

**An India-Israel-United States Alliance:
The Last Great Hope for Humanity**

Arvind Ghosh Memorial Lecture

Delivered in Chicago, November 1, 2008

Dr. Richard L. Benkin

WHY AN ALLIANCE AGAINST RADICAL ISLAM?

Good evening.

Some years back, my mother, wife, and daughter were sitting in a Jerusalem restaurant enjoying a meal. Not many weeks later, a Palestinian terrorist entered the restaurant and blew himself up, taking 15 souls with him. I realized that had my mother, my wife, and my daughter been there that day, the murderers would have considered their deaths something glorious; worthy of 72 virgins in heaven. And at that moment, I knew. Anyone who could glory in the deaths of my mother, my wife, and my daughter is an enemy so vile, so antithetical to our basic notions of right and wrong, so happy to kill that which means most to me, that with that enemy there can be *no quarter, no negotiation, no compromise; and in the fight against it there can be no rest*. For it was also clear that while *my* loved ones were not in Sbarro's that day, others were. And our enemy celebrated *their* deaths; just as they have done in Ahmedabad, New Delhi, Jaipur, and elsewhere in India this year.

Who are these people, and why is there *any* question about the need to fight them unrelentingly and to destroy them utterly? We need to be clear about this from the outset because many people find that concept difficult to grasp. We are facing an existential threat. Our enemy's expressed goals are to destroy our faiths, our values, our ways of life, our very ability to choose among them. They have no problem telling us that, and too many of us have no problem pretending they are not serious about it. Our enemies are ruthless and will gladly sacrifice the lives of their *own* children, let alone ours, to achieve those goals. Fuzzy thinking about this can destroy us, and unfortunately there is plenty of it to go around in our countries. No matter what set of elites tries to convince us otherwise, must remain focused on ***results; on what we have to do to defeat them.*** In my own country, there are people who find that distasteful; who believe it is bigoted to say that our own culture and belief system is better than someone else's. If they think we are no better than the murderers of September 11, the suicide bombers in Israel, those who blew up people in New Delhi, or the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing against the Bangladeshi Hindus; if they think their set of beliefs is as good as ours, then they surely have lost their moral compass, and G-d help us if they carry the day in the United States on Tuesday [November 4, 2008 US Presidential Election].

By the way, this enemy has a name, and we need to use it: ***radical Islam.*** Not terrorism, which is only a tactic; or *unspecified* radicals, militants, or whatever politically correct word is in fashion but *Islamist* radicals. For the words we use are important. If we are engaged in a war on "terror," then all we are doing is reacting to a tactic after it happens. It means we are not engaged in a comprehensive effort to defeat the terrorists and those who

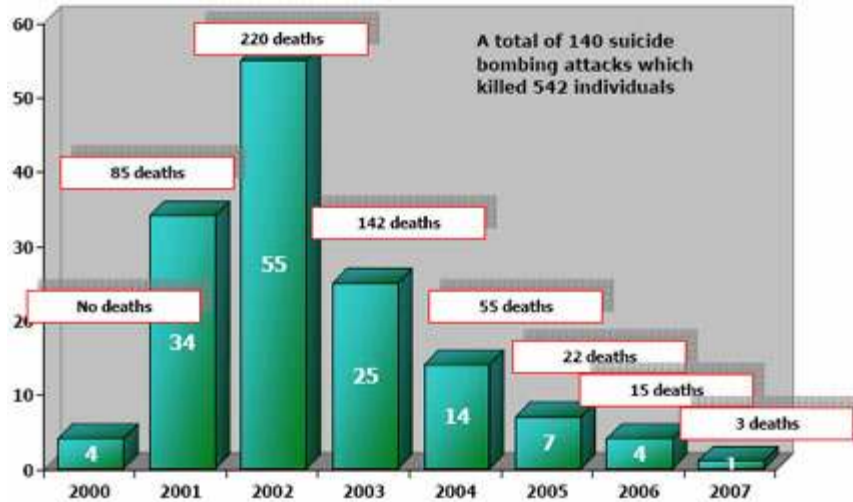
send them. If our enemies are merely “the extremists,” we have decided to abandon the search for any ideology or force that unites those extremists and motivates them. We cannot do that; it dilutes our struggle, weakens us, and strengthens our enemies. This is the same reason why I always refer to Bangladesh’s *racist* Vested Property Act, the law that empowers that government to seize *Hindu*-owned lands and distribute them to *Muslims*. My God, it is an integral part of their *jihad* to rid East Bengal of its Hindus. That is racism, and we need to call it racism. If we do not, if we are soft about it ourselves, how can we expect others to see how atrocious it is?

