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USINPAC and the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal: Lasting Influence or One Shot Victory?

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USINPAC and the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal: Lasting Influence or One Shot Victory?

Abstract

While a significant amount of scholarly literature has been written on whether ethnic lobby influence has a positive or negative impact on U.S. foreign policy, what has not been well explored is the way these ethnic lobbies are organized to influence policy, whether the organizational structure successfully advances their objectives, and the potential for future successful ethnic lobby influence through changing administrations. To achieve these objectives, this investigation develops a case study around Indian-American lobbying efforts in the United States, particularly that of the U.S.-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC). It analyzes what has been deemed as USINPAC's recent success in influencing Congress with regard to passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal and uses the Deal as a starting point to examine how such a success occurred and postulate whether this success foreshadows continuing influence in the future. It is clear that, due to its organizational strength, USINPAC did indeed play a role in influencing passage of the Deal and has the capacity to influence U.S. congressional policy in the future. However due to the ambiguities inherent in the Deal, it will be up to the Obama administration to follow through on the commitments of the Deal. Thus, what lies ahead for this lobby will be, in large part, contingent upon future administrations' decisions about how they will treat the U.S.-India partnership.

Keywords

U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, U.S.-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC), Indian-American, ethnic lobby, organizational strength, Social Sciences, Political Science, Francine R. Frankel, Frankel, Francine R.

Disciplines

Political Science

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Abstract

While a significant amount of scholarly literature has been written on whether ethnic lobby influence has a positive or negative impact on U.S. foreign policy, what has not been well explored is the way these ethnic lobbies are organized to influence policy, whether the organizational structure successfully advances their objectives, and the potential for future successful ethnic lobby influence through changing administrations. To achieve these objectives, this investigation develops a case study around Indian-American lobbying efforts in the United States, particularly that of the U.S.-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC). It analyzes what has been deemed as USINPAC's recent success in influencing Congress with regard to passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal and uses the Deal as a starting point to examine how such a success occurred and postulate whether this success foreshadows continuing influence in the future. It is clear that, due to its organizational strength, USINPAC did indeed play a role in influencing passage of the Deal and has the capacity to influence U.S. congressional policy in the future. However due to the ambiguities inherent in the Deal, it will be up to the Obama administration to follow through on the commitments of the Deal. Thus, what lies ahead for this lobby will be, in large part, contingent upon future administrations' decisions about how they will treat the U.S.-India partnership.

INTRODUCTION

The majority of existing scholarly literature on ethnic lobbies and American foreign policy focuses on whether ethnic lobby influence has a positive or negative effect on U.S. foreign policy. While some argue that “the negative consequence of ethnic involvement may well outweigh the undoubted benefits [such] activism at times confers on America in world affairs,”¹ others defend ethnic lobbies: “ethnic lobbies have passionate critics because of the lurking suspicion that they put the interests of their ancestral homeland before those of the United States.”² This topic has been debated time and again, producing two divergent camps unlikely to agree in the near future. However, what has not been well explored is the way these ethnic lobbies are organized to influence policy, whether the organizational structure successfully advances their objectives, and the potential for future successful ethnic lobby influence through changing administrations. When existing literature has aimed to answer these questions, it has generally focused on communities such as Jewish and Cuban Americans. This analysis aims not only to examine some of these unexplored questions, but also to focus on a little-discussed ethnic group, Indian-Americans.

To achieve these objectives, this investigation develops a case study around Indian-American lobbying efforts in the United States. It analyzes what has been deemed a recent success in influencing Congress with regard to passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal and uses the Deal as a starting point to examine how such a success occurred and postulate whether this success foreshadows continuing influence in the future.

¹ Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) 1-2.

² James M. Lindsay “Getting Uncle Sam’s Ear: Will Ethnic Lobbies Cramp America’s Foreign Policy Style?” *Brookings Review* 12 Dec. 2002: 40.

CHAPTER 1—Coming into Being: Maturation of India-American Mobilization and Inception of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal

I. BACKGROUND: INDIAN POPULATION EXPANSION IN THE UNITED STATES

In order for an ethnic population to mobilize in favor of a cause, it is crucial that this population be well-established in its country of residence. For Indian-Americans, this has only recently been the case. It was not until the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act that the Indian population in the United States began to expand. However, once this population did begin to grow, the background of those individuals who emigrated and their choice of state in which to settle paved the way for the Indian-American political mobilization that would arise as this ethnic population began to emerge.

Coming to America: Setting the Stage for Political Mobilization

The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act represented a watershed moment for all ethnic populations in the United States, but especially for Indian-Americans. The Act abolished the national-origin quotas that had been in place since 1924, thereby permitting the entry of many more immigrants. However, the act also specified a preference for professionals and scientists. This gave Indians several advantages in immigrating to the United States. From 1947-1964, Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Prime Minister, had developed industrializing policies, many of which were geared toward building world-class institutions of higher education. These policies resulted in an educated Indian population with a high proportion of professionals who were permitted to emigrate. Furthermore, due to the British colonial occupation of India, many of these professionals spoke excellent English, giving them an additional advantage over other ethnic groups that immigrated to the United States.

Due to these emigration advantages, the Indian population in the United States expanded rapidly. Between 1960 and 1980, it grew from under 9,000 to over 387,000. By 1990 the Indian population had reached 815,000 and by 2000 it approached 1.7 million.³ While the average growth rate for the United States was only 7.6 per cent from 1990 to 2000, the overall growth rate for Indians was 105.87 per cent.⁴ Today, there are over 2.5 million Indian-Americans in the United States and the population continues to increase rapidly. In fact, emigration from India is currently at its highest point.⁵

It remains the case that Indians emigrating today are still those who are highly educated. In his book *The World is Flat*, Thomas Friedman describes such a phenomenon as the “brain drain.”⁶ Because the United States has traditionally been ripe with opportunity, it has been advantageous for well-educated Indians to come to America to secure better jobs and provide themselves with greater opportunity.* This highly educated community gives Indian-Americans an advantage over other ethnic groups in mobilizing politically because they are viewed in America as an intelligent and credible population.

Indians in the United States also tend to be concentrated in certain states and regions. The U.S. states with the largest Indian-American populations include: California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, and Illinois. Furthermore, the cities with the highest concentration of Indian-Americans include: New York City, Chicago,

*Note: Due to the economic crisis in the United States, Indian-Americans are currently less likely to come to the U.S. and many Indian-Americans are returning to India.

³Sandhya Shukla, *India Abroad: Diasporic Cultures of Postwar America and England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003) 269.

⁴ “S0201. Selected Population Profile in the United States: 2005. Asian Indian alone or in any combination. American Community Survey.” *American FactFinder*. 2005. Bureau of Census. Web. 10 November 2008.

⁵ United States. Homeland Security: Office of Immigration. *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: Fiscal Years 1820 to 2006*. Washington: GPO, 2006.

⁶ Thomas Friedman, *The World is Flat* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005) 128.

Washington-Baltimore, Philadelphia, Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Detroit, Boston, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and the Bay Area. While Indians initially settled on the West Coast, the concentration of Indian-Americans today is much higher in those cities not on the West Coast. This has been crucial in their ability to influence policy as they can exert influence on congressmen across a wide arena whose districts include a significant proportion of Indian-Americans.

The combination of a rapidly expanding population, its highly educated nature, and the geographic spread of this ethnic group in the United States has eased the process of breaking into the political sphere with the purpose of influencing policy. However, the ways in which Indian-Americans initially mobilized politically proved to be less effective than desired.

II. FROM FRAGMENTATION TO CONSOLIDATION: INDIAN-AMERICAN MOBILIZATION

As Indians began immigrating to the United States, they were most concerned with settling into the new culture, adjusting to their new jobs and making a home for their families. However, after the initial period of adjustment, many Indians began to feel that their interests were not being represented in the policies pursued by the United States government. For this reason, Indian-Americans began to mobilize. They rallied behind two different groups, each trying to influence policy in a unique way. The first group was a religious identity group aiming to promote a Hindu vision. The second group was a pan-ethnic identity group wanting to expound a South Asian vision. The pan-ethnic group reached a larger percentage of the Indian population because it included

occupational groups and Indian professional associations.⁷ Additionally, both the South Asian and Hindu groups generally include large numbers of Indians from a Hindu background, and therefore, it is not religious affiliation that distinguishes the two groups. Instead, the two groups derive their differences from diverse conceptions of ‘Indianness’—a secular, multi-religious, and multi-cultural vision of India versus a Hindu centric one.⁸

Appropriate Ways to Mobilize

It is probable that Indian-Americans formed both Hindu and South Asian groups because they felt these were acceptable constructs under which to garner support for their respective ethnic group’s ideas and concerns. Rallying behind either a religion or a pan-ethnic vision is viewed as a respectable approach to promoting an agenda for the betterment of one’s ethnic population while still showing loyalty to one’s country of residence, in this case the United States.⁹ For this reason, it is not surprising that Indian-Americans rallied around either a religious or a pan-ethnic identity to promote their agenda.

Hindu Mobilization

Indian-Americans who associated with the Hindu identity group began to mobilize politically in the 1990s. This identity group generally believes in a conception of India as a Hindu country under attack from and therefore hostile to Muslims, as well as, to a lesser degree, Christians and secularists.¹⁰ This conception of India manifested itself in the Hindutva movement, a movement advocating Hindu nationalism. In India,

⁷ Prema Kurien, “Who Speaks for Indian American? Religion, Ethnicity, and Political Formation,” *American Quarterly* 3 Sept. 2007: 763.

⁸ Prema Kurien, “To be or not to be South Asian: Contemporary Indian American Politics,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 3 Oct. 2003: 263.

⁹ Kurien (2003) 276.

¹⁰ Kurien (2007) 762.

Hindu nationalism emerged as a reaction to Western colonialism. Proponents of this movement believe that invasions by the Muslims, and then the British diluted the Hindu culture and for this reason, it must restore the idea of India as a Hindu polity by rejecting religions such as Christianity and Islam.¹¹ This movement gained momentum among Indian-Americans in the 1990s when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in India at this time. The central plank of the BJP platform in the 1980s was Hindu nationalism and therefore, when the BJP party assumed power, this movement caught fire among those Indian-Americans in the United States who supported the Hindu identity. There are two other possible reasons for the rise in support for the Hindutva movement in the U.S. The first is the use of the internet and the second is the perceived need for resources and recognition. The internet provided a way for Indians to quickly gain supporters and educate people about the Hindutva movement.¹² Additionally, as Indians in the U.S. began to feel a greater need to pursue an agenda benefiting their community, they began to rally around Hindu nationalism. It has been argued that this movement has become even more successful in the United States than in India because the religious minority feels it necessary to espouse its beliefs in order to keep its identity alive.¹³

Those Indian-Americans who associate with the Hindu identity group aim to influence policy that is directly linked to Hinduism. They want to bring Hinduism to the attention of policy makers and draw attention to the difference between Hinduism and Islam. In keeping with the distinction between Hinduism and Islam, they also try to show that India has nothing in common with Pakistan and Bangladesh, reinforcing the idea of India as essentially a Hindu polity. A few of the groups that promote this Hindu vision

¹¹ Kurien (2003) 267.

¹² Kurien (2007) 763.

¹³ Kurien (2003) 266.

include the World Hindu Council of America (VHPA) and the Hindu American Foundation (HAF). VHPA's website boasts a mission of promoting unity among Hindus, providing a forum for Hindu interests, and raising awareness about Hinduism through publications and media.¹⁴ Similarly, the HAF's website states its mission as "interacting with and educating leaders in public policy, academia, media, and the public at large about Hinduism and global issues concerning Hindus..."¹⁵ Groups such as these have been able successfully to lobby for a Hindu priest to open a session of Congress for the first time in September 2000 and the recognition by President Bill Clinton of the Diwali holiday in October 2000. While significant to these Hindu identity groups, these otherwise marginal successes reflect the groups' inability to influence American policy on broader national issues.

