

Jagdish Bhagwati Festschrift Gala Dinner
Remarks by George Rupp

I wish I could claim during my time here that we managed to get the air conditioning system in Low Rotunda up to snuff, but, clearly, we didn't manage to do that, nor has my successor in the last three years managed to do that.

It's very hard to follow Bob Solow reminiscing about Jagdish Bhagwati, since they have so many years together, way back when. But I'm nonetheless delighted to have this opportunity to celebrate the personal connections that Jagdish and I have had over the years.

First, we share a love of India. Jagdish got there earlier, with his birth in 1934. I didn't get there until 35 years later, in 1969, when Nancy and our older daughter, Kathy, and I, were *en route* to a year in Sri Lanka. Nonetheless, for more than the past 35 years, I have shared with Jagdish a fascination with his native country.

We also share involvement in the Jagdish Bhagwati Chair here at Columbia. I will resist elaborating all of the details of how this chair came to be named in honor of Jagdish. But I am pleased to report that one of the very first fundraising events I had as the incoming President of Columbia in 1993, it was at the instigation of my fellow Harvard graduate student and then Barnard Faculty member Jack Hawley. And it was an event that was a terrifically energetic occasion to raise money for this professorship. It took a long time in coming, but it was clearly worth the wait. I know that the chair is a wonderful resource for Columbia, one that is enhanced through its association with Jagdish.

My third connection to Jagdish is that I had the honor to be the president of Columbia who appointed him to our highest academic recognition, that of University Professor. In my post-Columbia life – now, I know that no one ever leaves Columbia completely, but in my semi-post-Columbia life I've continued to interact with Jagdish both in person and through his intellectual engagements and achievements. We have more than a few occasions to be in touch through Columbia bonds, and also by way of his position as a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. In our post-Columbia interactions, we have, in a sense, reenacted our relationship to India. Just as I got to India long after Jagdish was born there, I also came to immigration and refugee issues as a professional preoccupation long after Jagdish had been deeply immersed in such issues.

Actually, I have always been involved in personal terms, since both of my parents were immigrants and most of the family friends I grew up with were immigrants and the children of immigrants. But it was only three years ago, when I joined the International Rescue Committee that I became fully engaged with the challenges that refugees and other displaced people face worldwide. It is exhilarating work, both around the world and in this country, where the International Rescue Committee assists refugees as they restart their lives here. Jagdish got to this set of issues a long time ago. Already, in the 1970s, he called attention to the growing phenomenon of personal mobility and the issues it raises for national tax systems. He edited two symposia on immigration issues and developed a proposal to extend the source country income tax to skilled migrants abroad, the so-called Bhagwati tax, that is now, again, being discussed in various scholarly and policy forums.

In his recent publications, since all of you are economists who read all these essays well know, he continues to address such issues, issues of the movement not only of money, goods and services, but also of people. I have in mind here the books that have collected his essays, not including the op-ed pieces in the last few days, but *A Stream of Windows* – listen to the subtitle – *Unsettling Reflections on Trade, Immigration, and Democracy*, 1998; *The Wind of a Hundred Days: How Washington Mismanaged Globalization*, 2000; and *In Defense of Globalization*, in 2004. As you know, Jagdish is currently the director of Columbia's program on international migration, economics, ethics, and law and also addresses the subject of international migration through his post at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Over 35 years ago I came to share enchantment with his native India, and I now am fully engaged in issues that he has addressed for those same 35 years. So I am pleased and honored to join with you in celebrating that doubled 35 years, plus the 35 years that came before, for an extraordinarily full 70 years in the life of our distinguished friend and colleague, Jagdish Bhagwati.