



Vajpayee visit: Reaffirming the Vision

“As we talk with candour, we open the doors to new possibilities and new areas of cooperation — in advancing democracy, in combating terrorism, in energy and environment, science and technology and in international peacekeeping. And, we are discovering that our shared values and common interests are leading us to seek a natural partnership of shared endeavours.”

Prime Minister Vajpayee's address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress — September 14, 2000



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For more information on Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to the United States, please go to the Embassy's web site <http://www.indianembassy.org>. The Prime Minister's speeches are also available in Real Video format.

Highlights of Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Washington, DC

September 14, 2000

- Meeting with Dennis Hastert (R-Illinois), Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives at the U.S. Capitol.
- Prime Minister Vajpayee addressed the Joint Session of Congress of the United States. The Prime Minister was the only foreign leader to do so during 106th session of the U.S. Congress.
- Separate meetings with U.S. House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Missouri), Chairman Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina) and Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Chairman Benjamin Gilman (R-New York) and Members of the House Committee on International Relations at the U.S. Capitol.
- Luncheon hosted by Chairman Gary Ackerman (D-New York), Co-Chairman Jim Greenwood (R-Pennsylvania) and the Congressional Caucus on India, Cannon House Office Building.
- Meeting with representatives of think tanks and academic institutions.

September 15, 2000

- Prime Minister Vajpayee's arrival ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House.
- Welcoming Prime Minister Vajpayee, President Clinton said that India and the United States have forged a common bond arising from our common commitment to freedom and democracy. While thanking President Clinton for the warm welcome accorded to him, the Prime Minister stressed the importance of the continuing multifaceted dialogue between the two democracies.
- Meeting with Vice President Gore and a Luncheon hosted by Vice President Gore, in honor of Prime Minister Vajpayee at the Department of State.
- Senator Sam Brownback (R-Kansas), Chairman of Senate Asia and Pacific Sub-Committee called on the Prime Minister.
- Prime Minister Vajpayee addressed the U.S.-India business summit hosted by the National Association of Manufacturers and Confederation of Indian Industry.

September 16, 2000

- Prime Minister Vajpayee dedicated the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial in the distinguished presence of President Clinton on federal land in front of the Embassy of India. At the ceremony, President Clinton said that no other country has been more influenced by India than the United States and added that he learned about Gandhi at 17 or 18 through Martin Luther King's writings about nonviolent resistance. The dedication took place less than two years after the passage of the Act of Congress in October 1998, the shortest period for any such memorial in Washington, DC.
- Ambassador Naresh Chandra hosted a luncheon reception in honor of Prime Minister Vajpayee at the Omni Shoreham Hotel for more than 800 guests.
- Prime Minister Vajpayee met with a group of Indian American entrepreneurs including many from the Silicon Valley and assured them that India would assist them in every possible way in their desire to contribute to India's rapid and all-round development.
- Prime Minister Vajpayee addressed members of the Indian-American community at a function organized in his honor by them at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, DC

September 17, 2000

- President and Mrs. Clinton hosted a State banquet at the White House in honor of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This was the largest such event during the Clinton administration and more than 700 distinguished guests from diverse varied backgrounds were present.

Prime Minister Vajpayee's address to the Joint Session of the United States Congress

September 14, 2000



Prime Minister Vajpayee welcomed at the U.S. Congress. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House and Senator Strom Thurmond are seen in the back. (September 14, 2000; Photo: Government of India Photo Division)

Mr. Speaker,
Mr. President Pro tem,
Honourable Members of the
United States Congress,

It is with a deep sense of honour that I speak to you today. I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of the Congress for giving me this opportunity.

In November 1999 a remarkable event took place in the House of Representatives. By a vote of 396 to 4,

the House adopted a resolution congratulating India and my government on the successful elections completed in October 1999. This display of broad-based bipartisan support for strengthening relations with India is heartening.

It is a source of encouragement to both President Clinton and to me, as we work together to infuse a new quality in our ties. I thank you for the near-unique approach that you have adopted towards my country.

