instill a sense of pride in the hindu heritage. This is the stated, mandatory guideline of SBE.

I am also confident that SBE will pay due regard to the hindu community being a minority community in USA and entitled to equal opportunity protection under US laws.

Introduction

There has been a miscarriage of justice in the process of review by injecting politically and religiously motivated elements, self-proclaimed scholars led by Michael Witzel of Harvard University who sent a letter on Nov. 9 to SBE with defamatory comments, unsubstantiated allegations and unscholarly opinions, apart from bandying about threats of international scandal. Some of the letter writers have been hired as a super-CRP who have overturned the earlier processes of review by Group Edits, CRP review and Ad Hoc Committee reviews and recommendations. It is incredible that a super-CRP arrives in the last minute overturning all the months of laborious work which also involved discussions with publishers. Many of the edits approved had also been accepted by the publishers. It is unfair to overturn this process based on a spurious set of recommendations by a super-CRP.

There is little evidence of concern on the part of the super-CRP for the sensitivities of the children who should feel a sense of pride in learning about hindu heritage. Scholarly opinions and arguments cannot be injected as facts in school textbooks.

There is no indication that the representations from hindu have been noted, read and taken into account. Some of the comments made by the super-CRP are simply arrogant, apart presenting opinions as facts. We call the group of Witzel, Wolpert and Heitzman the super-CRP because they were recruited after Nov.8 that is after the Ad Hoc Committee had submitted their recommendations to the Curriculum Commission. Two of this group (Witzel and Wolpert) wrote the defamatory letter of Nov. 9 addressed to Ms. Ruth Green, President SBE, defaming hindu organizations and accusing them of religious and political motivations, questioning their credibility.

We are shocked to find from the comments of the super-CRP that there is no indication that the representations from hindu have been noted, read and taken into account. Some of the comments made by the super-CRP are simply arbitrary assumptions, arrogant, and irresponsible, attempting to opinions, theories and myths as facts.

The so-called 'Final recommendations of CFIR/CRP' should be rejected IN TOTO.

Reasons:

Only such material should be included in the textbooks as will instill a sense of pride in the hindu heritage among the children.

The Final recommendations are factually incorrect, biased and stereotyped as will be demonstrated by the following examples. It is incredible that the people who wrote the scurrilous letter have been hired as

consultants by Curriculum Commission without due process of consultations. There is no indication that the final recommendations were made after due process of consultations with publishers and with representatives of hindu organizations who have submitted their objections. The Final recommendations have been produced by Witzel, Wolpert and Heitzman whose expertise in hindu civilization and culture is questionable and who have been shown to be biased, unscholarly and politically motivated people who proclaim themselves to be 'international academics'. It is a travesty of justice and due process that SBE has allowed two of the writers of the letter to SBE to be appointed as members of super-CRP (together with Heitzman who is only a recent recruit to a summer session of UCAL, Davis and who delivered the Witzel letter to Ms. Ruth Green, President, SBE on Nov. 8). It is strange that immediately after the delivery of this letter, Curriculum Commission in post-haste employs two of the letter writers as super-CRP, vitiating the entire process that has gone on so far and in many cases in consultation with the publishers who had agreed to introduce the changes.

Examples of irresponsible comments and recommendations of the super-CRP/CFIR.

No. 16 Page 238 Second bullet under "Focusing on the Main ideas": current text, "The Aryans introduced..." "New ideas and technology were developed in India (page 242)" was the Group's Edit/Correction. Ad Hoc Committee approved it. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation reads: The statement is NOT correct, Chariots came from the outside (steppes earlier than Mesopotamia, ca. 2000 BCE). Do not change original text.

Comment: How does CFIR/CRP know that chariots came from the outside? The super-CRP is telling that Aryans introduced the chariots. This is a blatant lie; a clear case of an indological myth being bandied about as a fact.