We also have to recognize that not all Muslims are the enemy; some are our friends, more so than we might think. And if we do not distinguish among them, we will treat friends and enemies the alike. We will send a message that religion not behavior is our real concern, which would make us no better than our enemies. But that aside, our deadliest foes are united in their adherence to their interpretation of *Islam*; not Hinduism, Judaism, or any other religion, but *Islam*. When appeasing elites or those who try to give our enemies a kind face, object that, ‘well there are radical Hindus or Jews or Christians,’ they create a moral equivalency that simply does not exist. When was the last time Hindus flew a plane into a crowded building in Bangladesh? Or the last time a Jew blew himself up outside a crowded mosque? Whether or not it represents Islam’s best or Islam’s worst, our enemy is radical *Islam*, and we need to say that.

So, why is an alliance among Israel, India, and the United States the answer? Well, the first reason is easy. We cannot let our enemies succeed, and together, these three nations could defeat them without even breaking a

sweat. United, unfettered by the constraints imposed by those who naively think there is *any* possibility of what we used to call “peaceful co-existence,” these three militaries can dispose of the terrorists and the national leaders that support them; they also are the world’s first, fifth, and seventh largest nuclear powers. So, take that Iran and Pakistan! Could they do it? Yes, they could do it if they let themselves.

Look at what each nation has done by itself. Ever since its 1948 birth, **Israel** has been bedeviled by nation-states and terrorist groups determined to destroy it. It is the *only* nation on earth that has never known a day of peace, a day without committed felons vowing triumphantly to destroy it, even from the floor of the United Nations. Invaded by multiple Arab militaries in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, each one many times larger than itself; Israel beat them all back so thoroughly, that they had to change tactics and send terror proxies to do their work rather than face continued defeat and degradation. But the terrorists have failed, too. Suicide bombings, their secret weapon, have been virtually eliminated. How often do we even hear of their vaunted rocket attacks from Gaza anymore? In a 2007 conversation with an Israeli insider, I noted how the number of terror attacks dropped significantly, even though the terrorists keep trying. “You must stop them at the border or something,” I said. “Let me tell you a secret,” he whispered, smiling. “We stop most of them in their beds.”



From Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Israel has survived; more than that, it has thrived to become one of the world's technological giants. Does anyone here have a cell phone? No, you don't without Israeli technology.

India was born with an enemy dedicated to *its* destruction on its northwest border. For the last ten years, Pakistan has been a nuclear power. It has supported anti-Indian terror for decades, and since 1996, the entire Muslim *ummah* in the form of the OIC [Organization of Islamic Conferences] and its members stand with Pakistan in claiming Kashmir. India still faces a steady stream of terror attacks. When I was there in February, there was some sort of terror attack or anti-terror engagement almost every day. From the east, a steady flow of Muslim infiltrators is trying with some success to change the demographic realities in East and West Bengal. As I rode through villages near the Bangladesh and Nepal borders on my way to refugee camps for Bangladeshi Hindus, I was told how each one has gone from having a mixed Hindu-Muslim population to an exclusively or almost exclusively Muslim one. And many of these villagers attack the refugees regularly, both with

and without help from nearby Bangladeshi Islamists. Yet India, too, survives and is becoming one of the new century's economic giants.

As for the **United States**, it remains the world's only superpower and its largest economy by far in terms of Gross National Product. Contrary to biased assertions the media and ideologues, America's efforts in Iraq are succeeding. Terrorist actions are down, calm is returning, and Iraqis are taking on ever more of their national responsibilities. In Iraq, the United States has defeated a committed onslaught by Islamists and their supporters—an onslaught conducted with no regard for the safety of innocents (even their own) or for any international conventions. It has done so despite a worldwide ideological crusade by leftists and elites to demonize the United States and its anti-Islamist efforts. They have called it a war for oil, a war for Israel, and a war against Islam. That last one is rather ironic, since many of those who shout it the loudest live in the very European countries that were content to stand by and watch ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims until—guess who—the United States led a successful war to stop that. The United States has sent Al Qaeda into disarray as well. What? Did anyone think they just decided to give up terrorism?

Imagine our success were we free of our “let's pretend politics.”

