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May 10, 2007

Sannyasin Arumugaswami
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Hinduism Today
107 Kaholalele Road
KAPAA, HI 96746
U.S.A.

Dear Sannyasin Arumugaswami,


You had asked for a letter of endorsement of the booklet on Hinduism intended for Grade 6 students in California. I have had now a chance to look at the very attractively produced text and believe it to be a vast improvement over what I have seen so far in this genre.

I welcome the idea of presenting Hinduism to young people in a positive and uplifting manner from the perspective of a practicing Hindu scholar. While there is always scope for discussion on matters of history and interpreting textual sources, it should be accepted as a matter of principle that it is the responsibility and privilege of a faith-community to present itself from its own perspective and in such a manner that its members can gain by it spiritually and feel proud of its history. Hindus certainly have much to be proud of, when they look at their traditions.

As an academic, connected with a Religion Department at a public university in Canada, I welcome the idea to include in Social Studies texts for public schools sections on the religious traditions to which students belong. I was personally involved some years back in producing slide series with texts for local schools that sympathetically explained the background and practices of various communities. I was told that these presentations had a positive effect on the students who learned to have respect for the different traditions their fellow-students came from.

I consider it a matter of course that only scholars who are active members of a particular faith community prepare such texts and that it would not be left to any outsiders to decide their content. I am sure that a local school board wishing to have a write-up on Christianity, would not ask the Beijing Centre for the Study of Religions to supply such a text, however reputable its scholars may be, but would invite a Christian theologian to do so.

With best wishes


Klaus K. Klostermaier, FRSC
University Distinguished Professor Emeritus