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# India is right

As noted in *The New York Times* and also *India Abroad* (August 8), Secretary of State John F Kerry has been going out of his way to woo Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, yet it is important to understand the unequal relationship between India and the United States dating back to the late 1940s, with the US triumphant after World War II while India was just emerging from colonial rule.

A recent *Times* article, headlined, 'In India, Kerry Seeks Compromise With Prime Minister', notes that the US 'is frustrated' because India is demanding, as a condition of its acceptance of a new trade agreement, that World Trade Organization rules on agricultural subsidies be waived so that India can subsidize grain production and storage, which Indian officials consider necessary to protect the poor in case of inadequate harvests.

The present WTO rules require India to allow the import of grains priced far below those produced in India. Indian farmers produce more than enough grain to feed the country, but if the US is allowed to dump our highly subsidized huge grain surpluses in India, close to 400,000 farmers will be driven out of farming.

Though the US today provides around five and a half times more subsidies to its large farmers than India would need to carry out its program, the US and the European Union oppose India's plan on the grounds that it would 'create a massive new loophole for potentially unlimited trade-distorting subsidies.'

But, in fact, the greatest distortion of trade results from a waiver obtained by these countries in 1948 soon after WWII, in developing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, allowing them to give huge subsidies to farmers — continued in the recent passed farm bill in the US — giving them to



LUCAS JACKSON/REUTERS

Secretary of State John Kerry with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, August 1. India is sticking to its WTO guns coincided with Kerry's India visit

large private farms and corporate farms — including some who are subsidized not to produce anything — and excluding US family farms.

The plan which the US and the EU are pushing through the WTO is parallel to the way in which the Indian textile industry was destroyed by the British in colonial times, and would probably produce a similar result.

Who will benefit if the present WTO ban on subsidies continues to apply to India, but not to the Western countries? India wants this issue decided on in 2014, not sometime in the future.

**Professor Joan P Mencher**  
New York City

## Good experience with Cox and Kings

I have been seeing a lot of letters criticizing Cox and Kings for their handling of visa and passport processing. I recently helped my elderly friend to apply for a 10-year visa and was pleasantly surprised at how easy and fast the whole process was.

The procedure to apply for the visa was straight forward for the most part. I did have a few questions; I called Cox and Kings and my call was answered in a reasonable time. The representative was polite and answered all my questions. We sent the application off and

got it back in exactly a week!

My experience with Cox and Kings has been positive. I just wanted to share my experience amidst the many letters of criticisms towards them.

**Gayathri Ramachandran**  
Roanoke, Virginia

## Stay secular

I was pleasantly surprised to read the article about Saadat Hasan Manto (*India Abroad Magazine*, August 8). He was one of my two favorite authors, the other being Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay.

I read most of Manto's fictional work during my adolescent years. He was

such a creative genius. When he left India, India lost one of her heroes. India's loss was not a gain for Pakistan, as the new country could not celebrate someone like Manto.

Now, Pakistan has become a fundamentalist state and people like Manto have been dealing with a worse situation in Pakistan than ever before. India must maintain its secular status and not turn into a Hindu state because then people like Manto would have no place in India either.

**Yogendra Upadhyay**  
Roslyn Heights  
New York