Radical Islam threatens every country and people on earth but targets these three nations specifically for extinction. The United States is their “Great Satan,” either standing alone or leading others to oppose the Islamists' warped morality. For them, there is also no doubt, no compromise; but also no *Bharat*, no *Yisroel*. Because the territories that are now Israel and India

were once Muslim-ruled, say the Islamists, they are by right Muslim forever. Yet, all three nations are told to “negotiate” with the enemy; to make concessions; to “understand” *their* grievances and *our* sins that forced them to engage in those despicable acts; talk with them as if they were dealing with a counterpart that really wants to make peace with them. Never mind that Israelis were being blown up on public busses; Palestinians said they were “humiliated” by Israel’s security checkpoints. So the world leaned on Israel, not the Arabs, to engage in what they called “confidence building measures”; i.e. unilateral concessions. But of course, the only confidence they built was our enemies’ confidence in our weakness. It is the height of irony that right now, the United States of all countries is pressuring Israel to trade “land for peace.” Land for peace? What a ridiculous notion! When in history has that sort of thing ever worked? If history tells us anything, it is that rewarding bad behavior only encourages more bad behavior. Divided, Americans, Israelis, and Indians fall prey to this deadly temptation; but united we can resist those who would put us and our children in jeopardy from their places of presumed safety, and we can reject appeasement unequivocally. For us, the matter is a simple one; for others not, and that has to be our focus.

India is the key. Israel and the United States have had a strategic relationship at least since the 1960s. The newcomer to this *manage a trios* is India. It did not even recognize Israel until 1992 and was a staunch ally of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. India, in the person of Prime Minister [Jawaharlal] Nehru, founded the so-called non-aligned bloc with Egypt’s [Gamal] Nasser and Yugoslavia’s [Josip Broz] Tito.

While calling itself non-aligned, the organization was unmistakably anti-American and by 1979 was formally anti-Zionist. But the collapse of the Soviet Union and growth of the Islamist enemy changed international realities and caused most nations to take a new look at their strategic interests. India's re-assessment, however, forced a more radical change in those interests than it did for most nations.

This has caused something of a generation gap among members of the India's media and government. Many remain tied to the ideologies and policies of the past, while much of the younger generation, especially in the media does not. While Indians correctly would object to any suggestion that leftist politics are dead in their country, the opposition to it continues to grow. The perennially left-leaning Congress Party recently broke with its communist allies over the just passed nuclear cooperation deal with the United States. Earlier this year in West Bengal, the CPIM [Communist Party of India Marxist] suffered some reverses in local elections for the first time in its thirty-year, iron-fisted rule of that state. We could be on the cusp of an opportunity to unseat ideologies of the past with practical solutions to the problems of communist and Islamist terrorism, agricultural production, economic growth, and energy; a matter to which I will return.

The Indian media is key to the success of this change; and I am optimistic about the future (dreadfully frustrated with the present media). Earlier this year, I addressed a group of journalism students at the University of Lucknow. My goal: to bring greater focus on Islamist ethnic cleansing of Bangladeshi Hindus. The students showed a great deal of interest and voiced their opinions about how the Indian media has failed to identify the

true nature of this genocide-in-the-making. It was a good discussion, and the students seemed engaged. As soon as someone remarked that I was Jewish and had been to Israel, however, their focus changed. No matter what I said, they only wanted me to tell them about Israel. They avidly drank in any detail I could provide about life in the Jewish state. They also were fascinated with Judaism and about the way Jews and Hindus share so many values and sensibilities. More than anything else, however, these journalists of tomorrow wanted to know how tiny Israel was able to “defeat the terrorists and *jihadis*,” as they put it. “Please tell us,” they said, “so India can adopt these methods and defeat our terrorists like the Israelis did.”

Interestingly, out of the entire class, only one student voiced a pro-Palestinian position. While most of the class was almost entranced as we spoke about Israel and its successes against our common enemy, he did not and would ask me how I could laud Israel while it “committed atrocities against the Palestinians.” We argued the point back and forth in a very animated fashion, and I provided some Middle Eastern history that evidently these students even now are not getting. It was a lively debate, and at the end of the class, this student—who had the courage to stand up for what he believed in when everyone else seemed to disagree—asked to address me and the class. He said that while he still supported “the Palestinian cause,” he recognized that he has not been given all the pertinent information and that—as a journalist—he would make the effort to find it.