Those of you who saw the warm response to President Clinton's speech to our Parliament in March this year will recognise that similar cross-party support exists in India as well for deeper engagement with the USA.

I am also deeply touched by the resolution adopted in the House two days ago welcoming my visit and the prospect of closer Indo-U.S. understanding.

Mr. Speaker,

American people have shown that democracy and individual liberty provide the conditions in which knowledge progresses, science discovers, innovation occurs, enterprise thrives and, ultimately, people advance.

To more than a million and half from my country, America is now home. In turn, their industry, enterprise and skills are contributing to the advancement of American society.

I see in the outstanding success of the Indian community in America, a metaphor of the vast potential that exists in Indo-U.S. relations, and what we can achieve together.

Just as American experience has been a lesson in what people can achieve in a democratic framework, India has been the laboratory of a democratic process rising to meet the strongest challenges that can be flung at it.

In the half century of our independent existence, we

Continued on next page



have woven an exquisite tapestry. Out of diversity we have brought unity. The several languages of India speak with one voice under the roof of our Parliament.

In your remarkable experiment as a nation state, you have proven the same truth. Out of the huddled masses that you welcomed to your shores you have created a great nation.

For me the most gratifying of the many achievements of Indian democracy has been the change it has brought to the lives of the weak and the vulnerable.

To give just one figure, in recent years it has enabled more than a million women in small towns and distant villages to enter local elected councils and to decide on issues that touch upon their lives.

Two years ago, while much of Asia was convulsed by economic crisis, India held its course.

In the last ten years, we have grown at 6.5 per cent per year: that puts India among the ten fastest growing economies of the world.

Economic activity gets more and more diversified by the year: President Clinton and many among the friends gathered here have had occasion to glimpse our advances in information technology.

We are determined to sustain the momentum of our economy: our aim is to double our per capita income in ten years — and that means we must grow at 9 per cent a year.

To achieve this order of growth we have ushered in comprehensive reforms. We are committed to releasing the creative genius of our people, the entrepreneurial skills of the men and women of the country, of its scientists and craftsmen. At the same time, we in India, remain committed to the primacy of the State in fulfilling its social obligations to the deprived, the weak and the poor.

Important sectors of the country's infrastructure — power, insurance, banking, telecom — are being opened to private initiative, domestic and foreign.

Trade barriers are being lowered.

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen,

There are forces outside our country that believe that they can use terror to unravel the territorial integrity of India. They wish to show that a multi-religious society cannot exist.

They pursue a task in which they are doomed to fail.

No country has faced as ferocious an attack of terrorist violence as India has over the past two decades: 21,000 were killed by foreign sponsored terrorists in Punjab alone, 16,000 have been killed in Jammu and Kashmir.

As many of you here in the Congress have in recent hearings recognised a stark fact: no region is a greater source of terrorism than our neighbourhood.

Indeed, in our neighbourhood — in this, the 21st century — religious war has not just been fashioned into, it has been proclaimed to be, an instrument of State policy.

Distance offers no insulation. It should not cause complacency.

You know, and I know: such evil cannot succeed.

But even in foiling it could inflict untold suffering.

That is why the United States and India have begun to deepen their cooperation for combating terrorism. We must redouble these efforts.

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen,

There was a time when we were on the other side of each other's globes. Today, on the digital map, India and the United States are neighbours and partners.

India and the United States have taken the lead in shaping the information age. Over the last decade, this new technology has sustained American prosperity in a way that has challenged conventional wisdom on economic growth.

We are two nations blessed with extraordinary resources and talent. Measured in terms of the industries of tomorrow, we are together defining the partnerships of the future.

But our two countries have the potential to do more to shape the character of the global economy in this century.

We should turn the example of our own cooperation into a partnership that uses the possibilities of the new technologies for defining new ways of fighting poverty, illiteracy, hunger, disease and pollution.