No. 20 Page 255, 256, bottom of page, illustrations of Brahman. Replace illustrations. Ad Hoc Committee commented: Replace illustrations of the Brahman with something more historically appropriate. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: The illustration is no worse than anything one sees in Amar Chitra Katha. It is impossible to imagine where something more historically appropriate would be found. We suggest that the illustrator simply remove the beard and change the dress to a dhoti.

Comment: What type of rubbish is this being dished out as scholarly recommendation? An earlier group asks for historically appropriate illustration. The Final recommendation by the super-CRP dismisses the suggestion as an impossibility. Why is the super-CRP trying to support the caricaturing that the publisher has done by including an inappropriate illustration, in the first place? On what authority does the super-CRP suggest the change of dress to a dhoti and the removal of the beard? Are they sartorial experts or what? [Contrast this with the super-CRP recommendations on Item 22: The images of these people (Chandragupta and Asoka) could not possibly come from a known historical source. They should be removed.]

Item 95, Item 96. Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP: Do not include the phrase 'Astronomical evidence in the Rigveda suggests a date earlier than 3000 BC for the Rigveda.' Why not? This is one piece of evidence which has been well authenticated by astronomical researches. It is just arrogant on the part of the super-CRP to dismiss the suggested sentence without adducing any reasons.

Item 28. Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP: There is no reason to mention Kalibangan, Dholavira and Lothal, if they are not on the map.

Comment: There is every reason to mention these archaeological sites because they are relatively recent discoveries many of which are archaeological proofs that Aryan Invasion/Migration never occurred; and that such an Aryan Invasion/Migration was only a myth perpetrated by indologists of the 19th century. They should also be shown on the map.

Item 33. Page 152, Identify all four sections of the Veda: (1) Samhita; (2) Brahmana; (3) Araynaka; and (4) Upanishad. Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP: Let's not burden students with unnecessary terminology. Do not make any of these changes.

Comment: This pontification is an instance of irresponsibility. The recommendation was made by the Group's Edit/Correction and approved by the Ad Hoc Committee. The identification of all four sections of the Veda is critical because the Veda is by all accounts the very foundation of hindu civilization and heritage. There should be some leads provided to students on the profundity of what could possibly be the earliest human document recording the evolution of human thought and enquiry into phenomena, cosmos and consciousness. The uses of

terminology such as hindu and veda are not burdens on students. The sections of the Veda are not terminology; they are FACTS, important facts to provide a glimpse of the breadth of coverage of the Veda.

Item 37. Page 169. Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP: Who in Sixth Grade cares which epic was "written" first?

Comment: Has the super-CRP surveyed the students of the Sixth Grade to enquire if they care? The students should be told about the relative chronology of the two great epics which define sanatana dharma, hindu dharma so that they can appreciate the evolution of dharma in a variety of contexts exquisitely elaborated in these magnificent epics which are the treasure of human civilization. Students of history should know which of the epics came first.

Number 30 Page 149 Group Edit approved by Ad Hoc Committee added the word 'widely' in the sentence: 'Sanskrit is no longer widely spoken today, but it is the root of many modern South Asian languages.' This is a factual correction. It is not clear why the Final recommendation says: Do not change original text.

Comment: The fact is it is not only spoken today in some parts of India but is also used in regular news bulletins in Sanskrit of All India Radio.

Number 32 Page 153 Current text "The oldest of the Vedas, the Rigveda, was probably written before 1000 BC." Replace with, "The oldest of the Vedas, the Rigveda, was collected and arranged in the form it is known to this day by 1500 BC." Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text, except substituting 'composed' for 'written'. Number 41. Page 235 Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP. Use the following wording: "around 1500-1000 B.C. Vedas were composed and circa 1000 B.C. the Vedas were collected in the form in which we know them today."