Elsewhere in India, I met with bona fide members of its mainstream media. They were quite candid about the media's leftist bias, corruption in the Congress government, “that will do anything to keep the vote bank,” several

said; and about the severity of the Islamist threat facing their country. They work for major newspapers and broadcast channels; English and Hindi-language outlets, purely Indian companies, and some with an international reach. Their concern was genuine; their passion intense. But because, they told me, and I remember this quote, they "would surely be sacked" if their editors or colleagues heard those candid opinions, we met in out of the way hotels, coffee shops, and other inconspicuous places. So concerned were they that only some agreed to let me tape our conversations. And all but one of them agreed to speak openly only so long as they remained anonymous. They hoped our interviews would garner support for their cause, especially in the United States. "At the very least," one told me, "perhaps it will help people know just how dangerous things here are."

Every one of the journalists echoed the sentiment expressed by this one. "The US and India are two great democracies. We [India] must support the US War on Terror. It is the *only* thing we should do!" They are frustrated and concerned, however, at India's reticence to do so whole-heartedly. As another put it, the ruling parties "fear a negative response from Muslims [and a loss of votes even though] more people believe India should openly ally itself with the US in the war on terror...the politicians are afraid to be seen as anti-Muslim," which, he insisted they are not. "We're anti-terror."

While the situation is infuriating for many Indian journalists and tragic for the Indian public, these widely echoed convictions demonstrate that things are changing, and the direction of the change is markedly away from old ideologies that have kept India from aligning with Israel and the United States.

“WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY AND THEY ARE US”

While the Indian media has to overcome more explicitly ideological traditions, in Israel and the United States as well, the mainstream media has largely adopted philosophies that are so damaging to a clear perception of what must be done. In the **United States**, it is the political correctness police who see a potential offense in virtually every comment that calls our enemy what it is. In **Israel**, it is the misnomered peace camp; misnomered because the only peace their policies would bring is the peace of the grave. In **India**, it is pseudo-secularism, a policy that legislates Hinduism to a second-class status. Certain political sectors in each country have made these policies articles of faith. Here, the Democratic Party and its current standard-bearer promise a more politically correct America that would consider seek to erase any distinction between us and our enemies so we can satisfy their grievances. [US Presidential candidate] Barack Obama has pledged to sit down and talk as equals with national leaders who are known to support the terrorists who want us *dead*, what our children *dead*. In India, Congress continues to extol and promote pseudo-secularism. The recent budget included millions to fund *Muslim* religious pilgrimages but not a penny for Bangladeshi *Hindus* living stateless and abused in refugee camps. Even in its final days in office, **Israel**'s Kadima Party is looking to strike a deal that would give up ancestral Jewish lands on West Bank, but also part of Israel's capital, Jerusalem; land for you remember what kind of peace. One of the places on Kadima's chopping bloc is Hebron, where Judaism's patriarchs and matriarchs are buried. It was home to the very first Hebrew community around 3000 years ago, and it was King David's first capital.

There had been a continuous Jewish presence in Hebron from biblical times until 1929. In that year, Muslims with help from local authorities rioted and attacked the ancient Jewish community. Those who were not murdered were expelled by the Arab rulers. And today, the descendants of the murderers have the gall to say the descendants of the victims have no title to the land, and the world disdainfully calls them “settlers.” So, tell me, at what point does the statute of limitation run on genocide?

Israel is holding a critical election in February that could determine how aggressively our anti-Islamist alliance can be pursued. Though there are dozens of parties, it is essentially an election between Kadima and current Prime Minister Tzipi Livni and the right wing Likud Party and former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Listen to this excerpt from a 1998 interview on ABC television in the United States.

ABC’s Sam Donaldson—like many in the media hostile towards Likud—was trying to pin down the then Prime Minister about Israeli nuclear capability. Of course, he was trying to get him to reveal things that no sane leader would reveal, least of all on a TV show. At one point Donaldson referred to a recent nuclear test by India, suggesting in a patronizing way that India did it because it felt that it was not getting enough respect. Would similar motivations prompt Israel to some sort of nuclear action? Netanyahu replied—and I want to remind you again, this was 1998, ten years ago:

“If you're worried about the detonation of a nuclear device on the Indian subcontinent, start thinking what the world will be like if Iran detonates a

nuclear weapon. That is my concern.” Does this guy understand what we are up against or what?

There is another revealing story about Netanyahu. I was at a function some years back where he said the following. (It might not be an exact quote.) ‘You want to know why there was no terrorism when I was Prime Minister? I’ll tell you. When I was elected, I sent a message to Arafat that if there was any terrorism, I’d have him killed. So there was no terrorism.’”

