

India
Feb. 19, 1956

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 Retain classification Change/ classify to CONF
 With concurrence of CIA
 Declassify In part and excise as shown
EO 12356, Sec. 1.3 (a) (1)
FFC/HDR by TD 10 / 17 / 77
Withdrawal No. 273-86

4. BRITAIN MAY PERSUADE INDIA NOT TO PURCHASE SOVIET AIRCRAFT

Comment on:



Reports from the press [redacted]

[redacted] suggest that Britain will be able to persuade New Delhi not to purchase Soviet military aircraft and to reject a Soviet offer to establish a factory in India for construction of Soviet-type aircraft.

Press

[redacted] key civil and military authorities continue to be opposed to Indian dependence on the USSR for spare parts, instructors, and technicians.

India, which already manufactures British Vampire jet fighters under contract, is in the final stages of negotiating with Britain for a plant to construct Gnat jet fighters and is discussing the purchase of Canberra jet bombers. Since Britain now seems willing to put a higher priority than previously on aid and deliveries to India, New Delhi is unlikely to purchase or manufacture Soviet fighters. The picture regarding bombers is less clear, but appears to favor Britain rather than the USSR.
(Concurred in by ORR)

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✓ USSR-Military-Aircraft
✓ CIA

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