See PRIME MINISTER'S ADDRESS, Page 4



Prime Minister's Address

(Continued from page 3)

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen,

We believe that India and America can — and should — march hand in hand towards a world in which economic conditions improve for all.

A situation that provides comfortable living standards to one-third of the world's population, but condemns the remaining two-thirds to poverty and want, is unsustainable.

The foremost responsibility that the 21st century has cast on all of us is to change this unacceptable legacy of the past.

It should be our common endeavour to overcome this legacy. I, therefore, propose a comprehensive global dialogue on development.

We would be happy to offer New Delhi as the venue for this dialogue.

In this Congress, you have often expressed concern about the future contours of Asia. Will it be an Asia that will be at peace with itself? Or will it be a continent, where countries seek to redraw boundaries and settle claims — historical or imaginary — through force?

We seek an Asia where power does not threaten stability and security. We do not want the domination of some to crowd out the space for others. We must create an Asia where cooperative rather than aggressive assertion of national self-interests defines behaviour among nations.

If we want an Asia fashioned on such ideals — a democratic, prosperous, tolerant, pluralistic, stable Asia — if we want an Asia where our vital interests are secure, then it is necessary for us to re-examine old assumptions.

It is imperative for India and the United States to work together more closely in pursuit of those goals. In the years ahead, a strong, democratic and economically prosperous India, standing at the crossroads of all the major cultural and economic zones of Asia, will be an indispensable factor of stability in the region.

Our cooperation for peace and stability requires us to also define the principles of our own engagement. We must be prepared to accommodate our respective concerns.

We must have the mutual confidence to acknowledge our respective roles and complementary responsibilities in areas of vital importance to each of us.

Security issues have cast a shadow on our relationship. I believe this is unnecessary. We have much in common and no clash of interests.

We both share a commitment to ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons. We have both declared voluntary moratoriums on testing.

India understands your concerns. We do not wish to unravel your non-proliferation efforts. We wish you to understand our security concerns.

We are at a historic moment in our ties. As we embark on our common endeavour to build a new relationship, we must give practical shape to our shared belief that democracies can be friends, partners and allies.

In recent years, through all the good and difficult times, we have spoken to each other more often than we have ever done in the past. I thank President Clinton for this leadership and vision in steering this dialogue. I sincerely thank members of this Congress for supporting and encouraging this process.

As we talk with candour, we open the doors to new possibilities and new areas of cooperation — in advancing democracy, in combating terrorism, in energy and environment, science and technology and in international peacekeeping. And, we are discovering that our shared values and common interests are leading us to seek a natural partnership of shared endeavours.

India and the United States have taken a decisive step away from the past. The dawn of the new century has marked a new beginning in our relations.

Let us work to fulfill the promise and the hope of today.

Let us remove the shadow of hesitation that lies between us and our joint vision.

Let us use the strength of all that we have in common to build together a future that we wish for ourselves and for the world that we live in.

Thank you.

Joint India-U.S. Statement on the Occasion of the Official Visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee

September 15, 2000

PRIME Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton today reaffirmed the vision they outlined in March in New Delhi of a closer and qualitatively new relationship between India and the United States in the 21st century. They reiterated their conviction that closer cooperation and stronger partnership between the two countries will be a vital factor for shaping a future of peace, prosperity, democracy, pluralism and freedom for this world. They acknowledged that this vision draws strength from broad political support in both countries.

The two leaders agreed that the wide-ranging architecture of institutional dialogue between the two countries provides a broad-based framework to pursue the vision of a new relationship. They expressed satisfaction at the pace and purposefulness with which the two countries have initiated the consultations envisaged in the dialogue architecture.

In particular, the two leaders are gratified by their recent exchange of visits, and by the regular foreign

policy consultations at the ministerial and senior policy levels.

They expressed satisfaction at the role that the two countries played in the launch of the Community of Democracies.

In the economic arena, they reaffirmed their confidence that the three ministerial-level economic dialogues and the High-Level Coordinating Group will improve the bilateral trade environment, facilitate greater commercial cooperation, promote investment, and contribute to strengthening the global financial and trading systems.