South Asian Mobilization

In contrast to the Hindu vision, those Indian-Americans who identify with a South Asian vision believe in a secular, multireligious and multicultural conception of India. They aim to demonstrate the importance of harmonious relationships between groups and countries in the Indian subcontinent.¹⁶ This movement began on college campuses in the 1980s when Indian-Americans began to realize they had both a common heritage and a common concern, challenging the exclusion of the South Asian voice. This group is interested in influencing policy by creating a progressive coalition against religious bigotry as well as a front against racial profiling in the United States. A few of the organizations that have mobilized around a South Asian ideology are the Subcontinental

¹⁴ VHP of America-World Hindu Council of America. Mission Statement; Accessed: Jan 2009.
<<http://www.vhp-america.org/whatvhp/mission.htm>>

¹⁵ HAF-Hindu American Foundation. Mission Statement; Accessed: Jan. 2009.
<<http://www.hinduamericanfoundation.org/about.htm>>

¹⁶ Kurien (2007) 763.

Institute, the Friends of South Asia (FOSA), as well as religious organizations such as the Indian-Muslim Americans and Indian-Christian Americans. The Subcontinental Institute produces a journal called *The Subcontinental* which is geared toward both policy-makers as well as politically active South Asians. It also aims to provide a forum for the development of South Asian American political identity.¹⁷ FOSA expounds a mission of achieving a peaceful, prosperous, and hate-free South Asia by bringing together people with roots in various parts of South Asia.¹⁸ As with Indian-Americans who mobilize in favor of a Hindu vision, those Indian-Americans who mobilize to effect policy through a South Asian vision have had minor successes in influencing policy, yet have not achieved success on broader foreign policy issues of interest to them.

Problems with Mobilization

The most apparent problem with Indian-American mobilization in the United States thus far has been the fragmented way in which this ethnic group aims to influence policy. While the Hindu identity group is concerned with lobbying for policies that promote Hinduism, the South Asian group is interested in promoting policies that preserve the equal treatment of all Indian people. Each of these groups has a different conception of “Indianness.”¹⁹ Furthermore, not only are Indian-Americans fragmented between the Hindu and the South Asian visions, but they are also fragmented within these ideological spheres. There are several different Hindu and South Asian groups, each trying to promote its agenda and influence policy in what it believes to be the best way possible. This becomes problematic when trying to impact U.S. policy because too many

¹⁷ The Subcontinental. Mission Statement; Accessed: Jan 2009.
<<http://www.thesubcontinental.org/public/institute.jsp>>

¹⁸ FOSA-Friends of South India. Mission Statement; Accessed: Jan 2009.
<<http://www.friendsofsouthasia.org/about/>>

¹⁹ Kurien (2007) 762.

voices simply detract from the political message a particular group is trying to promote. While it has been argued that it is possible for multiple ethnic lobby groups within a particular ethnic population to reinforce, rather than counter, each other, this does not seem to be the case with the Indian-American population. Ethnic groups, such as Armenian-Americans, that have achieved such unity among their various ethnic lobbies tend to have similar policy objectives.²⁰ Unfortunately, due to differing agendas and conceptions of how to influence policy, the Hindu and South Asian identity groups' efforts have not reinforced each other's desired policy aims.

New Mobilization: Formation of USINPAC (2002)

The founding of the US-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) in 2002 marked a new age for Indian-American political mobilization. Breaking from the former Hindu and South Asian models, founder Sanjay Puri, also president of the US-India Business Alliance (USIBA), understood that to influence Congress on broader, more significant issues, Indian-Americans needed to rid their community of its fragmentation and consolidate its voice. USINPAC was founded with a mission “to impact policy on issues of concern to the Indian-American community in the United States.”²¹ Unlike the Hindu or South Asian mobilization groups, USINPAC aims to influence policy on issues from immigration and anti-hate crime measures to US-India relations and entrepreneurship and business. Its principle strategic objective is “to consolidate individual contributions by actively engaging with every politically active Indian-American organization and individual via an effective platform to leverage the combined

²⁰ Heather S. Gregg, “Divided They Conquer: The Success of Armenian Ethnic Lobbies in the U.S.,” Rosemary Rogers Working Paper Series, No. 13 (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002) 10.

²¹ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Mission Statement; Accessed: Oct. 2008. <www.usinpac.com/mission_objective.asp>

strength of contributor and community concerns.”²² This lobby has tried to bridge the differences between the fragmented groups within the Indian-American community by reaching out to every group and addressing the concerns most important to its members. It is the “most active and least fractionalized” of the Indian-American lobbying organizations.²³ By consolidating the Indian-American voice into one overarching platform, USINPAC has tried to influence U.S. foreign policy on a grander scale. Additionally, this lobby has tried to garner bipartisan support in Congress, again demonstrating that USINPAC is truly focused on influencing those issues that are in keeping with its mission.

USINPAC has supported policies that are problematic for both the Hindu groups and the South Asian groups. It does not favor one identity group or the other, but attempts to transcend the boundaries these groups created. For example, USINPAC supported Bobby Jindal, an ethnic Indian, in his race for the governorship of Louisiana. This upset the Hindu mobilization groups because Jindal is a Christian. USINPAC believes it is important for Indian-Americans to be represented in political offices and for this reason, Jindal’s candidacy was not about his religion, but about his ability to represent the Indian-American community. Additionally, the Hindu groups were displeased when USINPAC did not speak to the Hindu perspective after the 2002 Gujarat riots. These communal riots between Hindus and Muslims were portrayed by the media as state sponsored attacks by Hindu nationalists that drove Muslims from their homes to relief camps. However, many Hindus claim that they were retaliating against a Muslim mob attack that bullied 57 young Hindu volunteers traveling on the Sabarmati Express

²² USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Mission Statement.

²³ Jason A. Kirk, “Indian-Americans and the U.S.-India Nuclear Agreement: Consolidation of an Ethnic Lobby?,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* July 2008: 291.

from Ayodhya—the disputed site of the Ram Janmabhoomi temple—when it stopped at Godhra, Gujarat.

On the other hand, the fact that USINPAC has alliances with Zionist organizations is unacceptable to the South Asian groups because these Zionist groups are often opposed by Muslim organizations. However, USINPAC has, in large part, patterned its organizational model on the Jewish lobby, so allying with these groups has been an important step in consolidating USINPAC’s success. South Asian groups were also outraged by the fact that USINPAC did not stand up against the Patriot Act that permits the deportation of immigrants suspected of terrorism and, in a charged racial environment, could potentially affect Indian-Americans.

Initial Indian-American political mobilization consisted of a split between those with a Hindu vision and others with a South Asian vision. However, neither of these groups was particularly successful because of ideological and internal fragmentation. With the creation of USINPAC in 2002, Sanjay Puri aimed to bridge such divisions. Supporting neither a strictly Hindu nor South Asian vision, USINPAC aims to promote an agenda touching on many issues that affect the Indian-American community. This lobby was formed to “create a ‘political brand’ that would represent Indian-Americans in Washington...and seems to be gaining the respect and admiration of the community.”²⁴ While this newfound respect from the Indian-American community has helped the lobby to consolidate its vision and begin to influence policy at the national level, the success of this lobby could not have occurred without the recent change in U.S.-India relations.

²⁴ Kurien (2007) 778.

III. THE PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE: WARMING OF UNITED STATES-INDIA RELATIONS

Relations between the United States and India have been consistently rocky. From an estranged Cold War relationship to the recent development of a “strategic partnership,” the change in U.S.-India relations has been one of ups and downs and continues to be unsettled due to changing administrations in both countries. For this reason, the recent transformation in relations has been described as “one of the most significant developments in American foreign policy in the past decade.”²⁵

Cold War Politics

The Cold War years marked tense relations between the United States and India. Constant backstabbing throughout this period has made it difficult for these two countries to cooperate as they are each suspicious of the others’ intentions. The tense relations between the United States and India began with the partition of British India and Indian independence in 1947 when the India-Pakistan rivalry was born. This rivalry became exacerbated with India’s decision to pursue a policy of a non-alignment. Because this policy precluded an alignment with the United States and consequently lead to a warmer relationship between India and the Soviet Union, the United States solicited help from Pakistan, deepening tensions between India and the United States. The 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistani wars again furthered the rift between India and the U.S. During the 1971 war, the United States supported Pakistan whose government acted as an intermediary in the U.S. opening to China, while the Soviet Union and India signed the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty during this same period. The policies pursued by the United States during the Cold War alienated India and India’s friendly relations with the Soviet Union

²⁵ Kirk 275.

similarly made the United States wary of India's intentions. The legacy of these suspicions has complicated efforts after the Cold War by the two countries to cooperate on issues of national importance.

The Clinton Era: Warming Begins with Mixed Signals

The Clinton presidency ushered in the possibility of a new relationship with India. With the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, India's primary trading partner at the time, India needed to diversify its options internationally. For this reason, Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited the United States in 1994, marking the beginning of improved relations between India and the U.S. Rao and President Clinton discussed a wide range of issues from human rights to nuclear nonproliferation, but the talks centered on economic cooperation.²⁶ Although this marked initial cooperation between India and the U.S., India's nuclear tests created further tensions.

In May 1998, both India and Pakistan conducted nuclear weapons tests. India felt this was necessary due to threats represented by China's nuclear capability, the ongoing border dispute with China, and Pakistan's 1987 announcement that it had succeeded in making a nuclear bomb. India felt continually vulnerable due to the ongoing border dispute which had erupted into a border war in 1962 after the Chinese pushed south of the McMahon Line. What India felt as necessary nuclear tests further escalated tensions between the United States and India, thereby prompting the U.S. to invoke sanctions against India and work for a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). However, these sanctions had modest effects on India's economy which was largely insulated from external

²⁶ U.S. Congressional Research Service. India-U.S. Relations (IB93097; Nov. 4, 2004), by K. Alan Kronstadt. Text in: LexisNexis® Congressional Research Digital Collection; Accessed: Jan. 2009. <<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/37996.pdf>>

influence. Consequently, in the months following the implementation of these sanctions, several legislative measures lifted many of the initial restrictions.²⁷

The next step in improved U.S.-India relations began in the latter months of the Clinton administration. President Clinton spent several days in India in March 2000 discussing topics such as economic ties, regional stability, nuclear proliferation, and counterterrorism. Later that year Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited the United States and signed a joint agreement with President Clinton that outlined cooperation on arms control and terrorism.²⁸

Watershed Moment: September 11, 2001

While the relationship between the United States and India had begun to take on new meaning at the end of the Clinton administration, the events of September 11, 2001 spurred an increasingly rapid change in the relations between the two countries. The need for aid during the September 11th crisis brought new meaning to India's willingness to help. Although most sanctions that had been put in place following the 1998 nuclear tests had been removed in 2000, any remaining sanctions were lifted in October 2001.²⁹ This crisis also accentuated the policy adopted during the Clinton Administration to delink India and Pakistan. During the Cold War period, there had been a tendency in U.S. policy to treat these two countries on parity and consider them relevant only within the South Asian region. As Condoleezza Rice once stated: "there is a strong tendency conceptually [in the US] to connect India with Pakistan and to think only of Kashmir or

²⁷ U.S. Congressional Research Service. 4 Nov. 2004.

²⁸ U.S. Congressional Research Service. 4 Nov. 2004.

