

### **The importance of remembering**

On Thursday, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal will be hosting a ceremony on Parliament Hill for National Holocaust Memorial Day.

Dignitaries, including Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney and Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, will be presenting plaques to honor enablers of Holocaust legislation. A rabbi and the Hindu Conference of Canada will also be presenting awards.

Hindus worldwide have a special bond with the Jewish community and a shared understanding that denial of mass genocides constitutes an egregious sin. As a small community, Jews throughout history have been driven from their historical homeland and forced to endure repeated pogroms and genocide in other nations. The establishment of Israel as a Jewish homeland ranks as one of the great events of our era.

Hindus, although too numerous to be driven from the South Asian Hindu homeland, have been subject to massive genocide and occupation since the 7th Century. American historian William Durant and Nobel Prize Winner VS Naipaul describe the Islamic occupation as the bloodiest saga in history, with an estimated 80 million slaughtered and over 50,000 temples smashed.

Today, political correctness and the threat of violence encourages the suppression of this ghastly chapter of history. The Jewish people have heroically prevented the obscenities of the Holocaust from being buried and suppressed, despite the attempts of white supremacists and leaders like Iran's noxious President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Hindu leaders like Savarkar and Arun Shourie have been among the strongest supporters of Zionism. The BJP political party opened up relations between India and Israel in the 1990s, and today these two democracies collaborate in technology, space, and military ties.

This is a natural outgrowth of Hindu tradition. Hindu kingdoms of South Asia merit the distinction of being the only locations in the world which have never seen anti-Semitism. Some of the world's oldest Jewish communities were refugees from Middle Eastern and European oppression sheltered in Hindu kingdoms.

In February, the Hindu Conference of Canada and the Speaker's Action Group jointly presented a seminar "Anti Semitism and Hinduphobia." The speakers revealed similarities in hatred against both communities often sprang from the same sources; those spreading the hate were closely aligned with deniers of the existence of historical horrors.

Holocaust deniers and those who seek to deny genocides, such as the obscenities perpetrated against Hindus, are the close cousins of the people who pulled the triggers. The adage "those who forget the lessons of history are doomed to repeat" is appropriate and timely.

Great organizations like the Simon Wiesenthal Institute, with events like National Holocaust Memorial Day, are helping all of us to preserve our humanity by ensuring that we never forget ... and thus never repeat.

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