They welcomed the progress of the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, and agreed that it would also examine linkages between terrorism and narcotics trafficking and other related issues. They noted the opening of a Legal Attaché office in New Delhi designed to facilitate cooperation in counter-terrorism and law enforcement.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction that the joint consultative group on clean energy and environment met in July and agreed to revitalize and expand energy cooperation, while discussing the full range of issues relating to environment and climate change.

They welcomed the establishment of the Science and Technology forum in July and agreed that the forum should revitalize the traditionally strong scientific cooperation between the two countries. In that connection, they noted the contribution of the two science and technology related roundtable meetings held in March and September.

They also welcomed the recent initiatives in the health sector, including the joint statements of June 2000, as examples of deepening collaboration in

See JOINT INDIA-U.S. STATEMENT, Page 6



Prime Minister Vajpayee speaking at the White House welcoming ceremony. (September 15, 2000; Photo: Government of India Photo Division)

Joint India-U.S. Statement

(Continued from page 5)

improving health care and combating AIDS and other major diseases of our time.

The two leaders agreed that India and the United States must build upon this new momentum in their relationship to further enhance mutual understanding and deepen cooperation across the full spectrum of political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological, social, and international issues.

During this visit, the two leaders had productive discussions across a wide range of bilateral, regional, and international developments. In the economic arena, they agree that India's continuing economic reforms, as well as the two countries' complementary strengths and resources, provide strong bases for expansion of economic ties between the two countries. The two leaders recognized the need to deepen cooperation on high-tech trade issues. They noted that the present regime on e-commerce would be rolled over until the next ministerial meeting of the WTO, and that the two countries would cooperate in building a wider international consensus on information technology. The two leaders pledged their joint commitment to bridge the digital divide, both within and between countries, so that the benefits of information technology may advance the economic and social development of all citizens, rich and poor.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction with their agreement on textiles. They also affirmed the need for expansion of bilateral civil aviation ties and agreed to work toward this goal. They recognized the contribution that biotechnology can make to a safe and nutritious food supply, in offering new options to farmers to address problems of pests and diseases, while contributing to environmental protection and enhancing global food security. The governments of the United States and India will explore ways of enhancing cooperation and information exchange, joint collaborative projects and training of scientists in agriculture biotechnology research. The ongoing vaccine research would be further strengthened also, making use of genomics and bioinformatics. The governments of both the United States and India support science-based regulatory activities.

They also noted significant progress on other important economic issues including mutual taxation and investment in the power and other sectors. In regard to double taxation issues, the competent authorities of both sides intend to soon negotiate an arrange-

ment under which collection or recovery of tax will generally be suspended on a reciprocal basis, during pendency of a mutual agreement proceeding. To ensure sustainable economic growth that will lift the lives of rich and poor alike, the two leaders committed support for efforts that will make capital markets more efficient, transparent, and accountable to attract the billions in private investment that is needed.

They recognize the need for appropriate technology for power generation, and the importance of greater South Asian regional cooperation and trade in energy, as well as the development and application of clean technologies that address our respective problems of urban and water pollution. The leaders noted with satisfaction the signings of several major commercial agreements, under which U.S. firms will contribute to the development of the power industry in India.

The United States and India intend to harness their cooperation in emerging scientific and economic sectors into a partnership for defining new ways of fighting hunger, disease, pollution, and other global challenges of our time. The two leaders pledged their strong commitment to address the global challenge of the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through the close involvement and cooperation between the governments and civil society in the two countries. They expressed support for the collaborative program for research in various areas, including HIV/AIDS vaccine development, through the Joint Working Groups of scientists envisaged by the Joint Statement of June 2000. They agreed to encourage the formation of a business council to combat HIV/AIDS with the active involvement and participation of business and industry to raise awareness in the industrial workplace.