²⁹ Jane Perlez, "U.S. Ready to End Sanction on India to Build an Alliance," *New York Times* 27 Aug. 2001; Accessed: Jan. 2009: <http://www.indianembassy.org/US_Media/2001/aug/U_S_%20Ready%20to%20End%20Sanctions%20on%20India%20to%20Build%20an%20Alliance.htm>

the nuclear competition between the two states.”³⁰ Separating policies toward these two countries marked a huge step in the changing U.S. approach toward India. The September 11th crisis was a defining moment that solidified what had been an already emerging trend—strategic cooperation between two countries that had been wary of the other due to past inconsistencies.

The Bush Era: Consolidation of a Partnership

The relationship between the U.S. and India continued to warm during the administration of George W. Bush. After the Asian tsunami of December 2004, the United States and India worked closely to help with rescue operations and reconstruction efforts. Similarly, after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, India donated five million dollars to the American Red Cross and sent several plane loads of supplies to the area.³¹ While these humanitarian efforts were significant, the transformation of the relationship between the United States and India began in earnest in July 2005, culminating in the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal in 2008.

A joint statement aiming to “lift the U.S. moratorium on nuclear trade with India, provide U.S. assistance to India’s civilian nuclear energy program, and expand U.S.-Indian cooperation in energy and satellite technology”³² was first announced on July 18, 2005 after Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the United States. President Bush subsequently visited India in November 2006 to further discussions about the Nuclear Deal. On December 18, 2006, President Bush signed into law the Hyde Act (H.R. 5682). This Act amended the US Atomic Energy Act of 1954, thereby providing

³⁰ Rice, Condoleezza, “Campaign 2000: Promoting National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs* Jan/Feb 2000: 56.

³¹ “Asian Nations offer US Assistance,” *BBC News Online* 5 September 2005; Accessed: Jan. 2009. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4215820.stm>

³² Esther Pan and Jayshree Bajoria, “The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal,” *Council on Foreign Relations* 2 Oct. 2008; Accessed: Oct. 2008. <<http://www.cfr.org/publication/9663/>>

India with the ability to purchase nuclear fuel and reactors from the U.S. and reversing a 30 year moratorium on such transfers.³³ Then, on July 27, 2007, the United States and India completed negotiations for the operative 123 article of the Hyde Act, Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of the United States of American and the Government of India Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. The 123 Agreement called for each country to “cooperate extensively in the *full* development and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as a means of achieving energy security, on a stable, reliable and predictable basis.”³⁴ At the core of the Agreement was India’s Separation Plan to identify 14 civilian nuclear reactors to be placed under International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) safeguards, while designating, at its own discretion, reactors and other research facilities for the military program outside the IAEA safeguards regime. As Indian Prime Minister Singh noted, “New Delhi retains the sole right to determine such reactors as civilian...this means that India will not be constrained in any way in building future nuclear facilities, whether civilian or military, as per our national requirements.”³⁵ The Separation Plan had to be “credible in the U.S. from the perspective of [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treat] (NPT) obligations not to ‘assist, encourage, or induce’ any non-nuclear weapon state to acquire nuclear weapons. It had to be defensible in India from the perspective of protecting the military program by asserting New Delhi’s sovereign right to designate which of its reactors will be placed under safeguards, identifying only civilian nuclear facilities of ‘no national security

³³ United States, Cong. House. *Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006*. 109th Cong. 2nd sess. H.R. 5682. Washington: GPO, 2006; Accessed: Mar 2009.

<http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&docid=f:h5682enr.txt.pdf>

³⁴ Agreement for the Cooperation between the Government of the United States and the Government of India Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (123 Agreement); Accessed: Mar 2009. <<http://meaindia.nic.in/pressrelease/2007/08/03pr01.pdf>>

³⁵ Esther and Bajoria 2 Oct. 2008.

significance.”³⁶ To this end, the United States agreed to provide fuel for India’s civilian reactors and India agreed to reprocess U.S. origin fuel in a special facility under IAEA safeguards.

A plan detailing specifics regarding the safeguards was then laid out under an India-specific Safeguards Agreement between India and the IAEA. On August 18, 2008, the IAEA Board of Governors, with U.S. support, approved such an agreement which was signed by India on February 2, 2009.³⁷ This Agreement provides for inspections of nuclear installations that India identified as “civilian” in its Separation Plan. Due to the tireless work of President Bush, India was also subsequently granted an exemption to access the international market for civilian nuclear trade by the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) on September 6, 2008.³⁸ This waiver makes India the only country that is permitted to be a non-signatory of the NPT while still conducting nuclear commerce with other countries. After nearly three years of negotiation, the final version of the Deal (H.R. 7081) was signed into law on October 8, 2008.* While the Deal materialized as the result of a presidential initiative, it was by no means a foregone conclusion as the conditionalities in the final language indicate that opposition from nonproliferation advocates persisted until the end.

³⁶ Francine R. Frankel, “Emerging Equations,” *India and Global Affairs* Jan.-Mar. 2009: 44.

³⁷ IAEA-International Atomic Energy Agency, “India Safeguards Agreement Signed,” 2 Feb. 2009; Accessed: Mar 2009. <<http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/News/2009/indiaagreement.html>>

³⁸ USIBC-US-India Business Council, “Nuclear Suppliers Group Grants India Historic Waiver: Focus Now Shifts to U.S. Congress for Final Approval,” 6 Sept. 2008; Accessed: Mar. 2009. <www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/enpyckoxd2zuuasci4333z4ga34iccgrqk5sx5kthiyixoom2rejqpdd2spjuxxkpuqwa4fbizjx6b53jiy4xh53zpd/2008.09.06NuclearSuppliersGroupGrantsIndiaHistoricWaiver.pdf>

* See section IV for details on the final version of H.R. 7081.

IV. THE US-INDIA NUCLEAR DEAL

The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, a controversial agreement aimed at the facilitation of nuclear cooperation between the United States and India, marks a pinnacle in the development of U.S.-India relations as well as a new perspective on nonproliferation standards. The Deal has significant meaning for both countries and both India and the United States, for different reasons, were committed to its approval.

Details of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal

The United States-India Nuclear Cooperation Approval and Nonproliferation Enhancement Act was introduced on September 25, 2008. It was passed in the House as H.R. 7081 on September 27, 2008 with 298 votes or 69% approval. This was a bipartisan effort as 120 Democrats and 178 Republicans voted aye. It was subsequently passed in the Senate as S. 3548 on October 1, 2008 with 85 aye votes or an 86% approval rate. Again, this was a bipartisan effort as 49 Republicans and 36 Democrats voted aye. The Act became law with the signature of President George W. Bush on October 8, 2008.³⁹

As previously noted, from the inception of the 2005 joint statement to the final form of H.R. 7081, the Deal underwent several significant changes. The original intention of the Deal, to provide *full* nuclear cooperation between India and the United States, has been pared down due to nonproliferation concerns. “Specifically, the U.S. commitment in the 123 Agreement for providing full access to fuel for civil nuclear reactors offered for IAEA safeguards ‘in perpetuity,’ is treated as a ‘political’

³⁹ United States. Cong. House. *United States-India Nuclear Cooperation Approval and Nonproliferation Enhancement Act*. 110th Cong., 2nd sess. H.R. 7081. Washington: GPO, 2008; Accessed: Jan. 2009. <<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?c110:2:./temp/~110ud50qD::>>

commitment rather than binding domestic law.”⁴⁰ Due to the ‘Rule of Construction,’ in its present form the Deal is also subject to “the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, the Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006, and other applicable U.S. law”⁴¹ Consequently, the transfer of nuclear material may not occur until the President has certified to Congress that the transfer would not be inconsistent with IAEA provisions nor would it be inconsistent with India’s Separation Plan. Additionally, it requires termination of all nuclear trade should India detonate a nuclear device. Further, the provisions of the Deal require India to allow IAEA inspectors access to existing and future civilian nuclear reactors, yet do not guarantee U.S. fuel supplies to support such reactors. For this reason, “once the separation plan is implemented and some two-thirds of nuclear reactors are working on imported fuel, if fuel imports are terminated, the cost to the economy of testing becomes prohibitive. Under such conditions, India’s voluntary moratorium on testing becomes a de facto permanent ban.”⁴²

The provisions of the Hyde Act and H.R. 7081 also “direct the President to: (1) certify to the Committees that it is U.S. policy to work with members of the NSG to restrict transfers of equipment and technology related to the enrichment of uranium and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel; and (2) seek to achieve within NSG or with NSG participating governments the adoption of principles and exchanges of information to assure peaceful use and accounting of by-product material.”⁴³ While the NSG has

⁴⁰ Francine R. Frankel, “Emerging Equations,” *India and Global Affairs* Jan.-Mar. 2009: 43.

⁴¹ United States-India Nuclear Cooperation Approval and Nonproliferation Enhancement Act.

⁴² Francine R. Frankel, “Emerging Equations,” *India and Global Affairs* Jan.-Mar. 2009: 45.

⁴³ Library of Congress. H.R. 7081 Thomas Summary. U.S. Govt; Accessed: Mar 2009.

<<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d110:SN03548:@@D&summ2=m&>>

provided an exception for India, it is clear that the United States intends to advocate close oversight of India to ensure safe and responsible transfers of nuclear material.

A Break from the Past

During the 1950s, the United States promoted nuclear energy cooperation with India as part of the Atoms for Peace program. This program was, in part, designed to distribute nuclear technology, materials, and information to countries with minimal research capabilities. However, with the creation of the NPT in 1968, and India's refusal to sign, the United States became wary of India's nuclear developments. When India exploded a "peaceful" nuclear device in 1974, the United States quickly recognized that what had been intended as a peaceful transfer of nuclear technology had the potential to contribute to the production of nuclear weapons. This resulted in the United States cutting all nuclear cooperation efforts with India as well as creating the NSG in 1975—an organization devoted to reducing nuclear proliferation and improving safeguards on existing materials. For this reason, the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal and especially the exception made for India by the NSG marked an entirely new U.S. position toward India as well as a new stance on nonproliferation.⁴⁴

U.S. Commitment to Getting the Deal Approved: Proponents of the Deal

Those in favor of the passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal argued that a partnership with India is of utmost importance for several reasons. First, there is a need to unite the world's two largest democracies to encourage democracy throughout the world. Second, a partnership is favorable for cooperation in fighting terrorism. Third, the Deal

⁴⁴ U.S. Congressional Research Service. U.S. Nuclear Cooperation with India. (RL33016; Jul. 29, 2005), by Sharon Squassoni. Text in Text in: LexisNexis® Congressional Research Digital Collection; Accessed: Jan. 2009. <<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33016.pdf>>

is necessary for geostrategic purposes because there is a need to prevent the domination of Asia by a single power, particularly China. Proponents of the Deal also felt that denial of the Deal would mean losing India's cooperation as a strategic partner, one that could be of help to the aforementioned goals of the United States.

Many in favor of the Deal also point to India's responsible stewardship of its nuclear technology to date. India has a history of imposing voluntary safeguards on its nuclear program as well as a history of nonproliferation. Those in favor of the Deal believe that it would reward India for its responsible behavior with regard to its nuclear technology. Although India is not a signatory of the NPT, it has never cooperated with other countries in selling or trading nuclear technology. While some in India question the reasons for such strict controls on its nuclear capabilities, the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal would provide India with an incentive to continue its voluntary controls. As President Bush pointed out, it is far better for the nonproliferation community if India is working with the U.S. instead of against it.⁴⁵

India and Indian-American Commitment to Obtaining Approval of the Deal

While much of the leadership in the United States was committed to having the Deal approved by Congress, authorities in India also had a large stake in its approval. The privileged position granted to India through not only the Deal, but also the NSG exception, essentially elevates India's status in Asia, making it a more credible counterpart to its regional rival, China. While India is not recognized as a nuclear power under the NPT, the Deal fundamentally gives India de facto recognition as such a power. Additionally, the Deal would allow India access to additional nuclear energy sources that are of great importance to its civilian nuclear program. India requires the ability to

⁴⁵ Esther and Bajoria. 2 Oct. 2008.

import nuclear technology as well as obtain capital to sustain its nuclear energy needs while building its infrastructure and manufacturing base so that it can then independently provide for its nuclear needs. India may also benefit from the Deal by receiving advanced technology previously developed by the U.S.

