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## COMMENTARY

### A Great Sucking Sound from India

Commentary by Chris Chatwood

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I remember hearing many management catch phrases during my working career as a software engineer. Such terms and books as the "One Minute Manager", "Quality: I Know It When I See It" or the ever famous "Who Moved My Cheese". Today American CEOs are introducing the American worker to still more management catch phrases. Two of the latest are off-shoring and outsourcing. It is not that these terms haven't been in the CEO lexicon for sometime it's just that they were usually only used in CEO Speak when talking about manufacturing. If you were a CEO ten years ago and didn't outsource manufacturing jobs to China or wherever else labor was cheapest you would probably have been laughed out of the National CEO League, had to return your key to the CEO's locker room and your chances of being inducted into the CEO Hall of Fame would be about as good as Pete Rose getting into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

The reduction in manufacturing in the United States meant the American worker was now free to return to school and retrain themselves for knowledge based employment rather than menial assembly line drudgery. America's workers re-educated themselves to become chemist, engineers, accountants and software engineers. They retrained themselves for these and many other knowledge based jobs while Hurricane NAFTA was circulating in the Gulf of Mexico sucking more and more of America's manufacturing infrastructure to Mexico and points south.

Well today it is not Hurricane NAFTA but Hurricane FREE TRADE that is sucking the knowledge based jobs out of the United States to such exotic locals as China and India. If history repeats itself and I believe it does, we will see the same thing that happened to manufacturing jobs happen to professional jobs. Jobs will continue to go overseas because CEOs, Economist and Politicians have discovered that the winds of Free Trade are inevitable and no economic or social structure can withstand the category 5 devastation that such a storm encompasses.

Most things that happen in nature usually have a cause and effect relationship of some sort or another. In the case of a Hurricane it begins as a tropical depression which grows as it feeds off of warm ocean currents in the Caribbean. The winds of Free Trade are similarly strengthened by the need of CEOs to increase economic efficiency in order to boost corporate profits. Increased economic efficiency and greater profits are not the only energy sources that Free Trade depends on to sustain its economic whirlwind. At the eye of the storm are found special interest groups that help propel and guide the storm for their benefit. One such group is known as USINPAC.

The US-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) describes itself as a bipartisan political action committee promoting the interests of the Indian American community. The Indian Express in a November 19, 2002 article describing USINPAC, *Indian toehold in US political whirlpool*, declared, "The American political process at one level is transparent and simple - you pay money, you get results. ... "A strong, well-organized lobby of Indian Americans can push for a clearer convergence of goals between the two countries, more than the jaded bureaucrats are prone to do."

According to Sanjay Puri, the Executive Director of USINPAC, "It is estimated that the Indian American community contributed more than \$7 million in the 2000 Presidential Election." ... "With an Indian American community of nearly 2 million, we must make sure that we support candidates that best represent our interests and we also must make sure that each candidate knows that we expect to be well represented in an Administration that we will help elect." Puri said.

As an American citizen my question to Mr. Puri and USINPAC is what are these important issues and how much will they cost the American taxpayer? Taking a look at the USINPAC website some of the issues USINPAC is promoting are to:

- Ask U.S. Congressmen to, "Oppose HR 2688, a bill introduced on July 9, 2003 by Representative Thomas Tancredo (R-CO). This bill seeks to eliminate the H1-B visa program".
- Prevent any protectionist legislation on IT outsourcing at the Federal level.
- Recognize the importance of the US-India partnership for the 21st century, and create a counterpart to the Caucus on India and Indian Americans in the US House of Representatives and to the Indo-US Parliamentary Forum.
- Support initiatives to provide technical, financial and infrastructure assistance to India to help fight the AIDS crisis.
- Concern for India's position on the UN Security Council
- Support for trade and the outsourcing of jobs.
- Concern for Indian immigration to the United States.

How successful has USINPAC and their supporters in the Congressional India Caucus been in meeting their goals? Again looking at USINPAC's website shows:

- USINPAC has stopped the progress of Congressman Tom Tancredo's bill to kill the H1-B visa program
- Democratic Congressman Robert Menendez of N.J. tried but failed to win Congressional appropriation of \$120 million for earthquake relief in Gujarat, India in 2001.
- USINPAC's Efforts on HIV/AIDS in India Produce Results - On March 4, 2004 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved an amendment by Senator Jon S. Corzine (D, NJ) making India eligible for assistance under the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The amendment furthers a key objective of USINPAC's AIDS India Initiative - making the HIV/AIDS epidemic in India a US foreign policy priority by securing increased funding for prevention and treatment, bridging identified gaps in funding and program needs. USINPAC is planning to hold a joint Senate/House briefing and a hearing on combating HIV/AIDS in India in the near future.

- On February 14, 2003 USINPAC, the largest Caucus in the House of Representatives, organized the first India Caucus day on Capital Hill. Adil Zanolbhai, Director McKinsey and Co., and a USINPAC delegate, expressed concern over the recently passed New Jersey law that bans state government IT outsourcing to offshore companies. Rep. Joe Crowley (D-NY) co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, expressed his grave disappointment with the passage of the law, and strongly urged members of the Indian American community to actively petition their elected officials and members of the India Caucus to stop such laws from being enacted.
- The US India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) strongly urged the 143 members of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, the largest Caucus in the House, to proactively engage with the Indian American community in resolving its concerns. The call was issued during the occasion of the first India Caucus Day organized by USINPAC at Capitol Hill on February 13, 2003. USINPAC organized India Caucus Day to urge the Caucus to develop a concerted plan to address the issues facing the Indian American community.

One of the goals of the USINPAC was to create a caucus in the U.S. Senate similar to the caucus in the U.S. House. Well, it appears that this goal has become reality. I noticed in the Hindustan Times for April 30, 2004 there was an article bearing the following headline: Hillary, Cornyn launch Senate India Caucus.

Quickly going to the UNSINPAC website I find the following self congratulatory news headline: USINPAC Helps Launch U.S. Senate India Caucus.

A similar story in the India Times stated that: "The Caucus, launched by Republican Senator John Cornyn and Democratic Senator Hillary Clinton, includes Senate Majority Leader Republican Bill Frist and Senate Minority Leader Democrat Tom Daschle who vowed to do their best to bring the two democratic nations even closer. Senator Cornyn said the Caucus had 32 members and added more are expected to join it soon – an impressive achievement in a chamber of 100 members. A similar Caucus is already there in the much larger House of Representatives, which began with nine members and has grown to 185. "

You know it's sort of funny, before I got into politics, I always thought that the U.S. Senate and House were supposed to represent the U.S. of A. not India. It sure seems like politics is all about special interest, money and influence instead of what is the right thing to do for the United States and the American citizen.

Maybe this election the American voters need to remind some Senators and Representatives that we might want to outsource their jobs to India and pay someone in New Delhi or Bangalore \$5,000 dollars apiece to legislate for the United States. Calculating the savings comes out to about \$15,200,000 and \$66,880,000 for the Senate and House respectively. Combining these we get an annualized savings of \$82,080,000.

On second thought though I bet we could save even more by outsourcing Congress to China? If all we care about is the bottom line and saving money why not?

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