The two leaders discussed international security. They recalled the long history of Indo-U.S. cooperation in UN peacekeeping operations, most recently in Sierra Leone. The two leaders agreed to broaden their cooperation in peacekeeping and other areas of UN activity, including in shaping the future international security system. The two leaders also discussed the evolving security environment in Asia, recalling their common desire to work for stability in Asia and beyond. They agreed that the Asian Security Dialogue that the two countries have initiated will strengthen mutual understanding.

The two countries reaffirmed their belief that ten-

Continued on next page

sions in South Asia can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia, and by peaceful means. India reiterated its commitment to enhancing cooperation, peace, and stability in the region. Both sides stressed the unacceptability of continued violence and bloodshed as a basis for solution of the problems of the region.

The United States and India seek to advance their dialogue on security and nonproliferation issues, building upon the joint statement signed during President Clinton's visit to India in March. They reiterated their respective commitments to forgo nuclear explosive tests. India reaffirmed that, subject to its supreme national interests, it will continue its voluntary moratorium until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) comes into effect. The United States reaffirmed its intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date. The Indian government will continue efforts to develop a broad political consensus on the issue of the Treaty, with the purpose of bringing these discussions to a successful conclusion. India also reconfirmed its commitment not to block entry into force of the Treaty. India expects that all other countries, as included in Article XIV of CTBT, will adhere to this Treaty without reservations. The United States and India reiterated their support for a global treaty to halt the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, and for the earliest possible start of Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty negotiations in Geneva. The United States noted its moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and supports a multilateral moratorium on such production pending conclusion of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. The United States and India commended the progress made so far on export controls, and pledged to continue to strengthen them. Both countries agreed to continue their dialogue on security and nonproliferation, including on defense posture, which is designed to further narrow differences on these important issues.

In combating international terrorism, the two leaders called on the international community to intensify its efforts, including at the current session of the United Nations. Noting that both India and the United States are targets of continuing terrorism, they expressed their determination to further reinforce bilateral cooperation in this area. They have agreed to hold another round of counter-terrorism consultations in New Delhi later this month, and to pursue work on a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

Finally, the two leaders also paid tribute to the contributions of the Indian-American community in providing a bridge of understanding between the two societies and in strengthening the ties of commerce and culture between the two countries. In this connection, they commended the progress of the initiative to set up a collaborative Global Institute for Science and Technology in India. The two leaders agreed to encourage people-to-people connections between the two nations, and to enlist the cooperation of all sections of their talented and diverse societies in support of that goal.



Prime Minister Vajpayee and U.S. President Clinton at the White House welcoming ceremony. (September 15, 2000; Photo: Rajan Devadas)

Dedication of Mahatma Gandhi Memorial

(Prime Minister Vajpayee dedicated the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial in the distinguished presence of President Clinton on September 16, 2000. The memorial, established by an Act of the U.S. Congress, is located on federal land opposite to the Embassy of India.)

Prime Minister's address after dedication:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am delighted to be with all of you this morning.

Today is, indeed, a memorable day for all of us. I have arrived here after unveiling a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in front of the Indian Embassy.

I am grateful to President Clinton for taking time out of his schedule to join me at the function. This extraordinary gesture, along with the glowing tributes he paid to the Mahatma in his opening remarks at the White House ceremony yesterday, have further endeared America and its President to our people.

With the unveiling of Gandhiji's statue in Washington, one of the greatest apostles of peace has, in a sense, arrived physically in the capital of the world's eldest democracy.

But the Mahatma's spirit has been with the people of America for the greater part of the last century.

Indeed, he was with Americans, not too far from here, 37 years ago. On that occasion, a quarter million Americans marched to Lincoln Memorial to hear Martin Luther King outline his dream of a truly emancipated America.

King's guiding light was Mahatma Gandhi. As he said: "The Christian doctrine of love, operating

through the Gandhian method of non-violence, was for me the most potent weapon available to the oppressed people in their struggle for freedom."