Due to the Deal's significant benefits for India, many politically involved Indian-Americans felt that a strong lobbying effort in the United States was of utmost importance. As substantial immigration really began a mere forty-five years ago, most Indian-Americans are either first or second generation residents, and for this reason many still feel very connected to their country of origin and want to see it advance in world stature.

Opponents to the Deal: Why the Deal was NOT a Foregone Conclusion

Concerns among many nonproliferation advocates that the Deal was going too far resulted in a final version of H.R. 7081 that significantly pared down the initial intention for full nuclear cooperation. The initial intentions of the Deal produced three major objections. The first is the concern that the Deal creates a privileged position for India. The second is the break from traditional nonproliferation standards on which the United States prides itself. The third deals with the implications for the NPT.

India, Pakistan and Israel are the three countries that are non-signatories of the NPT. Allowing India access to nuclear technology while not requiring it to be a NPT signatory provides India with a privileged position because it receives many benefits of NPT signatories while not having to commit to any of the provisions of the Treaty. Additionally, the Deal puts India in an advantaged position over Pakistan and Israel. This is especially of concern to Pakistan as it has been a strong United States ally for many years. In fact, Pakistan asked for a similar nuclear cooperation agreement after the 2005

announcement of U.S.-India cooperation, but Pakistan's request for such assistance was denied. As President Bush stated, "Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and different histories. As we proceed forward, our strategy will take in those well-known differences."⁴⁶ By elevating India to a new, privileged position, the United States may create a nuclear rivalry between India and Pakistan, provoking Pakistan to become an even greater proliferation risk by turning to other countries, such as China, for additional nuclear capabilities. The United States may be simply creating enemies in the Asian region, something that is dangerous for regional stability as well as for U.S. geostrategic concerns.

The extremely controversial nature of the Deal is also exemplified by Washington's nonproliferation community who remained opposed to a special exception for India to engage in nuclear commerce as a non-NPT signatory. These nonproliferation advocates argued that:

No matter how many facilities India places under safeguards, the opening of the international uranium market—forbidden to India since 1992 by the NSG—in effect frees up India's domestic uranium for its nuclear weapons program, and therefore, would assist the Indian nuclear weapons program. Consequently, only India's halt in the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons would ensure that U.S. assistance does not aid India's nuclear programs... for almost 30 years, the U.S. legal standard has been that only nuclear safeguards on *all* nuclear activities in a state provides adequate assurances. The Administration is apparently asking Congress to back a lower level of assurance by proposing that the separation plan take the place of comprehensive safeguards.⁴⁷

Furthermore, while the Deal imparts incentives for India to continue its voluntary nuclear controls, it does not place any restrictions on the number of nuclear weapons India may

⁴⁶ Shehzad Nadeem, "The Regional Implications of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal," *Foreign Policy in Focus* 29 April 2006; Accessed: Feb. 2009. <<http://www.fpiif.org/fpiftxt/3248>>

⁴⁷ U.S. Congressional Research Service. *India's Nuclear Separation Plan: Issues and Views* (RL33292; Dec. 22, 2006), by Sharon Squassoni. Text in: LexisNexis® Congressional Research Digital Collection; Accessed: Mar. 2009. <<http://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL33292.pdf>>

produce. Most other major nuclear powers such as France, Britain, Russia and even the United States are working to limit the production of fissile material, yet the Deal does not employ such incentives for India.⁴⁸ The Deal also requires India to place safeguards only on those facilities and materials produced following its implementation. For this reason, India could potentially use previously produced fissile material for the production of nuclear weapons, while using any recently produced material for civilian nuclear purposes. “While India has pledged that any U.S. assistance to its civilian nuclear energy program will not benefit its nuclear weapons program, experts say India could use the imported nuclear fuel to feed its civilian energy program while diverting its own nuclear fuel to weapons production. New Delhi has done similar things in the past; India claimed it was using nuclear technology for civilian purposes right up until its first nuclear weapons test in 1974.”⁴⁹ Finally, those opposed to the Deal believe that making India an exception to the NPT only legitimizes the corrupt practices of other NPT signatories such as China which has been supplying Pakistan, a non-nuclear weapon state, with nuclear technology.⁵⁰

The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal could also have far-reaching implications for the NPT itself. Article I of the treaty states: “Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive

⁴⁸ Esther and Bajoria. 2 Oct. 2008.

⁴⁹ Esther and Bajoria. 2 Oct. 2008.

⁵⁰ U.S. Congressional Research Service. 29 July 2005.

devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.”⁵¹ As nuclear nonproliferation advocates have asserted, “a voluntary safeguards agreement like those of the other five nuclear weapon states would not meet the NPT Article I obligations...India must accept some kind of safeguards arrangement that would allow safeguards to endure in perpetuity.”⁵² Although India’s Separation Plan is intended to avoid any confusion between civilian and military nuclear programs, India’s ability to determine which of its facilities are civilian and which are military could potentially create a situation in which the United States is unknowingly undermining the NPT.

While there are potential benefits for the United States in passing the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, it seems that, from undermining traditional nonproliferation practices to creating possible regional instability in an already volatile region, there were still a large number of risks inherent in the passage of H.R. 7081. For these reasons, much more than a presidential initiative was needed to secure passage of the Deal. It is in this context that the Indian-American lobby came into prominence and was able not only to influence U.S. foreign policy, but also to consolidate its success as a legitimate lobby with the possibility of having wide-reaching influence in the future.

⁵¹ UN-United Nations. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). 11 May 1995; Accessed: Feb. 2, 2009. <<http://www.un.org/events/npt2005/npttreaty.html>>

⁵² U.S. Congressional Research Service. 29 July 2005.

CHAPTER 2—Solidification of Influence: USINPAC in Focus

I. HOW THE LOBBY WAS ABLE TO INFLUENCE THE U.S.-INDIA DEAL: WHY THE RECENT SUCCESS?

It was in the wake of the events of September 11th and the changing relationship between the U.S. and India that Indian-American mobilization began to accelerate. USIPNAC, the most influential Indian-American lobby, was founded in this context in 2002. However, it was not until the recent U.S.-India Nuclear Deal that this lobby was able to consolidate its influence. This raises two questions: what led to USINPAC's most recent success and will this success continue in the future?

Proposed Explanations for Ethnic Lobby Effectiveness

There are several proposed explanations for the success of ethnic lobbies. The first is that the size of an ethnic group and/or the size of the ethnic lobby itself contributes to its ability to influence congressional policy. It is argued that the larger the unified base of voters, the more effective the lobby. The second explanation is that ethnic lobbies have greater success if they are “pushing on an open door,” meaning that the issues for which they are lobbying already have significant congressional support. The third is that lobbies with no organized opposition to their cause have more success than those that have to fight an opposing lobby. The last explanation is that the greater the organizational strength of a lobby, the more effective it will be.⁵³

In the case of the Indian-American lobby, its most recent success was based on neither size, nor “push on an open door,” nor lack of an organized opposition. Instead,

⁵³ Patrick J. Haney and Walt Vanderbush, “The Role of Ethnic Interest Groups in U.S. Foreign Policy: The Case of the Cuban American National Foundation,” *International Studies Quarterly* 17 Dec. 2002: 343.

this case demonstrates that it was the organizational strength of the Indian-American lobby that led to its successful effort in helping to pass the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal.

Size?

It has often been suggested that the size of an ethnic lobby or the electoral turnout rate of the ethnic community is what enables ethnic groups to influence policy. However, based on the lobbying success of relatively small ethnic groups, it is apparent this is not always the case. For example, the Armenian-American lobby is much smaller than the Indian-American lobby, yet Armenian-Americans have had significant successes influencing U.S. policy.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the Indian-American community is not a significant voting block; it is more of a donor block. Unlike large ethnic groups such as Hispanics, Indian-Americans do not have the ability to influence policy by turning out their base. They must instead rely on donating substantial amounts of money to congressmen in the hope they will be receptive to arguments made in favor of policies most important to the Indian-American community. Based on the lobbying success of both smaller and larger ethnic groups, it is apparent that the size of the Indian-American lobby is not what drove its most recent success.

“Push on an Open Door?”

As discussed above, there were several possible implications of the Deal that created a strong opposition. The break from traditional nonproliferation practices, the alienation of Pakistan, the potential creation of regional instability and volatility, and the possible weakening of the NPT are among some of the most important factors that created this strong opposition to the Deal. Congress was split on the pros and cons of the

⁵⁴ Gregg 5.

Deal, and for this reason, the lobbying effort of USINPAC was not simply reinforcing an already likely conclusion. It has been noted that:

strategic ‘self-evidence’ does not account fully for the surprisingly high levels of congressional support for the nuclear agreement, especially given the deal’s historic break with the NPT and recently heightened proliferation concerns related to North Korea and Iran. Not only did the agreement face strong principled opposition, but the Bush administration was rather clumsy in teeing it up...[for this reason] we must turn to the efforts of the Indian-American community, which has lately become much more politically active following a two-generation process of gradual organization.⁵⁵

Lack of an Organized Opposition?

Not only was there opposition to the Deal among members of Congress, but there were also several nonproliferation organizations that mounted strong lobbying efforts to inhibit passage of the legislation. On August 15, 2008, just months before H.R. 7081 was passed, over 150 non-proliferation specialists and NGOs, from approximately two-dozen countries, wrote a letter to the Foreign Ministers of the NSG. The letter stated:

India's commitments under the current terms of the proposed arrangement do not justify making far-reaching exceptions to international nonproliferation rules and norms. Contrary to the claims of its advocates, the deal fails to bring India further into conformity with the nonproliferation behavior expected of the member states of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Unlike 178 other countries, India has not signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). It continues to produce fissile material and expand its nuclear arsenal. As one of only three states never to have signed the NPT, it has not made a legally-binding commitment to achieve nuclear disarmament, and it refuses to allow comprehensive, full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. Yet the arrangement would give India rights and privileges of civil nuclear trade that have been reserved only for members in good standing under the NPT. It creates a dangerous distinction between “good” proliferators and “bad” proliferators and sends out misleading signals to the international community with regard to NPT norms.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Kirk 285.

⁵⁶ Arms Control Association, “Decision Time on the Indian Nuclear Deal: Help Avert a Nonproliferation Disaster,” 15 Aug. 2008; Accessed: Jan. 2009.
<<http://www.armscontrol.org/system/files/NSGLetterGermanyAug15.pdf>>

The letter goes on to list potential dangers of supporting the Deal, which include: undermining the nuclear safeguards regime, possible transfer of sensitive enrichment and reprocessing items, indirect assistance to India's nuclear weapons program, and facilitating Indian nuclear testing. Undoubtedly, there was a large, well-organized opposition to USINPAC's lobbying efforts. It was not the case that the lack of an organized opposition contributed to the recent success of the Indian-American lobby.

Organizational Strength?

