From Russia with Love: Dissidents, Defectors and the Politics of Asylum in Cold War India

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ABSTRACT
During the Cold War defectors were invariably paraded as propaganda trophies. The wider political significance of defections has hitherto been interrogated almost exclusively in an East–West binary. Utilising recently declassified documents from three continents, attention is focused on the elided role played by the developing world in the Cold War asylum story and, specifically, that of non-aligned India. By reinterpreting international responses to three Soviet defections that occurred in India in the 1960s, new light is shed upon political asylum as a source of North–South tension and discord.

In January 1968, Suman Mulgaokar, editor of the influential Indian daily, the Hindustan Times, published an editorial entitled, ‘The Right of Asylum.’ Mulgaokar was an acerbic and long-standing critic of the ruling Congress Party’s left-leaning socio-economic policies and pragmatic approach towards authoritarian Eastern bloc Communist regimes. His interest in political asylum was piqued by a series of high-profile incidents that saw nationals from behind the Iron Curtain seek refuge in the Indian capital’s Western missions. Mulgaokar’s newspaper had, wittingly or not, served as a vehicle for the dissemination of Western counterpropaganda designed to weaken Communist influence in the subcontinent. Back in 1964, the British Information Research Department (IRD), a shadowy covert information arm of the Foreign Office with close links to MI6, or the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), recorded with satisfaction that the Hindustan Times had, ‘not been inactive on our behalf recently.’¹ Four years later, in noting the consternation that Cold War defections had engendered in Indian government circles, Mulgaokar observed wryly that:

To have three Russian defections occur in your country within three years is embarrassing enough. When one of the defectors is Stalin’s daughter, the matter gets much worse. When the third of the defectors … goes about stating that … he had ‘chosen’ India to defect from because visas for India were relatively easy
to obtain, the unusually high colour of Indian Home and External Affairs Ministry officials becomes easy to understand.²

Less easy to comprehend, in Mulgaokar’s opinion, was an aide memoire that the Indian Government circulated to diplomatic missions in New Delhi on 30 December 1967. Originating in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the note stated that it was, ‘well established that the affording of asylum is not within the purposes of a Diplomatic Mission.’ Should any Mission receive a request for asylum, the MEA directive added, it should be refused.³ The instruction backed Indian officials into an awkward corner. Were the American or the Soviet embassies to take in a defector, Mulgaokar observed, the MEA faced, ‘the choice of either doing nothing, which would make it look impotent, or of invading the Embassy premises which would be a violation of the conventions of courtesy between nations.’ In respect of low-level and largely benign political refugees, the adoption of such a rigid policy appeared unnecessarily punitive and counterproductive. It made little sense in such cases, Mulgaokar opined, ‘for India to get into a flap merely because its soil was used to stage the defection.’⁴

The Indian government’s decision to issue a directive on political asylum was triggered by the defection of Aziz Saltimovitch Ulug-Zade, a lecturer in Hindi at Moscow State University. Ulug-Zade had travelled to India as part of a Soviet Komsomol group, or political youth delegation. On 19 December 1967, just hours before he was due to return to the Soviet Union, Ulug-Zade walked out of the Hotel Ranjit in New Delhi, hailed a taxi, and made for the British High Commission in the diplomatic enclave of Chanakyapuri. Having been turned away by the British, Ulug-Zade tried his luck at the American embassy a few hundred yards further down the same street. The Americans proved more welcoming. To the fury of the MEA and the Soviet embassy, the US ambassador, Chester Bowles, offered Ulug-Zade sanctuary and agreed to assist his defection to the West.⁵

Diplomatic tensions over the Ulug-Zade affair escalated rapidly. In the Indian press, Soviet officials charged their American counterparts with kidnapping the young Russian teacher. Finding itself caught in the middle of a spat involving the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union, an alarmed Indian government saw its relationships with all three countries, and its domestic credentials as a safe haven for victims of political persecution, come under pressure. Above all, the MEA worried that India’s acquisition of an unwelcome reputation as a Cold War clearing-house, or the ‘Berlin of the East,’ threatened serious harm to the nation’s international relations.⁶