Gandhiji's unique method of passive resistance proved to be an enormously active force against colonial oppression. His use of non-cooperation, civil disobedience and non-violence as instruments in the

struggle for freedom touched the American people as much as it did people all over the world. America's own struggle for independence had an important influence on India's freedom movement. Gandhiji has acknowledged that the great American philosopher Thoreau was his teacher in "the science of civil disobedience."

Gandhiji's personality had a magnetic effect on many people in this country. All of us know about the incomparable homage paid to him by Albert Einstein.

But not so well known is the effect he had on ordinary Americans. For example, Samuel Evans Stokes, a wealthy American from Philadelphia, gave up everything to become a soldier in the Mahatma's army of Satyagrahis in India.

He even changed his name to 'Satyanand' Stokes and had the rare honour of being the only American to become a member of the All India Congress Committee.



Prime Minister Vajpayee dedicating the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial with President Clinton and Ambassador Naresh Chandra (September 16, 2000; Photo: Raj Sharma)

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Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton with the sculptor Gautam Pal and Ambassador Naresh Chandra (September 16, 2000; Photo: Raj Sharma)

His recent widely acclaimed biography, *American in Khadi*, shows how there has always been a natural affinity between India and America. Friends, what is it about Gandhiji that makes him a man not just of the past, but equally of the present and the future?

What is it about him that makes him not just an Indian, but a man who belonged to the whole humanity?

The answer to these questions is obvious: The universality of the man. And the immortality of his message.

What is more, Gandhiji lived his own message. As he himself famously put it, "My life is my message".

It is the message of truth and non-violence.

Of brotherhood of all human beings.

Of cooperation among nations.

Equally, it is the message of tolerance and respect for diversity, which are the basic tenets of democracy.

Gandhiji saw both these tenets as the art and science of mobilising the physical, economic and spiritual resources of all sections of the people in the service of the common good.

It is the proud privilege of both India and the United States that out two countries are models — one in the East and the other in the West — of democracy as well as unity in diversity.

We both cherish, preserve and promote universal human rights such as freedom of speech, political choice and religious belief.

These are universal values that form the foundation of more tolerant and compassionate societies, a more non-violent world free from tensions and fear.

They form the foundation of a world where the liberty of people living in open societies is not threatened by extremism and terrorism.

These are values enshrined in the American and Indian Constitutions and handed down to us by great men like Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. It is not a coincidence that all three of them fell to the bullets of assassins.

Inspired by the Mahatma, we believe that non-violence requires faith in God and faith in man. Hence, we remain hopeful of a world where the conscience of humanity will never allow forces of bigotry and violence to succeed. Gandhiji's statue here in the heart of Washington will be a symbol of the triumph of the human spirit against oppression, just as the Statue of Liberty in the New York has been the beacon of freedom, for the whole world.

Distinguished guests,

Today is the penultimate day of my visit to this great country. It has been a very satisfying and fruitful visit.

I thank President Clinton for the enormous personal commitment he has brought to bear on the success of the Indo-American dialogue.

Just as his visit to India earlier this year was a memorable one for him, my own visit to America now has been equally momentous.

See VAJPAYEE'S AFTER DEDICATION SPEECH, Page 10

Excerpts from U.S. news media on Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit

A "Tilt" towards India

Two years ago, India's nuclear tests provoked world-wide condemnation and retaliatory sanctions by the United States. Yet in recent months, culminating in Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to Washington last weekend, the United States has drawn closer to India diplomatically than at any time since the early 1960's. President Clinton has shaped a new foreign policy course in South Asia by embracing India and distancing the United States from Pakistan's military government. These steps have far-reaching ramifications for all of Asia, including China, as well as for the issue of nuclear proliferation. The shift is justified by India's growing importance.

Editorial, New York Times - September 20, 2000

At This Dinner, Harmony Is Served

India and America clinked glasses in their new whirlwind friendship at an elaborate and exotic state dinner at the White House last night as Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee profusely praised Bill and Hillary Clinton—and also Christopher Columbus, “who set sail for India but landed in America. I wonder where we would be if he had actually reached India.”