If it is not the size of the lobby, the ability to "push on an open door," or the lack of an organized opposition, then it follows that the organizational strength of the Indian-American lobby is what most likely lead to its success in influencing the passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal. With further exploration, it becomes apparent that this is indeed the case.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH: THE KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF USINPAC

While organizational strength has been previously cited as a potential explanation for the success of ethnic lobbies, what constitutes such strength must be analyzed. This section will explain and define organizational strength, as well as demonstrate how USINPAC used such strength to influence the passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal.

Organizational Strength Model

Organizational strength, for the purposes of this paper, will be defined as:

1. The ability to attract members
 - From different regions in the United States
 - From different viewpoints (most importantly from both the Hindu and South Asian groups)
 - From different age groups
2. The ability to build a strong economic profile by generating donations from members as well as those in the broader Indian-American community

These organizational factors lead to two additional benefits that permit lobbies to influence policy. First, having members who are diverse in geographic, economic, and ideological background creates a national constituency which makes it easier to frame one's message in a way that is most likely to influence Congress. Second, with a large fundraising initiative and a strong economic profile, it becomes easier to channel major donations to congressmen while encouraging them to support policies most favorable to one's agenda and concerns.

Organizational Strength in Practice

While USINPAC had previous success in influencing a number of relatively minor U.S. policies, the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal marked a profound breakthrough in the ability of the lobby to influence high-level policy. As a fairly new lobby, prior to influencing the Deal, USINPAC had been building up its organizational strength. Its influence on the Deal then consolidated the lobby into a strong force that, with a solid organizational foundation, may have an easier time influencing policy in the future.

For USINPAC, the first tenet of the organizational strength model—the ability to attract members from different regions, viewpoints, and age groups—developed slowly as the lobby began to address the previously fragmented political organization of the Indian-American community. First, USINPAC capitalized on the settling pattern of Indian-Americans that developed when they first immigrated to the United States following the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. As previously discussed, Indians settled in several major cities which fortuitously happened to be distributed throughout the United States. From California to New York and from Texas to Illinois, those states in which Indians settled were also large, politically influential states. This became

helpful as USINPAC could cite support from many regions of the country when lobbying Congress for passage of the Deal.

Second, USINPAC reached out for support from all age groups. The lobby understood the value of attracting young members so the organization could continue its success beyond the tenure of its founders. USINPAC started a Youth Committee with a mission to “increase awareness among the Indian-American youth of issues concerning the Indian-American community and to actively engage the Indian-American youth in [the lobby] to impact policies on issues concerning the Indian-American community.”⁵⁷ USINPAC speaks of Indian-American youth as “the future of our community and the leaders of tomorrow.”⁵⁸ It is clear that, in designing a program to target younger members of the Indian-American community, USINPAC has increased its organizational strength.

Lastly and perhaps most significantly, USINPAC has worked to bridge the fragmented mobilization of the Hindu and South Asian identity groups. USINPAC’s website details a grassroots program called the National Outreach Program which the lobby started. This program “is an ambitious undertaking by USINPAC to coordinate the efforts of politically active Indian American organizations and individuals.”⁵⁹ Founder Sanjay Puri believes that the program is essential to USINPAC’s efforts because “it is vital that we have a unified stand to impact issues facing the community.”⁶⁰ By reaching out to Indian-Americans from many different viewpoints, USINPAC aims to consolidate

⁵⁷ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Youth Committee Statement; Accessed: Jan. 2009.
<http://www.usinpac.com/youth_committee.asp>

⁵⁸ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Youth Committee Statement.

⁵⁹ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. National Outreach Program Statement; Accessed: Jan. 2009.
<http://www.usinpac.com/nat_outreach_program.asp>

⁶⁰ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. National Outreach Program Statement.

the Indian-American voice, magnifying its influence on Congress on those issues most important to the community.

By reaching out to Indian-Americans settled in various regions of the United States, creating a Youth Committee to perpetuate the new vision of Indian-American leadership, and starting a National Outreach Program to bridge the voices of different Indian-American viewpoints, USINPAC has created a strong foundation for its organizational strength. This lobby has indeed succeeded in achieving the first part of the organizational model previously defined.

The second basic tenet of the organizational strength model is the ability to build a strong economic profile. Due to the relative affluence of the Indian-American community, USINPAC has had considerably less difficulty than many other lobbies achieving this objective. As of 2002, “Indian-Americans [were] one of the most affluent groups in the United States,”⁶¹ and they have used such affluence to their advantage when mobilizing politically. “Over the last three election cycles, they have contributed an estimated \$8 million to federal election campaigns.”⁶² USINPAC has worked to generate funds from members of its community by soliciting donations on its website as well as by exercising its networking effort. Its website boasts a “get involved” section in which individuals can join, contribute, volunteer, or petition for the organization. USINPAC has worked hard to develop the second facet of the organizational strength model.

Because USINPAC has both the ability to attract a diverse range of members and to create a large funding base to achieve its desired political activities, it also benefits from the two additional factors that arise from the basic organizational model. First, with

⁶¹ Kirk 280.

⁶² Kirk 280.

regard to the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, USINPAC was able to frame its message—the desired passage of the Deal—in a way most likely to obtain congressional ratification. For example, USINPAC linked the US-India Deal to other goals in U.S. policy related to India. It framed the Deal in terms of economic and environmental goals as well as trade potential in the civilian nuclear sector. By linking the Deal to policies that were favorable for the U.S., USINPAC made H.R. 7081 more appealing to Congress, highlighting additional benefits that would result from a strategic partnership with India. USINPAC also used its organizational strength to highlight the importance of the Deal by issuing briefs to members of Congress, holding receptions and fundraisers, and garnering the attention of the mainstream media.

Second, due to its organizational strength, USINPAC has been able to channel major donations to congressmen to encourage them to support policies most favorable to its agenda and concerns. USINPAC has used this strategy effectively by donating to congressmen in the regions that have the most concentrated Indian-American populations. By making campaign contributions to congressmen in areas with significant Indian-American populations, USINPAC has been able to encourage those members of congress both to vote favorably on policies it supports and to enlist the support of other congressional delegations. Building reciprocal relationships with congressmen has been a crucial aspect in the organizational model of USINPAC. The lobby also designed a tracking system that appeared on its website and was specifically geared toward the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal. It followed the progress of the Deal in Congress by tracking which congressmen were already in favor of the Deal and which needed to be targeted for further attention.

As part of this effort, the lobby wrote many letters to congressmen explaining why the Deal should be supported and urging them to act favorably. The following serves as an example of one such letter:

Open Letter to Members of Congress

“On behalf of USINPAC, an organization which promotes issues that are shaped by the emerging concerns of two million Indian Americans living in the United States, I respectfully urge you to support the civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the US and India. This historic agreement has the potential to transform US-India relations and this is why USINPAC has taken the lead in ensuring that Congress knows that this issue is of utmost importance to the Indian American community.

For the past eight months, USINPAC has been actively engaged in Washington and India. In advance of President Bush’s trip to India and in response to Prime Minister Singh’s visit to the US, USINPAC also hosted a critical event about the agreement which was attended by key Members of Congress and India’s Ambassador Ronen Sen. In January 2006, USINPAC took a delegation to India where we met with Government leaders to further this cause.

While we are clearly aware that this agreement cannot move forward without Congressional approval, USINPAC is hopeful that you will consider the views of our community as you begin to deliberate this very serious matter. We are also hopeful that you will take into account India’s response to concerns raised by those who would oppose this agreement.

To date, India has produced a plan to separate its civilian and military nuclear facilities much sooner than originally planned. India has committed to more than triple the number of nuclear reactors under IAEA safeguards. India will allow more detailed inspections by the IAEA as evidenced by agreeing to the Additional Protocol. India has also created a new Export Control System to further protect its nuclear technology and materials from proliferation. While India already has a stellar record of nonproliferation, it is evident by the actions India has agreed to take that global nonproliferation will be enhanced should the US Congress decide to support civil nuclear cooperation. In fact, if supported by the US Congress, the agreement reached by Prime Minister Singh and President Bush will bring India’s nuclear program into the international mainstream.

As importantly, civil nuclear cooperation will help India address its rapidly rising energy needs which will increase more than threefold over the next thirty years. By lessening India’s demand for other energy supplies, the price of fossil fuels for consumers in America and around the world also will be curbed.

Finally, India, with a population of more than one billion, is a key U.S. ally in, as The Economist labels it, “one of the world’s tougher neighbourhoods.” India is also positioned to become the world’s third largest economy. Civil nuclear cooperation as

proposed by President Bush and Prime Minister Singh will bolster security and stability which is good for America, good for India, and good for you.

Again, USINPAC respectfully urges you to support civilian nuclear cooperation between the United States and India. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 202-861-1900 or mantani@usinpac.com.” Sincerely, Sanjay Puri. March 14, 2006.⁶³

Letters such as this demonstrate the direct effort USINPAC made to facilitate passage of the Deal in Congress.

In addition, in an effort to make certain that congressmen were not conflicted by differing policies between the United States and India, USINPAC lead a fact finding mission to India in 2007. Just as the Deal was not a foregone conclusion in the U.S., there were several groups opposed to the Deal in India, as well. While the Congress Party was in favor, the BJP had concerns that the independence of India’s foreign policy would be sacrificed, and the Communist Party of India (CPI) argued that the Deal would create a situation in which India was yielding to “arm-twisting by the US.”⁶⁴ For this reason, during a period of stalled activity in India, USINPAC met with senior leaders of the Congress Party, the Left Parties, and the BJP Party with the “sole intention of understanding differing perspectives, so that [they] could come back and report to constituencies in the community and on the Hill...”⁶⁵ USINPAC met with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of the Congress Party, President of the BJP, Rajnath Singh, and National Secretary of the CPI, D. Raja. All parties recognized USINPAC as “an organization that is working in an unbiased fashion.”⁶⁶ Furthermore, it has been noted that both “the Indian media and Indian public seem to trust USINPAC as an advocate and

⁶³ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Letter to Congress; Accessed: Feb. 2009. <http://www.usinpac.com/nuclear_deal/open_letter_v2.html>

⁶⁴ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission; Accessed: Oct. 2008. <http://www.usinpac.com/nuclear_deal/index.html#>

⁶⁵ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission 2.

⁶⁶ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission 2.

facilitator of US-India ties.”⁶⁷ The fact that USINPAC has been able to hold discussions with both congressmen in the United States as well as high ranking officials from all of the most prominent political parties in India again demonstrates this lobby’s organizational strength. Being a trusted organization in India gives USINPAC the ability to leverage support in India for those policies it wishes to advance in the United States. By developing solid working relationships with officials in both the United States and India, this lobby has created the ability to influence U.S. foreign policy by not only holding discussions with high officials in the U.S., but also by working to facilitate agreement between officials in the U.S. and India.

While it has been suggested that the success of ethnic lobbies may be due in part to size, “push on an open door,” or lack of an organized opposition, these possibilities do not explain the reason for the recent success of USINPAC in influencing the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal. Instead, USINPAC’s strong organizational strength seems to be the driving factor behind its success. This lobby meets the requirements of the outlined organizational strength model and further reaps its predicted benefits by garnering significant membership and funds.

III. ANALYZING USINPAC’S SUCCESS

While it is clear that USINPAC employed its organizational strength in an attempt to influence the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, it remains necessary to determine what, if any, success USINPAC had in building congressional support for the Deal. But what is a success in this context?