From the early 1960s, the Indian government was embroiled in a succession of diplomatic disputes involving defections from East to West. Notably, the Ulug-Zade case had been preceded a few months earlier by an incident that dominated global news headlines. In March 1967, Svetlana Iosigovna Alliluyeva, the only daughter of the former Soviet dictator, Joseph Stalin, defected through
the US embassy in New Delhi. Further back, in 1962, concurrent with the Sino-
Indian border war and the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vladislav Stepanovich Tarasov,
a twenty-five-year-old Soviet merchant seaman, jumped ship in the eastern
Indian port of Kolkata. After a protracted legal wrangle in the Indian courts,
that saw New Delhi entangled in an acrimonious exchange between the Soviet
Union and the United States, the Russian sailor left the subcontinent to begin
a new life in the West. The Tarasov episode came at a point when India was
reeling from a humiliating military defeat inflicted by China, and the national
government was actively courting American and Soviet assistance to stave off
what, at one point, appeared a threat to the India Republic’s very survival.
More broadly, defections staged in India served as an unwelcome irritant in
relations between the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain, when
these countries were attempting to forge new and more productive ties in the
wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The ten-year period between the Sino-
Indian border war of 1962, and the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1971, witnessed
India distance itself from the West and become more reliant on Soviet
support. In this context, the government of India found itself scrambling to
contain diplomatic fallout from defections staged on its soil that threatened to
undermine a strategic tilt towards Moscow.

The significance of nonaligned states and, more specifically, India, in the
transnational story of Cold War asylum has been obscured by a tendency on
the part of historians, and producers of popular culture, to approach questions
surrounding defection in a narrow East–West binary. The scant attention that
has been given to defections that occurred inside the developing world has
largely privileged personal narratives of the individuals concerned, and margin-
alised or ignored the role and agency of Asian and African nations. This article
tilts the prevailing axis of the Cold War asylum debate to examine the diplomatic
impact of dissidents and defections from a North–South perspective. It draws
upon, and seeks to further develop, recent scholarship by Odd Arne Westad,
Robert McMahon, and Paul Thomas Chamberlain that reinterprets the Cold
War as a global conflict. The ideological and socio-political prescriptions for
modernity and progress advanced by Washington and Moscow after 1945,
were buffeted by local influences across the developing world. To their discom-
fort, the superpowers discovered that the politics of Cold War asylum in India
required pragmatism and compromise to be exercised on all sides, and not
merely by New Delhi.

Cold War defections placed considerable strain on the practice of Cold War
non-alignment by states such as India. Of late, scholarship undertaken by Itty
Abraham, Nataša Mišković, Lorenz Lüthi, and Christopher Lee, has emphasised
how Western neo-colonialism, and the Cold War interventionism of Moscow
and Washington, intersected with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). As
Lüthi has noted, ‘Although the Non-Aligned Movement tried to transcend the
Cold War, its foundation in 1961 was triggered, and its first dozen years were
shaped, by the superpower conflict. In the case of India, the long-1960s, beginning with the inauguration of the NAM, in Belgrade, at the beginning of the decade, and culminating with the organisations gathering in Algiers, in 1973, saw New Delhi’s adherence to non-alignment stretched thin and, eventually, snap. The policy drivers that lay behind India’s shift away from the United States and towards the Soviet Union during this period are manifold. Tensions with Washington over issues as diverse as the Vietnam War, food aid, and Bangladesh’s emergence as a nation state, all contributed to Indian premier Indira Gandhi’s decision to enter into a security pact with the Soviet Union in 1971. Yet, the record of East–West defection in the subcontinent during a tumultuous period in its recent history, suggests that India was as much an active participant in the demise of non-alignment in South Asia, as it was a hapless victim.