The line got a big laugh from the nearly 700 assorted political, business and entertainment glitterati lucky enough to snag one of the coveted seats in what was by far the largest—and possibly last—such event of the Clinton administration.

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Vajpayee's After Dedication Speech

(Continued from page 9)

It has taken a very short time — from March to September — for our two countries to come a long way.

At the same time, it seems that New Delhi and Washington are not a long way off from each other.

I describe this period as “Six Months That Cemented the Natural Alliance Between India and America”.

The Vision Document we signed in New Delhi has been translated into a specific forward movement in a number of areas in the Joint Statement adopted in Washington.

It reflects the synergy of our mutual interests.

We have laid a solid foundation for stronger and more broad-based economic cooperation between our two countries. I am confident that this foundation will support the attractive architecture of Indo-American relations in the coming years.

But going beyond the mutuality of economic opportunities, our two sides have talked candidly about several important issues that form the texture of our bilateral relations.

We have talked about security matters. We have talked about the situation in South Asia.

We have also talked about threat of terrorism to civilized world order.

Of course, differences are bound to be there between the two countries. But dialogue between democracies, in an atmosphere of candour and trust, never fails to dissolve some if not all differences.

And that is what has happened on account of the continuing dialogue at various levels between our two democracies.

From divergence, we have moved to a convergence of thinking and outlook on a broad range of issues.

I heartily thank all those who have contributed to the success of this dialogue.

I especially applaud the consistent efforts of the Indian-American community. Your patience and hard work are paying off. Keep it up.

I thank all of you for the opportunity of sharing my thoughts with you.

Thank you.”

Vajpayee said in his official toast, “I’m grateful to Mrs. Clinton for taking time from her campaign” to attend the dinner, a line that brought sustained applause—and an apparently startled and pleased reaction from Mrs. Clinton.

The evening was an Indian summer indeed, climaxing—in a sense—with these dramatic words of Clinton’s toast: “Together,” he said, “India and America can change the world.”

*Rowan Philp and Phil McCombs
Washington Post – September 18, 2000*

Gandhi Likeness Unveiled by Vajpayee and Clinton

Washington’s newest statue, a larger-than-life figure of Mahatma Gandhi, was officially dedicated yesterday by President Clinton and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in a small park across from the Indian Embassy on Massachusetts Avenue NW.

“It’s very important for the United States to make a memorial to Gandhi,” Clinton said after the dedication. “Gandhi provided the inspiration to Martin Luther King, which spread to the civil rights movement and brought an end to the business of slavery and brought integrity to the democratic ideal.”

The statue, just under nine feet tall, stands on a 16-ton block of rough-hewn granite from India. It shows a lean, bespectacled Gandhi in full stride, pushing forward against a walking stick in a scene recalling his 1930 march to the sea to protest an increased salt tax by the British.

The robed, sandaled figure faces north, toward the British Embassy about a mile away. The inscription below it is spare: “My Life Is My Message.”

The president said that last week’s visit by the prime minister enhanced the relationship between their countries and that he hopes “this chain in partnership goes beyond my service into a whole new era of U.S.-India relations.” No other country “has been more influenced by India than the United States,” said Clinton, who learned about Gandhi at 17 or 18 through King’s writings about nonviolent resistance.

*Bill Broadway
Washington Post – September 17, 2000*

Indian Leader Urges Close U.S. Ties

In a further sign of strengthening U.S.-India relations, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee appeared before a joint session of Congress yesterday to urge closer economic and political ties that he said would help erase the “shadow of hesitation” that still persists between the two countries.

Vajpayee found his audience in a receptive mood. Despite concerns about proliferation, Democrats and Republicans alike have welcomed the Clinton administration’s efforts to forge closer relations with India, the world’s most populous democracy and a trading partner of vast and largely untapped potential. Their enthusiasm reflects, in part, the growing political and economic clout of Indian Americans, one of the nation’s most prosperous immigrant groups and a driving force in its booming computer and software industries.

