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***Rewarding the Violent, Penalizing the Tolerant***

**To preserve freedom, it is vital for democratic societies to audit themselves to ensure that our actions encourage behavior in accordance with our core beliefs, and penalize unacceptable conduct. The West is doing the precise opposite in its treatment of Muslim fanatics, especially in comparison to well behaved minorities like Hindus.**

**Islamist reactions to Danish cartoons, films about the treatment of Muslim women, or books which contradict Islamic myths are well known. The meek surrender of Western media and educational institutions to barbaric Islamist mobs threatens to destroy democracy. Schools and educational institutions are especially complicit: numerous institutions have denied their student newspapers the right to publish the cartoons to avoid ‘upsetting’ Islamic students.**

**Curiously, as educational institutions bend over backwards and violate the principles of free speech to curry favor with Muslims (or perhaps to avoid jihadist violence), the educational system in California is taking a bigoted stance with respect to the peaceful Hindu minority. California school textbooks, while treating other religions including Islam with respect, have for years been describing Hinduism in inaccurate and demeaning terms which border on hate literature. The well known inequality between the genders within Islam are described as ‘different roles for men and women’, while Hinduism is projected as a faith where ‘women were less important than men’. The ‘caste system’, which has effectively disappeared from modern India, is dwelled on in excessive length, with the implication that it is a common feature even**

**today (nothing could be further from the truth). Hindu beliefs are described as ‘myths’ while stories from other religions are presented as facts.**

**Additionally, the discredited ‘Aryan invasion’ theory is presented as the definitive truth about India’s history. In the 1800s, German thinker Max Muller, whose teachings were fore-runners of Nazi ideology, created this supremacist theory, which suggested that the Hindu faith was imposed on India by light-skinned Aryan invaders. It thus implied that Hindus were foreigners who had no right to inhabit India. British colonialists eagerly seized on this racist fantasy to justify their imperial rule. Invaders ruled India by creating hatred and divisions within various Hindu castes by exaggerating caste discrimination among Hindus. The goal was to justify British and other foreign rule by portraying Hinduism as unjust.**

**Enemies of Hinduism and democracy employ this tactic very successfully today. Despite the fact that democratic India has abolished the caste system and provided enormous benefits to lower castes, various Stalinist and Islamist groups with backing from foreign sources have recruited low caste Hindus and tribes to form virulent terrorist groups who slaughter thousands of people every year. All of these groups wield tremendous influence in the West and operate through numerous front organizations. University campuses, which are often breeding grounds for all leftist and Islamist causes, are infested with ‘scholars’ and ‘professors’ who support this virulent bigotry against Hindus.**

**California school texts have drawn their teachings from this deep reservoir of hate. Despite the fact that other religions also discriminated based on class, race and gender, Hinduism was singled out in these books as being particularly complicit.**

**When Islamic terrorists commit genocide, they are described in school texts as a misguided minority who do not represent the religion as a whole. Hindus apparently do not merit any such consideration: every age-old practice is re-hashed and misrepresented as evidence of the heinous nature of the religion itself.**

**The issue came to light when young Hindu children disclosed to their parents merciless harassment and physical assaults by classmates. Apparently, it had never occurred to the California school board that systematic demonization of a vulnerable minority would lead to oppression and cruelty. Or perhaps the knowledge that this peaceful minority would not respond by burning embassies or slaughtering civilians marked Hindus as legitimate targets.**

**Hindu parents and advocacy groups swung into action and proposed edits to the school texts. Organizations such as the Hindu American Foundation and Vedic Foundation backed the edits. The California Board appointed renowned history professor Shiv Bajpai to make recommendations; Dr Bajpai approved most of the changes. By this time the content of the offending texts had been advertised in India and elsewhere, but embassy burnings, killings, and violent protests did not materialize: the Hindu community followed the rules and proceeded by legal means.**

**Their decent conduct did not yield much benefit. A Germanic Harvard University professor of Sanskrit, Mike Witzel, who has aggressively promoted Aryan invasion theory, jumped into the fray. Mr Witzel and a coalition of Communists and leftists, supposedly representing lower castes and 'disadvantaged groups', voiced their opposition to the edits. This motley crew included 'Friends of South Asia', whose website promotes an**

**activist named ‘Stalin K’ and features leftist marches against American policy in Iraq.**

**These groups immediately began attacking the concerned Hindu parents and supporting organizations by accusing them of whitewashing Hindu history and downplaying caste and gender discrimination. Mr Witzel made bizarre accusations, implying that these American Hindus were somehow connected to ‘Hindu supremacist’ political organizations in India. These accusations swayed the California Board: the decision was made to reject a very large number of proposed edits and leave much of the hate literature intact.**

**The outraged Hindu American Foundation retained a law firm and is committed to fighting the California School Board in court. It is a testament to Hindus that although their children are subjected daily to racially abusive teachings against their faith, and their protests are silenced by non Hindu promoters of hatred and division, this community still does not resort to violence.**

**On the other hand, Western society is betraying its own values through its hateful treatment of Hindus, and meek submission to violent adherents of other faiths. In addition to bowing our heads with shame, we ought to consider what type of message we are sending to fanatical opponents of our values who seek to destroy civil society.**

*Ron Banerjee is a Director of the non-profit Hindu Conference of Canada ([www.hccanada.com](http://www.hccanada.com))*