Furthermore, this paper reperiodizes the issue of political asylum. To date, a preponderant focus has been placed on early Cold War defections, such as those of Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, and Kim Philby, members of the so-called ‘Cambridge Five’ spy ring. Equally, much has been made of espionage activity and political asylum in the later Cold War period, when the process of détente faltered and East–West tensions intensified in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, in December 1979, and Ronald Reagan’s subsequent elevation to the White House. Yet, from the mid-1950s, the politics of defection entered a new temporal and geographic phase. Numbers of Soviet defections staged in Europe slowed as border controls between East and West Germany were tightened and, in 1961, the Berlin Wall went up. Meanwhile, defections at points of Cold War intersection outside Europe multiplied. Appeals for political asylum increased on the part of ‘non-returnees’ from state-sponsored Eastern bloc travel and trade groups visiting Asia, and from ‘jumpers,’ or absconders, on Soviet ships docked in ports across the developing world. Before long, such shifts in the pattern of defections began to be represented in popular culture. In the early 1970s, the novel, Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy, penned by the eponymous espionage author, and one-time member of the British secret State, John Le Carrè, cast a Soviet defection episode not in the well-worn literary borderlands between East and West Germany, but in Istanbul, the gateway between Europe and Asia. Prior to the Berlin Wall, two-thirds of defectors had been Slavic soldiers from the Eastern bloc who simply walked across Europe to freedom in the West. By the mid-1960s, under the Brezhnev regime, the ranks of Soviet defectors were dominated by intellectuals that had travelled beyond the Iron Curtain as part of cultural exchange programmes. Typically, such individuals were members of Soviet non-Slavic minorities. Moscow’s armed subjugation of the Prague spring in 1968, coming in the wake the crushing of earlier nationalist uprisings in Hungary in 1956, and East Germany and Poland in 1953, unsettled citizens in the USSR’s eastern republics. At the same time, crackdowns by Brezhnev’s government on dissident and human rights movements at home, alienated artists
and intellectuals. As will become apparent, Soviet defectors in India frequently referenced Moscow’s repression of academic and cultural freedoms as a rationale for their actions, a fact that Western propagandists were not slow to encourage and exploit.

In a sense, it is understandable that so little attention has been paid within Cold War narratives to incidents of defection and political asylum that occurred within the context of decolonisation. Historical enquiry in this area has traditionally been hampered by government secrecy surrounding the processes for identifying would-be Cold war defectors, the roles played by intelligence and security services in facilitating defection, and state management of publicity and diplomatic blowback in asylum cases. In this analysis, to minimise the impact of such restrictions, recently released material from state archives in the United Kingdom, the United States, and India, has been triangulated with private papers and secondary sources to provide the clearest picture yet of the impact of Cold War defection on India’s international relations. Specifically, the declassification, early in 2019, of new material from the Information Research Department (FCO 168), has significantly augmented the existing British record covering defection that has been drip-fed to researchers since the 1990s (notably, through file series FO 1093, FO 1110, and FCO 95). In addition, in the United States, the opening of previously embargoed Cold War records by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and within the presidential library system, most especially papers held by the Lyndon Johnson and Gerald Ford Libraries, have transformed understanding of American responses to prominent political asylum cases. Likewise, it is only very recently that important Indian material relating to defection and asylum has become available for public consultation at the National Archives of India and the Nehru Museum and Memorial Library, in New Delhi.

Considerable obstacles remain to scholars attempting to navigate the history of Cold War defection in South Asia. Not least, in keeping with a policy favoured by Britain’s SIS, India’s intelligence agencies and, above all, the nation’s external intelligence service, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), continue to keep their organisational archives firmly closed. Back in 2004, a leading intelligence historian noted that the British government had, ‘fought a long campaign to ensure that much of the history of its intelligence services remains secret’. The same could be said of administrations in United States and India. While much of the record of the covert Cold War in the UK, US, and South Asia remains elided, matters have improved considerably over the last two decades in terms of state transparency in respect of intelligence history. It has now become possible, for the first time, to write comprehensive accounts of India’s secret Cold War that are informed by official documentation from three continents.

Significantly, this paper recovers the importance of hitherto marginalised actors to the history of Cold War defection and political asylum in the
developing world. Local politicians, human rights activists, lawyers, and journalists, competed alongside and, on occasions, collaborated with, the intelligence services and covert propaganda agencies of the Western and the Eastern blocs to shape popular attitudes and influence national policy on the question of asylum. For much of the early Cold War period, the Indian state adopted a proactive, if not altogether successful approach to this issue. Concerned that political refugees would disrupt India’s relationships with important international partners, including the Soviet Union, China, the United States and Great Britain, New Delhi proved to be anything but a passive player in the high drama of Cold War defection.