Right now, even the liberal Israeli newspaper, *Haaretz*, gives Netanyahu a better chance of becoming Prime Minister than Livni. Their numbers are close, but the way things appear to divide, Netanyahu would have a much easier time forming a right wing coalition than Livni would have of forming one on the left. As the paper notes, unexpected events between now and February could change the entire picture. In the United States, of course, the election is only *days* away, and we soon will know if our attempted alliance will be with a President John McCain or a President Barack Obama. Despite the national and international media’s love affair with Obama—and the resulting bias in polls and reporting—the election remains either man’s to lose. Polls do show Obama slightly in front, but pre-election polls in 2000 and 2004 had George Bush well behind his opponents. Polls into the end of October 1980 gave President Jimmie Carter a substantial lead over his challenger: Ronald Reagan. Hence, the *only* poll that counts is the one on election day.

Regardless of what happens on Tuesday in the United States or February in Israel, a US-Israel-India alliance will not be opposed, only more difficult and perhaps more equivocal in its mission.

THE RED-GREEN ALLIANCE

We are also fighting what I have termed the Red-Green Alliance: the marriage of Communists and Islamists, something I have been writing about for years. Those who believe their ideologies are so diametrically opposed making cooperation impossible might even point to specific incidents in which the two oppose one another (and I can point to at least as many in which they teamed up together), but history is a far better teacher than random citations. In 1939, Nazi Germany and Communist Russia – mortal enemies – signed a non-aggression pact with each other. *Their* ideologies were in conflict, but they were united in their hatred of freedom and dissent, and their determination to crush it. *That* is the same motivational glue for the Red-Green alliance.

In 2004, Al Qaeda terrorists were on the run from U.S. forces that dislodged them from their strongholds in Afghanistan. Over the next two years, Pakistani forces loyal to strongman Pervez Musharraf harassed them in their mountainous lairs in that country. But since most Pakistanis are more loyal to the Islamists than to their own government, friendly border guards got them safely out of Pakistan to terrorist-controlled sections of Kashmir. They then helped them through a sort of no-man's-land and into Nepal where they set up terror bases. What fascinated me about that is the fact that Nepal is overwhelmingly Hindu and hardly a likely candidate to become the next

Taliban state. But the Nepalese King had seized dictatorial powers in response to a decades-long communist revolt. That made for social chaos and uncontrolled borders that allowed Islamists in the Pakistan Embassy to engineer an agreement with the communists to provide Al Qaeda with safe haven.

The Islamists were not interested in Nepal, but they were very interested in the world's third-largest Muslim country just down the road, Bangladesh. That country was ripe for the picking. Funded by Saudi and Kuwaiti "charities," Islamists had infiltrated virtually all of the country's social institutions and had been part of the government since 2001. They were all set to make further gains in the upcoming January 2007 elections, perhaps enough to demand the Law Ministry and impose Sharia Law on the nation of almost 150 million. They almost pulled it off, too, but a military coup stopped them—for the moment. I arrived in Dhaka three days before the coup to find one major party, the Awami League, calling for chaos in the streets; and the other, the Bangladesh National Party, having transparently rigged the pending elections. In one of the oddest turn of events in recent memory, every single western democracy publicly urged that elections *not* be held. And they—along with every Bangladeshi I encountered—welcomed the military regime as the savior of Bangladeshi democracy. Indeed, once in power, it started arresting corrupt officials and even executed a few Islamist terrorists. But that was short-lived and the Islamists remain in the area ready to seize power when conditions allow it. Some have returned to Afghanistan, but they have supplemented their ranks with local Islamists.

And the Nepalese Maoists? Their reward was a role in Nepal's coalition government, which gave them enough legitimacy to masquerade as a political party and run in the next election. As we know now, that led to their seizure power in the poverty-stricken Himalayan country.

The incident confirmed the strategic benefit of their cooperation, and it has been replicated since. The most egregious example is the collusion between West Bengal communist government and Bengali (primarily Bangladeshi) Islamists. In several of the refugee camps I visited, residents testified to ongoing attacks by local and Bangladeshi Islamists that the government tolerates. I recall one village where the local commissar got there before I did in an attempt to intimidate the refugees into silence. And it appeared to be working until one elderly woman stood up in the public square and said, "I'm not afraid of anyone," and with the red official looking on, proceeded to tell me about the continuing attacks.