*John Lancaster
Washington Post – September 15, 2000*

Vajpayee visit marks changing relationship between U.S., India

“We are the oldest democracy. They are the world’s biggest democracy,” said White House national security spokesman P.J. Crowley. “There is an opportunity here to have a qualitatively new relationship with India.”

As if to underscore that point, Vajpayee’s visit will also showcase the growing and increasingly prosperous community of Indian-Americans, who include Hotmail founder Sabeer Bhatia and Sun Microsystems co-founder Vinod Kholsa. Vajpayee is scheduled to attend a private reception of Indian-Americans Saturday night, and he’ll presumably be talking to the dozens of Internet entrepreneurs in the crowd about investing in his country.

“You now have 2.2 million Indian-Americans in the United States, and you can imagine the number of their relations and friends” who come here on visits from India, said Promodh Malhotra, who planned to attend Saturday’s event and who is head of Washington-based Global Finance Associates Inc., a small international investment bank.

*Jay Hancock
Baltimore Sun – September 14, 2000*

India's Experience Has Taught That Peace Lies in Strength

By Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India

International Herald Tribune – September 21, 2000

MY RECENT visit to the United States has consolidated relations between the world's two largest democracies. The joint initiatives and understandings that we reached represent a major step forward. India and the United States can be natural allies in the 21st century. Events and circumstances over the last two years have confirmed this.

We are both motivated by shared values that give freedom, dignity, democracy and tolerance the highest priority. Open societies oppose international terrorism which, in the cloak of religious extremism, is eating away at the foundation of democratic nations.

The integrity of nation-states as building blocks of a stable international order is threatened by newly-promoted concepts of interventionism that add to insecurity and social chaos. The principle of social equity that must underline economic prosperity and globalisation is often ignored. Barriers to mutually enriching science and technology must be removed to promote creativity and knowledge to the full.

As the two biggest open societies, India and the United States must address these pressing concerns. Agreement and common action would be ideal; but disagreement on some issues should not constitute division. We have agreed that, as our dialogue proceeds, we will listen with respect to each other and seek to accommodate our mutual concerns.

As natural allies, it is important that India and the United States remain engaged. Contacts should be so frequent that they become routine. President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March took place after a gap of 22 years. In the fast-changing world in which we live, even 22 months is an unacceptable interruption.

India is growing at an annual rate of more than 6 per cent; we aim to reach 9 per cent and beyond. Such growth results from unshackling the energy and enterprise of the Indian people. India is a vast market as well as an expanding platform for manufacture and services. Its growth has generated an insatiable thirst for green energy, efficient communications and modern infrastructure. India is open for business and partnership.

India is in the vanguard of the knowledge revolution. Information technology and knowledge-intensive industries, including biotechnology, entertainment, communications and services, have taken root. They are now moving beyond India to network at a global level. Traditional industry and science also continue to flourish. India today is equally adept in both "brick" and "click" economies.

No armies from India have stepped out to conquer and dominate others. We want a world free of weapons of mass destruction. But security in the real world must be based on the principle of equal security for all. Without a non-discriminatory world order, our experience has taught us that peace lies in strength. The security of one billion Indians is central to Asia's security and stability. Yet peace and strength are not incompatible. As a nuclear weapon state, our approach is guided by a sense of responsibility and transparency that we urge others to adopt.

A unilateral moratorium on explosive tests, a policy of "no first use," a tight export control regime and a willingness to engage with other countries on all aspects of international security are the principles of India's nuclear policy.



Arrival ceremony at the Blair House. Prime Minister Vajpayee, Chief of Protocol, Ambassador Mary French and India's Ambassador Naresh Chandra. (September 13, 2000; Photo: Rajan Devadas)

Prime Minister Vajpayee addressing a luncheon hosted in his honor by the U.S. Vice President Al Gore at the State Department. (September 15, 2000; Government of India Photo Division)



Prime Minister Vajpayee arriving for the state dinner hosted in his honor by President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton (September 17, 2000; Photo: Rajan Devadas)



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