Comment: This is an example of the bias of the CRP and perpetuation of an indological myth and presenting it as a fact. There is no factual basis for the dates asserted. The veda were not 'composed' circa 1000 BC; the earlier oral versions were 'collected and arranged'. According to the hindu tradition, there is no date for the compositions. Astronomical references have been proved to point to a greater antiquity. There is no basis for making hypothetical assertions and telling the children that the Rigveda was probably written before 1000 BC. How can anyone be certain about this date? The astronomical references which the CRP repeatedly asked to be removed from the edits point to a greater antiquity. The suggested Group Edit/Ad Hoc Committee suggested some practical way to point out the collection and arrangement of the Rigveda by 1500 BC. This is a fair statement. The Final Recommendation which asks for the old text to be retained allows the perpetuation of stereotyping based on some indological myth, of assumed Aryan invasion which is supposed to have occurred around 1000 or 1500 BC.

Number 35 Page 154. Page 154, "Hinduism and Women": current text, "However, Hinduism also taught that women were inferior to men. As a result, Hindu women were not allowed to read the Vedas or other sacred texts." Delete these sentences. Ad Hoc committee: Make edit as directed. Deletion leaves only one sentence under "Hinduism and Women". It might be better for flow to just add this remaining sentence to the end of the previous section, or remove it altogether. Final recommendation of CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text.

Comment: The original text was a factually incorrect statement. The Vedas refer to many women as rishis. It is an absurdly biased and religiously bigoted statement to allow the original text to remain. Hinduism never taught that women were inferior to men. Hindu women were allowed to read the Vedas or other sacred texts. It is inconceivable that the Final recommendation of the CFIR/CRP is to retain the defamatory original text which is an insult to the hindu heritage which is a celebration of women and their contribution to hindu thought and the nurturing of hindu civilization.

Number 43 Page 242, last paragraph: current text, "In the years that followed, a group of people called the Aryans began settling in the region. Soon a new civilization emerged." Replace with, "In the years that followed, a group of people from other regions of India began settling in the region, enriching the Harappan civilization." Ad Hoc committee: Approve edit as written. CFIR/CRP makes a long political statement and no recommendation as follows: (1) The mature Harappan complex was in decline by about 1900 B.C., not 1500 as claimed here; pushing the decline later in time is simply a crude attempt to create a linkage with the Aryans. (2) The map on p. 242 should show the MATURE Harappan civilization between 2600-1900 B.C., which should include Gujarat in green.

Comment: Why is the recommendation a crude attempt to create a linkage with the Aryans. The super-CRP is making a political statement here. The injecting of the issue of 'Aryans' in this comment shows the bias of this CRP and attempt at stereotyping the issue related to Aryans and others. There is no archaeological or other evidence to state that 'a group of people called the Aryans began settling in the region.' This is clearly a factually incorrect statement in the text and should be removed as suggested by the Group Edit and as recommended by Ad Hoc Committee. The CRP recommendations which are consistently biased and stereotyped governed by a political agenda should be rejected in TOTO.

Number 45 Page 244. Original text Page 244, second paragraph: current text, "Men had many more rights than women. Unless there were no sons in a family, only a man could inherit property. Only men could go to school or become priests." Group Edit approved by Ad Hoc committee: Replace first sentence with, "Men had different rights and duties than women," and add after last sentence, "Women's education was mostly done at home." CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Do not change original text.
Number 47 Similar recommendation.

Comment: The original text is factually incorrect. In Kerala and other parts of the country, there was a system of marumakattayam giving property rights to women. The text is clearly a stereotyping of women's rights in hindu society. It is unclear why super-CRP wants to present a biased picture in the textbook by retaining the incorrect statement of the textbook.

Number 48. Page 249, second paragraph: current text, "Hinduism began with the religion of the Aryans, who arrived in India around 1500 B.C. The Aryans believed in many gods and goddesses who controlled the forces of nature. We know about Aryan religion from their ancient hymns and poetry, especially their epics." Replace with, "Hindus believe in many gods and goddesses. We know about Hindu religion from ancient Vedic hymns and poetry, especially Hindu epics."

CIFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Do not change original text, except as follows: "Hinduism began with the religion of the Aryans, who arrived in India around 1500 B.C. The Aryans believed in many gods and goddesses who controlled the forces of nature and governed society. We know about Aryan religion from ancient Vedic hymns and poetry, especially their epics."