A success will be defined as having a recognized impact on influencing the passage of the Deal. Because there were many other influences working to push the Deal

⁶⁷ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission 3.

through Congress, it is difficult to tease out the extent to which each of these competing factors influenced the result. Consequently, the way to determine the success of USINPAC is to show that: (1) the lobby was actively working to influence members of Congress; (2) members of Congress recognized USINPAC as a significant player in obtaining ratification of the Deal; and (3) a relatively high correlation existed between those congressmen who voted in favor of the Deal and those congressmen to whom USINPAC made campaign contributions. As previously shown, USINPAC worked hard to actively influence congressmen—the first requirement for a success. The following sections will discuss the reflections congressmen had regarding USINPAC’s active work as well as provide a model to show the correlation between congressmen voting in favor of the Deal and donations USINPAC gave to these congressmen.

Congressmen Define the Success of USINPAC

While it is clear that USINPAC actively worked to ensure the passage of the U.S.-India Deal, in order to determine if it met the second factor in the analysis of success, it is necessary to look at the reactions of congressmen to USINPAC’s efforts.

Congressman Eni Faleomavaega (D-AS), a ranking member of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific and Co-Chair of the Congressional Task Force on US-India Investment and Trade Relations said “USINPAC has been actively working to advance the proposal for full nuclear cooperation between the US and India.”⁶⁸ He added:

Having served on the International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific for almost twenty years, I commend USINPAC for its efforts. No other organization has worked harder or been more effective in giving a voice to India and Indian Americans and, in these historical times, USINPAC is to be applauded

⁶⁸ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Home Page; Accessed: Sept. 2009.
<<http://www.usinpac.com/>>

for the work it is doing to strengthen US-India relations and shore up support for the civic nuclear cooperation agreement...The passage of this crucial legislation is a testament to USINPAC's determination to work closely with senior administration officials and key Members of Congress to bring to fruition the legislative goals of the Indian American community.⁶⁹

Congressman Joe Crowley (D-NY), a Member of the House Committee on International Relations and former Co-Chair of the House Caucus on India and Indian Americans commented that "Given the importance of this agreement, I commend USINPAC for mobilizing the Indian American community and for tirelessly working to make sure your voice is heard."⁷⁰ Additionally, once the Deal had gained substantial support in Congress, U.S. Representative Illeana Ros-Lehtinen stated:

Although the initiative has strong bipartisan support in the House and the Senate, there are increasing concerns that there may be too little time left in this session for Congress to act. I look forward to working closely with Indian-American organizations such as USINPAC that have been proactive in educating us about the importance of an expeditious approval of the deal by Congress.⁷¹

These comments laud USINPAC's continued hard work for passage of the Deal, especially when it appeared to be stalled. Congressman Frank Pallone (D-NJ) discussed his desire to continue to work with the USINPAC in the future: "I am proud of the strong support this agreement received." He added, "I congratulate USINPAC today and look forward to continuing to work closely in the future to address the concerns of the community."⁷² Finally, Senator Kit Bond (R-MO) summed up the efforts of USINPAC by stating:

⁶⁹ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission.

⁷⁰ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission.

⁷¹ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Quotes; Accessed: Feb. 2009.
<http://www.usinpac.com/nuclear_deal/quotes.html>

* The 2006 election cycle came prior to the vote on H.R. 7081 while the 2008 election cycle came just after. Looking at both of these election cycles gives an understanding of which members of Congress USINPAC was aiming to influence before the vote as well as which members the lobby wants to continue to build its reciprocal relationships.

I want to commend the Senate for passing this historic agreement and I especially applaud the efforts of key members of the House and the Senate who have worked hand in hand with Secretary of State Nicholas Burns and in cooperation with USIBA/USINPAC to keep this deal alive. Tonight's vote is a culmination of those efforts which will re-define US-India relations for generations to come and USINPAC/USIBA should be recognized for the significant work they have done to bring this agreement about.⁷³

These statements demonstrate that members of Congress who are heavily involved in Indian affairs recognized USINPAC as a substantial player in helping to obtain passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal.

Donations Cross-Listed with Voting Record

Yet another way to define the success of USINPAC is to look at the donations given by this lobby to members of Congress in the 2006 and 2008 election cycles, and cross-reference these donations with the roll call votes from H.R. 7081.* From this information, the percentage of representatives and senators who were given campaign contributions and subsequently voted for the bill can then be determined. A high correlation between the number of congressmen to whose campaigns USINPAC donated and those who voted for the Deal will indicate a high level of success for USINPAC in influencing congressmen (See Chart 1).

When looking at those members of Congress who voted for H.R. 7081 in conjunction with the donations made to them by USINPAC in 2006, it is apparent that USINPAC did indeed obtain a large number of votes from those congressmen to whom it donated. While some donations were given to congressmen who may have been already favored the Deal, USINPAC channeled other donations to members of Congress representing states with large percentages of Indian-Americans or those members who

⁷² USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. News Releases; Accessed: Jan. 2009.

<http://www.usinpac.com/news_details.asp?offset=0&News_ID=55>

⁷³ USINPAC-US India Political Action Committee. Fact Finding Mission.

held prominent positions on committees or caucuses most important to the community (i.e. the India Caucus, U.S. Committee on Foreign Affairs, etc.). USINPAC gave donations in an attempt to influence the vote on H.R. 7081, while simultaneously continuing to build reciprocal relationships with those congressmen receptive to the interests most important to USINPAC.

It is important to look at the 2006 voting cycle donations because these were the last donations given to congressmen prior to their 2008 vote on H.R. 7081. In the House, USINPAC made donations to 41 candidates. Nine of these were not elected, not re-elected, or not eligible to vote, and for this reason did not vote on the bill. Of those who voted, twenty-five voted in favor of the Deal, four voted against the Deal, and one abstained from voting. Thus, 81% of those representatives who could vote and to whom USINPAC donated voted for the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal. Additionally, all but one of those voting against the bill were representatives from areas that do not have a large percentage of Indian-Americans. The only exception was Representative Diane E. Watson from California, a state having a large number of Indian-Americans. In the Senate, USINPAC donated to nine individuals. Of these nine, eight voted in favor of the Bill and one senator abstained. There were no senators to whom USINPAC donated that voted against H.R. 7081. With an overwhelming majority of those to whom USINPAC donated voting for the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, it is reasonable to conclude that the lobby's donations favorably impacted those congressmen USINPAC intended to influence.

While the 2008 voting cycle occurred shortly after the vote on H.R. 7081, it is still important to look at USINPAC's donations during this period as they may indicate which

congressmen the lobby rewarded for their support of the Deal. Such support would suggest a continuing reciprocal relationship. In the House, USINPAC made donations to 22 representatives. Two of these congressmen were either not re-elected or were not able to vote. Of those who voted, eighteen voted in favor of the Deal, two voted against the Deal, and one abstained from voting. Thus, approximately 91% of those representatives who could vote and to whom USINPAC donated voted for the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal. Additionally, during this cycle, the two representatives voting against the bill were both from areas that do not have a large percentage of Indian-Americans. In the Senate, USINPAC donated to nine individuals. Of these nine, four were either not elected or not re-elected, and the remaining five voted in favor of the bill. It is clear that even after the vote on H.R. 7081, USINPAC continues to reward those members of Congress who support the lobby's agenda and thus aims to perpetuate the reciprocal relationships necessary for future success of the lobby.

By reviewing USINPAC's lobbying efforts, the congressional recognition of those efforts as a driving force behind passage of the Deal, and the way donations to congressmen correlate with their voting behavior, it is reasonable to conclude that due to its organizational strength, USINPAC has indeed had success in influencing the passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal.

Chapter 3—Helping Hands: Influences on USINPAC and the U.S. India Nuclear Deal

I. A MODEL FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH: JEWISH AMERICANS, AIPAC and AJC

The organizational model developed by USINPAC is not unique to this organization. Instead, it has been argued that this model stemmed from the examples of powerful Jewish lobbies in the United States. The Jewish-American community in the United States operates two of the most powerful lobbies in the country—the American-Israel Political Action Committee (AIPAC) and the American-Jewish Committee (AJC). For years, these lobbies have had tremendous success in lobbying Congress on issues important to the Jewish-American community. However, it is not only the success of the Israel lobby that influenced Indian-Americans to adopt this lobby's organizational model, but it is the commonalities between Indian-Americans and Jewish-Americans that contribute to the desire of Indian-Americans to use the Jewish lobbies as a model for the development of their own highly-influential lobby.

Commonalities between Indian-Americans and Jewish-Americans

First, both Jewish-Americans and Indian-Americans make up a relatively small percentage of the population in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2007), there are approximately 6.4 million Jews⁷⁴ and 2.7 million Indians in the U.S.⁷⁵ Jews make up only about 2.2% of the population in the United States and Indians about 0.9% of the total population. Indian-Americans noted that Jewish-Americans have been

⁷⁴ Ira M. Sheskin, and Arnold Dashefsky, "Jewish Population of the United States 2006," *American Jewish Year Book 2006* (New York, American Jewish Committee, 2006); Accessed: Feb. 2009. <<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/US-Israel/usjewpop.html>>

⁷⁵ S0201. Selected Population Profile in the United States: 2005.

able to make a profound influence on U.S. foreign policy despite their relatively small numbers.

Second, both Indian-Americans and Jewish-Americans are relatively affluent and have attained high levels of education. Both of these factors contribute to their ability to influence Congress; large contributions to a lobby provide it with the funds necessary to donate to congressmen and in turn form reciprocal relationships. Highly educated individuals also more easily navigate through the political system.

Third, India and Israel are both democratic countries and therefore, their respective lobbies are advantaged in Congress which respects democratic institutions and countries which have them. This provides some leverage and a helpful subtext for both the Indian-American and Jewish lobbies. At a minimum, because India is a democracy, USINPAC is not relegated to less legitimate consideration than the Jewish lobbies.

Lastly, it has been argued that the Israel lobby is effective, in part, because of the “special” relationship between the United States and Israel. However, while Israel has a special relationship with the United States that many argue is unlike that of any other country, India and the United States seem to be developing a unique relationship as well. This relationship has yet to be solidified for the long-term, but the changing relationship outlined previously suggests that Indian-Americans may, in the future, find it less difficult to influence Congress just as Jewish-Americans have. While the difference in relationships between the United States and Israel and the United States and India may have been a limiting factor in considering the Jewish lobby as a model, the newly developed strategic partnership between the United States and India further demonstrates that USINPAC’s decision to use the Jewish lobby as a role model was prudent.

The Basis for a Model: How AIPAC Achieves its Success*

The effectiveness of the Jewish lobby in the United States is undisputed. In both a 1997 *Fortune* magazine poll and a 2005 *National Journal* study, AIPAC was ranked as the second most powerful lobby in Washington.^{76*} It is argued that this lobby has been so effective for two basic reasons, both of which are attributed to its organizational strength. First is its ability to influence Congress. “Whatever an individual lawmaker or policymaker’s own views may be, the Lobby tries to make supporting Israel the ‘smart’ choice.”⁷⁷ Second is its aptitude for ensuring that public discourse portrays Israel in a positive light. “The goal is to prevent critical comments from getting a fair hearing in the political arena. Controlling the debate is essential to guaranteeing US support.”⁷⁸

AIPAC uses pro-Israel congressional staffers and targeted donations to influence Congress. Those members of Congress who have a favorable view of Israel help this lobby to spread its message while simultaneously silencing those who may have a negative view of the country. Additionally, by making large donations to those supporting AIPAC’s objectives and channeling funds to the political opponents of those seen as hostile toward Israel, AIPAC aims to control the voting outcome in Congress on issues affecting Israel.

* This analysis focuses on AIPAC at the exclusion of AJC because AIPAC is arguably more powerful than AJC and therefore presents a better comparison with USINPAC.