But the alliance's *less* violent side is even more influential in blocking a US-India-Israel alliance. That is the tendency of leftists to sympathize with Islamist goals, demonize Israel, and oppose anything the United States does. The European left—where many in the Congress Party look for guidance—is universally anti-Israel, even though Islamists detest the atheism and multi-cultural articles of faith for the European left. Look anywhere in our three

potential allies and you will find those on the left most vehemently opposed to a principled and unrelenting stand against radical Islam.

MANY REASONS FOR AN ALLIANCE

Not only are these enemies working together, but the Islamists in general subscribe to an overarching international network. No matter what the local issue might be, no matter what internal power struggles exist; they are all united in their ultimate purpose and ready to work together. One of the most chilling developments in the Middle East over the past few years is the new alliance between Sunni radicals, such as Hamas, and Shiite radicals, such as Hezbollah and Iran. That even scares the Saudis. So, it only makes sense that we pool our strength as well.

There are so many reasons for this alliance. Wherever I went in India, I heard, “There are no democracies between Jerusalem [sometimes Tel Aviv] and New Delhi.” And it was said with tremendous pride, because India and Israel have been able to adhere to democratic principles, have been able to maintain their democracy without military coups or contrived states of emergency, without the suspension of rights or elections, despite pressure so continuous that few nations would be able to withstand it. In our tripartite alliance, we have the world’s oldest democracy, the United States, the world’s largest democracy, India, and the only democracy in the Middle East, Israel. All three nations face problems with corruption, but even the most corrupt of our officials have never been able to seriously compromise our basic democratic structure. If India and Israel look around their

neighborhoods, they both would be hard pressed to find other democracies or countries committed to a free press and individual rights. In that way, they have far more in common with each other and the United States than with the nations that surround them. The history of all three peoples also shows a decided preference for peace over war; for equality and justice over tyranny; and perhaps that tendency contributes to democracy's staying power with them.

More practically, each country offers something the others do not. In the field of international relations, each has cordial relations with some of the others' worst enemies. India's greatest enemy is Pakistan; at least for now, the United States maintains extensive relations with it. Iran is Israel's nemesis (America's, too); and India has a good relationship with that country. America's greatest rival, China (also a threat to India), has some serious ties with Israel.

In the area of energy, competition for resources between India and the United States helped drive up the price of oil, increasing the revenues that fund the war against us through Saudi Arabia, Iran, Venezuela. Kuwait funds the Revival of Islamic Heritage, an organization identified by many countries as a terrorist front posing as a religious charity. Its Islamist sympathies are so transparent that even Bangladesh revoked its charter to operate there. In 2006, the United States and India accounted for one third of the world's oil consumption and are the numbers one and six oil importers on the planet. For a long time, we appeared dependent on OPEC while they seemed independent of us. But recent US actions to increase drilling, dip into its oil reserves, and conserve energy, followed by the economic crisis,

drove *down* the price of oil, so much so that it sent OPEC into a panic. If these two giant oil importers could unite in deliberate action to collapse the price—then take advantage of some extremely exciting Israeli advances in alternate energy technologies—the three could turn defeat and dependence into victory. In 2007, the United States passed the Energy Independence and Security Act that included an entire section that focused on strategic cooperation with Israel. There is no reason why India cannot be part of the same process.

Military cooperation has already started. Both the United States and India now have troops training in Israel, studying anti-terrorism tactics, urban guerilla warfare, and other tactics. In January, an Israeli spy satellite, its eleventh, was fired into orbit on the back of an Indian rocket; and the device is sending back intelligence even as we sit here. And India is now the largest importer of weaponry from Israel. Tourism, real estate, agriculture; these are only three of many commercial areas in which Israel and India are helping each other's economy. Intelligence sharing has also grown with time, and Israeli intelligence is particularly active in providing India with good information to keep Pakistan in check.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

So what must we do to make an India-Israel-US alliance a reality? The problem, as we can see, is more political than anything else. Stripped of those considerations, there is no question that it is something that must be done.

First, we have to commit ourselves to doing what it takes to achieve this. If we in this room will not, then who will? In each country, people cry about the lack of will against our enemies, the passivity and sometimes self-seeking behavior of our politicians, and Byzantine procedures designed to squash innovation. And in each country, those people are right, but complaining changes nothing. Remember, these countries are democracies. Those same politicians have to respond to motivated constituents if they want to be re-elected. As I have found in my own human rights efforts, there is nothing that can stop a committed individual who continues to impress upon leaders the moral nature of his or her claims.