Comment: The change in the original text suggested by the super-CRP is a biased attempt at perpetuating the myth of the arrival of the Aryans. It is factually incorrect that there is an entity called 'Aryan religion'. This is a myth created by indologists and sought to be perpetuated by the CRP showing them to be aryan-supremacists and can be construed as a Eurocentric view trying to perpetuate discarded theories of aryan racism.

Number 61. Teaching the children about yoga is important in the context of the modern-day America where there are millions of yoga practitioners. CIRF/CRP comment to retain the original text is a crude attempt at avoiding reference to yoga as part of hindu heritage and contribution to world heritage.

Number 76. Page 162, Chapter Standards, Section 3: current text, "A group of people known as the Indo-Aryans arrived in the Indus Valley about 1500 B.C. These people developed a social structure called a caste system." Add a sentence informing students that there is a lot of controversy concerning the category of people known as "Indo-Aryans" and their origin. Use BCE, not BC. Ad Hoc committee: Approve edit as written. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Do not change original text.

Comment: Why not? There is no archaeological, textual basis to state as a FACT that people known as Indo-Aryans arrived in the Indus Valley about 1500 BC. What is this category called Indo-Aryans as distinct from Aryans earlier mentioned by the super-CRP? This is the clearest case of presenting opinions, theories and myths as FACTS and misleading the children. That the issue is hotly debated is a FACT. The retention of the original text will mean retention of a factual error and a biased, stereotyping statement of hindu heritage. All evidence so far points to an indigenous evolution and continuity of hindu civilization. There was NO arrival of Aryans or Indo-Aryans.

Number 79 Page 181, "Main Idea": current text, "The social structure known as the caste system was an important characteristic of Aryan society." Replace with, "The social structure known as the Varna system was an important characteristic of the ancient Indian society." Ad Hoc committee: Add clarifying note "(social class)" when the term Varna is first used. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Do not change original text.

Define varna as class, and jati as caste. Number 80. Page 181, second paragraph: current text, "Once their society had merged with the local population, a late hymn of the Rig Veda described the four castes."
CFIR/CRP recommendation: Do not change original text, except substitution of "four classes" for "four castes".

Comment: The original text SHOULD be changed. The reference to 'caste system' is incorrect, biased and a blatant instance of stereotyping hindu society. There was no such society as 'Aryan society'. Introduction of words such as class or defining jaati as caste are clearly politically, religiously inspired recommendations of CFIR/CRP. Ad Hoc committee added the term 'social class'; CFIR/CRP makes the term broader by using 'class' giving Marxist connotations of class. This is an attempt to inject political motives in a school text in a section which is to explain social structure and the term varna. The recommendation SHOULD BE REJECTED.

Number 81 Page 181, "Origins of Caste": "When Indo-Aryans arrived in the Indus River valley, their society already had three social classes: priests, rulers, and common people. They soon added a fourth caste for the native peoples who already lived in the area." Omit these sentences. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Do not change original text.

Comment: A clear case of muddled thinking and inadequate care in ensuring consistency in the text apart from attempt to retain stereotyping statements in the school text. This will be inconsistent with the comments Numbers 79 and 80. If there were four 'classes', how can the term 'fourth caste' be retained in the text? The Group Edit and Ad Hoc committee rightly suggested omitting the sentences. It is unclear by the super-CRP wants to retain the original text. This will cause enormous confusion in the children's minds about word used without meaning, words such as class, social class, caste, varna, jati.

Number 82 Page 181, table, "The Caste System": replace table header with, "The Varnas". CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text.

Comment: Why not? There is consistency here after having introduced the term varna. The table shows the varnas and NOT caste.

Number 86 Page 182, fourth paragraph: current text, "In modern India, these people are now called Dalits, and treating someone as an untouchable is a crime against the law." Replace with, "In modern India, treating someone as an untouchable is a crime against the law." CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text.