⁷⁶John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2007) 9. *Note: Mearsheimer and Walt are extremely critical in their view of the “Israel Lobby.” This investigation does not take such a critical approach but rather uses information about the structure of AIPAC to further the analysis of the effectiveness of the Indian-American lobby.

⁷⁷ Mearsheimer and Walt 9.

⁷⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt 9.

By conducting letter writing campaigns and training young advocates, AIPAC tries to control what is said about Israel. “The lobby doesn’t want an open debate,”⁷⁹ and therefore aims to shut down any voices running counter to its objectives. Letter writing campaigns strive to inundate congressmen with a constant flow of information so that they have no choice but to think one way about a targeted idea. Similarly, AIPAC “monitors university activities and trains young advocates in order to vastly expand the number of students involved in campuses in the national pro-Israel effort.”⁸⁰ This ensures that negative views of Israel are crushed before they even come to fruition. AIPAC also aims to ensure that criticism of policies favorable toward Israel is cut off by leveraging influence over the executive branch, ensuring that critics of Israel do not get important foreign policy jobs, and monitoring what professors write and teach.⁸¹

Due to the incredibly effective organizational model developed by AIPAC, many members of USINPAC are blunt about their desire to emulate Jewish-American groups and have stated that they are interested in establishing a long-term relationship.⁸² Although USINPAC has not yet developed such far-reaching influence that it has leverage over the executive branch, as discussed previously, when aiming to influence Congress, it has employed many of the same tactics as AIPAC. From donations to targeted congressmen to letter writing campaigns to the creation of a Youth Committee and the use of pro-Indian congressional staffers in the House and Senate India caucuses,

⁷⁹ Mearsheimer and Walt 12.

⁸⁰ Mearsheimer and Walt 15.

⁸¹ Mearsheimer and Walt 8,12,15.

⁸² R.M. Hathaway, *Washington’s news strategic partnership*, “The Diaspora, a Symposium on Indian-Americans and the motherland,” seminar in June 2004; Accessed: Feb. 2009.

<<http://indiaseminar.com/2004/538/538%20robert%20m.%20hathaway.htm>>

USINPAC emulated many of AIPAC's organizational tactics when aiming to influence H.R. 7081.

Working Together

Not only did USINPAC use the Jewish lobbies as a model for its organization, but the Jewish lobbies have contributed to the success of USINPAC by building an increasingly friendly relationship with this lobby. There are several examples of AIPAC and AJC have working with USINPAC to help it develop into an effective lobby. On July 16, 2003, AIPAC, AJC, and USINPAC held the first-ever joint Capitol Hill forum for U.S. lawmakers. Joe Wilson, Co-Chair of the Congressional India Caucus stated during the forum that it was "appropriate to make this bond."⁸³ Furthermore, it has been suggested that the AJC helped to establish the Congressional India Caucus, now the largest country caucus on Capitol Hill.⁸⁴ AJC also sent letters to members of Congress urging them to support the U.S.-India Deal. These letters targeted the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Lugar, its Ranking Democrat Joseph Biden, Chair of the House International Relations Committee Henry Hyde, and Ranking Democrat Tom Lantos when stating that "the AJC strongly supports the proposed US-India civil nuclear energy agreement and urges approval of the enabling legislation...the US-India nuclear agreement will advance the growing relationship [between India and the US]...The benefit of the nuclear energy deal is 'strategic' and in America's best interest."⁸⁵ Additionally, an article in the newspaper *India Abroad* cited the AJC as having said: "the proposed agreement [the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal] is a pragmatic and

⁸³ Britt Roels, *The Indian and Pakistani Diaspora in the U.S.: Interest Groups, American Politics and Policy Process* (New York: Columbia University, 2005) 128.

⁸⁴ Roels 128.

⁸⁵ Sridhar Krishnaswami, "Jewish Panel Backs Indo-US Nuclear Deal," *India Abroad* 16 May 2006; Accessed: Mar 2009. <<http://ia.rediff.com/news/2006/may/16nddeal.htm>>

forward-looking response to the strategic requirements of both nations and one that recognized the nuclear capabilities of India, a vibrant democracy, while preserving the essence of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is a bulwark of peace and stability in the post-War world.”⁸⁶

USINPAC’s organizational strength model, which has led to its most recent success in influencing the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal, was modeled after the powerful Jewish-American lobbies, AIPAC and AJC. These lobbies have helped USINPAC to develop and may have helped push the Deal through Congress, as well. While Jewish-American lobbies may have contributed to influencing Congress on the Deal, several other organizations may also have been instrumental.

II. OTHER INFLUENCES

As discussed previously, perhaps the largest influence supporting passage of the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal was the presidential initiative that began with a warming of relations between the U.S. and India during the Clinton era and continued into the Bush presidency, culminating in the passage of H.R. 7081 on October 8, 2008.

Despite the presidential initiative, due to the controversial nature of the partnership, the passage of the Deal was not a foregone conclusion. As previously discussed, USINPAC played a part in influencing the Deal’s ratification. However, USINPAC’s lobbying effort was not the sole factor pushing the Deal through Congress; there were many different influential factors. As Jason A. Kirk states, “it would be a gross oversimplification to suggest that congressional support for the U.S.-India nuclear agreement owes only to Indian-American efforts.”⁸⁷ Therefore, to place in context the

⁸⁶ Krishnaswami 2.

⁸⁷ Kirk 281.

influence that USINPAC had on the Deal, other factors that may have impacted its passage are examined.

The Legislative Initiative: The India Caucus

The House's India Caucus was first formed in 1994 and today is the largest country caucus in Congress, making it exceedingly influential.⁸⁸ The Caucus emerged as the result of discussions between the Indian American Forum for Political Education (IAFPE) and a group of congressmen lead by Frank Pallone (D-N.J.). IAFPE was concerned at the way the U.S. State Department was portraying India, as this was a time when the State Department was particularly critical of India's human rights policies in Kashmir. As a consequence, the Caucus was formed for the purpose of educating Congress on issues concerning India.⁸⁹

A Senate "Friends of India" group was subsequently formed in April 2004. Senator John Cornyn (R-Tex) initiated the formation of the caucus and Senator Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y) became its Co-Chair. This caucus was the first country-focused caucus in the Senate, making it a landmark for Indian-Americans. The importance of the caucus was evident as then Majority Leader, Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) and Minority Leader, Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) were among the 20 initial members of the caucus.⁹⁰

While the exact extent to which these caucuses helped to push the Deal through Congress is unknown, it is clear from various press releases that they indeed contributed, in part, to the passage of the final legislation. In an article from February 4th, 2008 in *India Abroad* titled: "India matters more than ever," Co-Chair of the Senate India

⁸⁸ US-India Friendship Network, House; Accessed: Feb 2009.

<<http://www.usindiafriendship.net/congress1/housecaucus/caucusonindia.htm>>

⁸⁹ Kirk 290.

⁹⁰ US-India Friendship Network, Senate; Accessed: Feb 2009.

<<http://www.usindiafriendship.net/congress1/senatecaucus/senatecaucus.htm>>

Caucus, Senator Hillary Clinton emphasized the importance of voting for the US-India Nuclear Deal.⁹¹ Similarly, U.S. Representative and former Democratic Co-Chair of the House's India Caucus, Gary Ackerman (D-NY), met with President Bush several times to discuss passage of the Deal and in an enthusiastic speech to Congress proclaimed, "it is time for a 21st Century policy towards India, one that supports and encourages India's emergence as a responsible global power and solidifies the U.S.-India bilateral relationship for decades to come. The bill before us today is that new policy. Vote yes on H.R. 7081!"⁹² These powerful members of Congress who had formed the House and Senate India Caucuses continued to encourage Congress to pass those initiatives they believed best served the interests of the United States as well as India. They clearly played a part in pushing the Deal through Congress.

The Business Initiative: Indian and American Business Interests

There were two types of business interests that impacted passage of the bill. First, two Indian-American business groups—US-India Business Alliance and US-India Business Council were invested in the Deal's passage. Second, there were several businesses in the United States that had an interest in the Deal due to the increased trading potential for these businesses.

The US-India Business Alliance (USIBA) was founded by President Sanjay Puri, the same individual who founded USINPAC. This organization was established with the intention of "serving as an interface between Governments and businesses in the US and India and representing the concerns and issues of the US India trade community to

⁹¹ Hillary R. Clinton, "India Matters more than Ever," *India Abroad* 4 Feb. 2008; Accessed Feb 2009. <<http://ia.rediff.com/news/2008/feb/04hill.htm?zcc=r1>>

⁹² United States, House of Representatives, *Ackerman Hails Approval of U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Energy Deal* (Washington: GPO, 27 Sept. 2008); Accessed: Feb. 2009. <http://www.house.gov/apps/list/speech/ny05_ackerman/WGS_092708.html>

decision makers in the US and in India, as well as supporting legislation, policies, and programs, in Washington and in New Delhi to ensure rapid growth of investment and trade between US and India.”⁹³ Due to the benefits of increased trade potential built into the Deal, this lobby also pressed Congress to pass the bill. For example, on September 11, 2008, USIBA held a briefing entitled “The US-India Nuclear Deal: Current Situation,” which was intended to educate those members of Congress who were still ambivalent toward the Deal.⁹⁴

The US-India Business Council (USIBC) operates with motives similar to USIBA with regard to the Deal. This group is run by Chairman Indra K. Nooyi (Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo) with the mission of “representing America’s top companies investing in India, joined by global Indian companies, promoting economic reforms with an aim to deepen trade and strengthen commercial ties.”⁹⁵ This organization creates a list of objectives each year. One of its primary objectives for 2008 was to “enable U.S.-India cooperation in civilian nuclear power to become a reality by advocating for U.S. legislative approval of the 123 Agreement [and subsequently the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal]...”⁹⁶

Many businesses in the United States also had a vested interest in seeing the Deal pass because of lucrative trade opportunities which the Deal would foster due to warmer

⁹³ USIBA-US-India Business Alliance. About USIBA; Accessed: Jan 2009.
<<http://www.usiba.org/aboutus.asp>>

⁹⁴ USIBA-US-India Business Alliance. Events Briefings; Accessed Jan 2009.
<http://www.usiba.org/event_flyers/USIBA_Holds_Briefing_on_N-Deal.pdf>

⁹⁵ USIBC-US-India Business Council. Mission Statement; Accessed: Jan 2009.
<<http://www.usibc.com/usibc/about/default>>

⁹⁶USIBC-US-India Business Council, *The Way Forward-A Bright Horizon 2007-2008* (Washington D.C.: US-India Business Council, 2008) 15; Accessed: Feb 2009. <<http://www.usibc.com/NR/rdonlyres/efcsf2roy3dotrxnnjobwxwnrvaa6qyefn2zggqtigazugcedfbqp2jsiyhug75nb67nqrrmtyidzng3lvukha6z5e/TheWayForward072807.pdf>>

relations between the U.S. and India. For example, Boeing has projected a market of over \$15 billion for its products in India over the next ten to fifteen years.⁹⁷ Similarly, Lockheed Martin has bid to sell fighter planes to India's air force. Westinghouse Electric Co., leader in the US civilian nuclear industry is also lining up to build power plants for the ever-growing India whose electricity is expected to double by 2015.⁹⁸ These companies represent just a few examples of the way businesses in the United States stand to benefit from the Deal. Consequently, many of these companies likely worked to influence passage of the Deal as the benefits they would obtain were significant.

The Indian Initiative: Lobbies Hired by India in the U.S.