Second, now that we have committed, we have to organize. While the lone voice in the wilderness is a romantic notion, it is not *as* effective as an organized group. We can start here by identifying people who are willing to put together structures, raise funds, and do the leg work needed to convince people in Washington, New Delhi, and Jerusalem to further these ties.

Third, elections. As noted earlier, parties gravitate to certain positions; so do individuals. We need to make this an issue that they cannot ignore. Bring it to their attention; tie donations to it; take out ads; get media time. None of that is out of reach for us. Despite general party principles, we can get things done—at least here in the United States—by securing the cooperation of lawmakers from *both* parties, and not *only* in the United States. When I toured the Hindu refugee camps earlier this year, it was a member of the *Congress Party* who stood with me there. He told me privately that many in his party opposed his decision but that he felt morally constrained to take

that action and support our cause. It is no different in the United States. The last protest letter I asked be sent to the Bangladeshi government was signed by four Members of Congress: Trent Franks of Arizona, a conservative Republican; Mark Kirk of Illinois, a moderate Republican; Steve Rothman, a moderate Democrat from New Jersey; and Allyson Schwartz, a liberal Democrat from Philadelphia. I have found all of them to be principled individuals who do what they say they will do. Each one has commitment to fight for human rights, and I hope all four of them are returned to Congress on Tuesday. And work to defeat those who reject the seriousness of the existential threat that all three nations face. Do it as if your life depended on it because it does.

Fourth, there are many ways to build a corps of supporters in the United States Congress and Senate. Networks of like-minded individuals exist in all three countries and all over the world. Some bring their own contacts and influence to the table; and there are ways to build these coalitions. But again, it requires a commitment.

Fifth, find the “good guys” in the media. Although we rightly complain about a media tendency to avoid naming the threat and to downplay its seriousness, there are many writers and outlets that are not like that. We need to identify them and cultivate those relationships. Again, some of us already have the entrée our movement needs. And—to emphasize it again—it takes time and commitment.

But in all of these things, there has to be something more; that is, a moral certainty and an unrelenting belief that we have no choice but to take action on behalf of our children and grandchildren. In the iconic American film, *Casablanca*, restaurateur Rick Blaine asks anti-Nazi freedom fighter Victor Laszlow who has again narrowly escaped capture and death: “Don’t you sometimes wonder if it’s all worth all this? I mean what you’re fighting for.” Laszlow’s response: “We might as well question why we breathe. If we stop breathing, we die. If we stop fighting our enemies, the world will die.”

I have a personal reason for this as well. Over the past couple years, I have become more and more involved in trying to protect the Bangladeshi Hindus from the genocidal efforts of Bengali Islamists, the corruption of Bengali leaders, and the shameful inaction by India, the United Nations, Amnesty International and the other so-called human rights groups; and even my own United States. People who know these things estimate that since this *jihad* began over 30 years ago, some 20 million Bangladeshi Hindus who should be here are not. Twenty million people! If that does not spur one to action, I do not know what can. As a Jew, I am extremely sensitive about the Nazi holocaust against my people. I have family who survived it and family who did not. There is nothing in history that comes close to it, period. One third of my people murdered because of our faith, our peoplehood, because of who we are.

But in all honesty this ethnic cleansing *cum* genocide of the Bangladeshi Hindus seems awfully familiar. We need to stop it, or we will be crying over the dead one day and asking other how it could have happened—again! But we here today know: it does not *just happen*. I believe that together with the will to do so, India, Israel, and the United States have the power to prevent it.

In the meantime, I will be making going to India early next year to visit my Hindu brothers and sisters and to see what we can do to help them and other oppressed people. This is an important issue that Congressman Mark Kirk and others have promised to address with me if they are returned to Congress. I am interested in speaking with anyone who can help me and support these efforts (which so far I am funding entirely out of my own pocket), whether with funds, with people, with contacts, whatever. I encourage *anyone* who wants to be part of this absolutely necessary effort to contact me. See me about speaking to your organization or radio audience; help me teach people about this real live genocide-in-the-making. Work with me; please do not let this opportunity pass.

A great Jewish sage by the name of Hillel once said, “If I am not for myself, who will be for me. If I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now when?” Let us stand together—now, as Hillel counsels us—before it is too late. “If not now, when!”

Thank you.