Number 89 Page 198, second paragraph: current text, "Hinduism teaches that a person may be reborn as a human being of a higher or lower caste." Replace with, "Hinduism teaches that a person may be reborn as a human being of a higher or lower caste (or another life form) depending upon the quality of one's deeds."
CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text.

Number 93 Page 145, last paragraph: "The caste system is just one example of how Hinduism was woven into the fabric of daily life in India." Delete this part. Ad Hoc Committee: Approve edit as written. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Do not change original text.

Comment: Why not? The original text which is FACTUALLY INCORRECT should be changed. The comment of the super-CRP is a mischievous and irresponsible political statement by the super-CRP to stereotype hindu society as a caste system. The term 'dalit' is not referred to in any statute in India. It is factually incorrect to say that 'in modern India, these people are now called Dalits'. The original text must be changed as suggested by Group Edit and approved by Ad Hoc committee which presents a factual statement.

Number 91 Page 144, second paragraph, last sentence: current text, "Hinduism is a blend of the Aryan beliefs and the beliefs of the people they conquered." Replace with, "Hinduism is a blend of the Aryan beliefs and the beliefs of the people living in the Indus-Saraswati civilization." Ad Hoc committee: Approve edit as written.

Minor corrections underlined. The text uses, "Indus- Saraswati civilization" throughout.

CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: Solve the problem. Delete the entire sentence.

Comment: Why 'solve' the problem by deleting reference to recent discoveries. The reference to 'people they conquered' is absurd. There was no 'aryan conquest' involved. All evidence points to continuity and indigenous

evolution. The text correctly uses 'indus-sarasvati civilization'. Why should this reference be deleted? The idea of the edit, which is correct, is to show that Hinduism is a blend of belief of many people. Deletion of the sentence is NOT a solution. It will only leave a wrong stereotyped, erroneous image of hindu society among the children with particular reference to the evolution of hindu traditions and what are called 'beliefs'.

Number 92 Page 144, third paragraph, replace current text, "Early Aryan religion..." with "Early Hindu religion..." Ad Hoc approved edit as written. CFIR/CRP Final recommendation: We solve this problem by rewording the first two sentences of this paragraph: "We can learn about religion in the time of the Aryans by studying the Vedas , a large collection of sacred verses, hymns, prayers, and teachings composed in Sanskrit." See also the comments of the Vedic Foundation below, #44.

Comment: The new sentence suggested by CRP is a clear indication of their aryan-racist bias. What is the time of the Aryans? This is an undefined and baseless phrase. The reference to Early Aryan religion in the text was WRONG, factually incorrect. The suggested edit was to present Early Hindu religion. The CRP recommendation is a clear instance of irresponsible injection of their personal views and opinions and presenting them as facts to children.

Vedic Foundation comments.

Number 20 Grade 6, p. 231: Internet Activity – "Use the Internet to learn about Hindu customs concerning one of these topics: the Ganges River, cows, funerals, diet." The book directs the student to learn more about such non-illuminating topics as those listed above. For example, the text could have asked the student to learn about ahimsa (nonviolence), and how it is practiced in daily life, to discover why Hindus practice vegetarianism, or to learn more about ayurved, the ancient and advanced system of medicine which is still the most popular form of medical care in India today. Ad Hoc committee: Existing passage is not accurate. CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text.

Comment: Ad Hoc committee has noted that the existing passage is not accurate. Shouldn't the factual error be corrected? Why does the CRP want to retain the original text? To perpetuate stereotyping of hindu society as cow and curry?

Number 39 p. 143: "Hinduism...has affected how people worship, what jobs they do,... And it has helped to determine the status of people in Indian society." Remove. Ad Hoc committee: Approve edit as written. CFIR/CRP: Do not change original text.

Comment: The edit sought to correct a factual error. CFIR/CRP has made an arbitrary, biased judgement recommending retention of the original text.

Thanking you for your consideration and with the best regards,

Yours truly,

Signed.
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