In addition to Indian-American lobby groups in the United States, the Government of India (GOI) also hired a consulting firm to represent its interests in congressional passage of the bill. This firm, Barbour Griffith & Rogers (BGR Group), headed by Robert Blackwill, a former U.S. ambassador to India, has a diverse client base, from Fortune 500 companies to foreign governments and provides a variety of services, one of which is lobbying. It is probable that these lobbying efforts, on which India spent nearly \$1.3 million, impacted Congress' passage of the Deal.⁹⁹

While USINPAC did indeed have an influence, it was by no means the sole group involved in pushing the Deal through Congress. What is important, however, is to

⁹⁷ Saritha Rai, "U.S. Military Contractors Seek Deals at Bangalore Air Show," *New York Times* 7 Feb. 2007; Accessed Jan 2009. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/07/business/worldbusiness/06cnd-defense.html?ex=1328504400&en=062e53088d966233&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>>

⁹⁸ EIA-Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs: India in March 2008; Accessed: Feb. 2009. <<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/India/Full.html>>

⁹⁹ Subrata Ghoshroy, "The US-India Nuclear Deal: Triumph of the Business Lobby" (Cambridge: MIT Center for International Studies, 2006); Accessed Mar 2009. <<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0C54E3B3-1E9C-BE1E-2C24-A6A8C7060233&lng=en&id=25577>>

understand how and to what extent USINPAC influenced passage of H.R. 7081 and if such significant influence can be replicated in the future.

Conclusions: USINPAC and Beyond

After concluding that its organizational strength is the primary reason for USINPAC's recent success, the question remains: will this success last, enabling the lobby to influence a wide-range of policies in the future, or was this a one-shot victory?

Had USINPAC reached its goal due to the lack of an organized opposition or by "pushing on an open door," it would be more likely that its recent success would not create a foundation for future success. The "push on an open door" scenario would indicate that the success had been primarily driven by a presidential or congressional initiative. However, as previously discussed, that is not the case. Similarly, had USINPAC been successful due to the lack of an organized opposition, it is likely that if significant opposition materialized in the future, the lobby's efforts would be undermined. However, in the case of the Deal, there was indeed an organized opposition. USINPAC was able to skillfully parry such opposition and exert a positive impact. Therefore, it is likely that this lobby is organized to confront opposition in the future. Also, USINPAC was able to be successful as a relatively small lobby, so an increase in the number of members and resources could only help this lobby to succeed in influencing policy.

The reciprocal relationships established with congressmen are likely to continue or even strengthen in the future as USINPAC continues to increase its campaign contributions and becomes more politically sophisticated. The grassroots efforts USINPAC established are also likely to help extend the success of the lobby. Having made great progress in bridging the gap between the formerly fractured voices of the Hindu and South Asian groups, it is probable that the lobby will be able to leverage these

newly united voices to influence policy in the future. It may be argued that this Deal could have been favorably received by both Hindu and South Asian groups, and its passage may not have required USINPAC's intervention to bridge the gap between the fractured Indian-American voices. Had this been the case, influence on the Deal may have been issue-specific. However, as discussed previously, the BJP was initially vehemently against the Deal, and the Hindu groups in the U.S. who identify with the BJP followed its lead; it was not a foregone conclusion that Hindu groups would support the Deal. Consequently, the fact that USINPAC could eventually bridge these groups was indeed significant, suggesting a level of sophistication that bodes well for continued success.

Future Implications: Beyond USINPAC

The implications of USINPAC's organizational model and success are three-fold. First, if USINPAC's success in influencing policy is not issue specific but rather due to its organizational model, this strongly suggests USINPAC will have the ability to influence U.S. policy on a wide range of issues important to it in the future. Second, USINPAC's organizational model has implications for other ethnic lobbies. Due to the enormous successes of the Jewish lobby and the recent achievements of the Indian-American lobby, which has candidly adopted the organizational structure of the Jewish lobby, it is probable that other ethnic lobbies, to the extent possible, will adopt a similar organizational model. Finally, USINPAC's recent lobbying efforts have implications for the future of U.S. foreign policy. Since the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, ethnic populations in the U.S. have risen rapidly. It has taken time for these ethnic populations to settle into the U.S., and only now are they expressing a desire to make their voices heard. Just as the Indian-American lobby has recently bolstered its organizational

strength to consolidate its voice in the public arena, as other ethnic groups organize to push their agendas, U.S. foreign policy may be increasingly shaped by ethnic minorities through their concentrated, well-funded, and aggressive lobbies.

Final Remarks

USINPAC has built a foundation which indicates that it is likely to have success in influencing U.S. congressional policy in the future. However, such success in influencing congressional policy is dependent on a partnership with a willing administration that views favorably a continued warming of the U.S.-India relationship. The recent election of President Barack Obama leaves some uncertainty as to this administration's relationship with India and thus the future of USINPAC's effectiveness. While President Bush was exceedingly enthusiastic about developing a partnership with India, President Obama may be less committed to such a policy. As the *India Times* recently stated, "[while] former US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice was on record that the US was committed to building up India as an influential global player...the Obama administration has virtually put on the backburner the US-India civil nuclear cooperation agreement of October 2008. It has yet to work on its global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda and to determine where the agreement with India fits in with any new global architecture."¹⁰⁰

Although the decisions of President Obama regarding the future of the Deal may not be the only factor determining the future of the relationship between India and the United States, it is likely that without a presidential commitment to making the Deal work, USINPAC will have a hard time influencing large-scale policy initiatives. Due to

¹⁰⁰ M.K. Bahadrakumar, "India frets over Obama's Chinamania," *Asia Times* 14 Mar. 2009; Accessed: Mar 2009. <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KC14Df01.html>

the ambiguities inherent in H.R. 7081, it will be up to the Obama Administration to follow through on the commitments of the Deal and thus continue the warming relationship between India and the United States.

USINPAC has done its part in ensuring that it has the capability to influence Congress on a wide range of U.S. policies in the future. Now, what lies ahead for this lobby will be, in large part, contingent upon future administrations' decisions about how they will treat the U.S.-India partnership.

Chart 1

Voting Cycle 2006:

HOUSE

Total to Democrats: \$51,200

Total to Republicans: \$58,549

Congressman	Donation from USINPAC	Vote on H.R. 7081
Akin, Todd (R-MO)	\$1,000	Aye
Bass, Charles (R-NH)	\$500	N/A
Berman, Howard L (D-CA)	\$1,000	Aye
Bhakta, Raj Peter (R-PA)	\$1,000	N/A
Bilirakis, Gus (R-FL)	\$1,000	Aye
Blumenauer, Earl (D-OR)	\$2,000	No
Cannon, Chris (R-UT)	\$3,500	Aye
Clemons, Bret Michael (D-NH)	\$500	N/A
Coble, Howard (R-NC)	\$1,000	Aye
Crowley, Joseph (D-NY)	\$500	Aye
Davis, Tom (R-VA)	\$1,000	Aye
DeLay, Tom (R-TX)	\$500	N/A
Doolittle, John T (R-CA)	\$1,049	Abstain
Engel, Eliot L (D-NY)	\$1,000	Aye
Etheridge, Bob (D-NC)	\$2,900	Aye
Faleomavaega, Eni F H (D-AS)	\$5,000	N/A
Fitzpatrick, Michael G (R-PA)	\$2,000	N/A
Hall, Ralph M (R-TX)	\$2,000	Aye
Hoekstra, Peter (R-MI)	\$1,000	Aye
Honda, Mike (D-CA)	\$2,000	Aye
Hoyer, Steny H (D-MD)	\$1,000	Aye
Israel, Steve (D-NY)	\$2,000	Aye
Issa, Darrell (R-CA)	\$1,000	Aye
Jindal, Bobby (R-LA)	\$4,000	N/A
Kellam, Phil (D-VA)	\$500	N/A
Lantos, Tom (D-CA)	\$4,500	N/A
Manzullo, Don (R-IL)	\$11,000	Aye
McDermott, Jim (D-WA)	\$6,000	No
Miller, Brad (D-NC)	\$2,900	Aye
Moran, Jim (D-VA)	\$5,000	Aye
Oberstar, James L (D-MN)	\$1,000	No
Pallone, Frank Jr (D-NJ)	\$2,500	Aye
Pence, Mike (R-IN)	\$6,500	Aye
Price, David (D-NC)	\$2,900	Aye
Reichert, Dave (R-WA)	\$2,000	Aye
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R-FL)	\$10,000	Aye

Royce, Ed (R-CA)	\$1,000	Aye
Sessions, Pete (R-TX)	\$1,000	Aye
Sodrel, Michael E (R-IN)	\$2,000	N/A
Watson, Diane E (D-CA)	\$2,500	No
Wexler, Robert (D-FL)	\$1,000	Aye

SENATE

Total to Democrats: \$3,650

Total to Republicans: \$9,100

Senator	Donation from USINPAC	Vote on H.R. 7081
Alexander, Lamar (R-TN)	\$1,100	Aye
Bayh, Evan (D-IN)	\$2,100	Aye
Cardin, Ben (D-MD)	\$500	Aye
Cornyn, John (R-TX)	\$2,000	Aye
Graham, Lindsey (R-SC)	\$1,000	Aye
Kennedy, Edward M (D-MA)	\$1,000	Abstain
Kyl, Jon (R-AZ)	\$1,000	Aye
Landrieu, Mary L (D-LA)	\$50	Aye
Lugar, Richard G (R-IN)	\$4,000	Aye

Voting Cycle 2008:

HOUSE

Total to Democrats: \$49,800

Total to Republicans: 7,000

Congressman	Donation from USINPAC	Vote on H.R. 7081
Akin, Todd (R-MO)	\$1,000	Aye
Berman, Howard L (D-CA)	\$1,000	Aye
Bilirakis, Gus (R-FL)	\$1,000	Aye
Blumenauer, Earl (D-OR)	\$1,000	No
Connolly, Gerry (D-VA)	\$2,500	Aye
Crowley, Joseph (D-NY)	\$7,500	Aye
Etheridge, Bob (D-NC)	\$4,400	Aye
Faleomavaega, Eni F H (D-AS)	\$2,500	N/A
Hodes, Paul W (D-NH)	\$3,000	Aye
Honda, Mike (D-CA)	\$2,000	Aye
Israel, Steve (D-NY)	\$2,000	Aye
Madia, Ashwin (D-MN)	\$9,500	Aye
McDermott, Jim (D-WA)	\$1,000	No
Miller, Brad (D-NC)	\$4,400	Aye

Moran, Jim (D-VA)	\$1,000	Aye
Pallone, Frank Jr (D-NJ)	\$9,000	Aye
Pence, Mike (R-IN)	\$2,500	Aye
Price, David (D-NC)	\$1,000	Aye
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R-FL)	\$3,500	Aye
Shuler, Heath (D-NC)	\$1,000	No
Wexler, Robert (D-FL)	\$1,000	Abstain
Wilson, Joe (R-SC)	\$1,000	N/A

SENATE

Total to Democrats: 9,800

Total to Republicans: 3,000

Senator	Donation from USINPAC	Vote on H.R. 7081
Cornyn, John (R-TX)	\$2,000	Aye
Dodd, Christopher (D-CT)	\$2,300	Aye
Kerry, John (D-MA)	\$2,500	Aye
Kyl, Jon (R-AZ)	\$1,000	Aye
Martin, James Francis (D-GA)	\$500	N/A
Mikulski, Barbara A (D-MD)	\$1,000	Aye
Shaheen, Jeanne (D-NH)	\$1,000	N/A
Swett, Katrina (D-NH)	\$500	N/A
Warner, Mark (D-VA)	\$2,000	N/A

Aye=Voted in favor of H.R. 7081

No=Voted against H.R. 7081

Abstain=Refrained from voting on H.R. 7081

N/A= Did not vote on H.R. 7081 (not yet elected, not elected, not re-elected, not able to vote)

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