Equally, in framing approaches to Cold War asylum, Indian governments came under pressure from a judiciary, a robust national press, and querulous parliaments, elements within which, on both the left and right of the political spectrum, approached the asylum question as a means of orientating India’s wider international relations. The importance of the Indian media to the struggle for Independence waged in the first half of the twentieth century, and British efforts to co-opt the Indian press in a counter-propaganda campaign designed to sustain British imperialism, have been interrogated by scholars elsewhere.20 Less attention has been placed on the extent to which Indian national perceptions of the press as guardians of individual liberties continued to impact Indian politics in respect of defection and asylum after 1947. Following in the footsteps of their imperial predecessors, Western Cold War propagandists worked with sympathetic Indian publishers, journalists, and newspaper editors, to exploit debates surrounding political asylum in a bid to arrest what policymakers in London and Washington saw as an alarming lurch to the left by New Delhi, both domestically and in the arena of global diplomacy.

In privileging previously elided local Indian agency, therefore, this paper looks to complicate established accounts of the emergence of a human rights dimension of international diplomacy. In the case of India, tensions between domestic and international considerations surrounding questions of dissidents, political asylum, and the application of universal human rights, directly informed policy decisions taken from the very foundation of the Indian Republic.21 One legacy of India’s anti-imperial struggle, and the oppressive security apparatus employed by the British colonial state to frustrate it, was an antipathy towards work performed by intelligence agencies and a corresponding emphasis on freedom of political expression and individual liberty.22 Indian policymakers, journalists and political activists were often confronted by competing demands to robustly assert state sovereignty and evidence a liberal approach to political asylum while, at the same time, advancing national security by remaining on good terms with both Cold War blocs.

In attempting to navigate the treacherous waters of Cold War defection, India’s leaders were not helped by the persistence of disagreements within the international community over the legal and moral obligations of national states
on the question of asylum. The inviolability of diplomatic premises had been generally accepted by European states as far back as the medieval period. The right of embassies and diplomatic missions to grant individuals asylum, although not always welcomed by local authorities, was invariably upheld. It was not until the twentieth-century that test cases emerged which challenged the legal principle of diplomatic asylum. Notably, in 1950, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled against Columbia’s decision to grant asylum to a prominent Peruvian politician, Haya de la Torre. In its ruling, the ICJ drew a distinction between diplomatic asylum, or asylum which a state grants in its embassy within the territory of another state, and territorial asylum, or asylum granted inside the territory of the state offering asylum. Diplomatic asylum, the ICJ directed, had no basis in general customary law. The ICJ’s position prompted periodic and unsuccessful attempts to revisit the asylum issue and to codify the right of diplomatic asylum in international law. An early draft of article 14 of the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) provided for an expansive definition of the individual’s right to asylum and protection from persecution. However, the UN eventually settled on a more restrictive, and politically anodyne asylum formula, that emphasised members obligations to uphold territorial asylum. Subsequent meetings of UN bodies concerned with diplomatic intercourse and immunities, and further work undertaken by the International Law Commission, failed to agree a common policy on diplomatic asylum.23 Into the 1960s, the validity of diplomatic asylum remained in dispute.

While governments in Britain and the United States took a robust line, in public at least, on the moral imperative of extending Cold War asylum, Indian administrations came to see things differently. In 1959 May, after Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s premier, decided to grant refuge to Tibet’s spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and thousands of his supporters, following a failed revolt against Chinese rule, India’s Ministry of External Affairs made it clear to the UN Commission on Human Rights that the country lacked the economic capacity and infrastructure to accommodate further political refugees. Nor, given New Delhi’s commitment to non-alignment, were Indian policymakers inclined to do so, and run risks of becoming embroiled in superpower disputes.24 Tensions between India’s national security interests and popular Indian support for a liberal political asylum policy were brought sharply home to Nehru by the Dalai Lama episode. Incensed that India’s prime minister had provided Tibetan exiles with a safe haven for the conduct of anti-Chinese activity, and suspicious that the Indian government was colluding with the CIA to foment unrest inside Tibet, Beijing took an increasingly dim view of what it saw as a provocative and unwarranted intrusion by New Delhi in China’s internal affairs.25 In April 1960, having travelled to New Delhi for talks with the Indian government, China’s premier, Zhou Enlai, underlined the extent to which the two states’ differing interpretations of political asylum had poisoned bi-lateral relations. Admonishing his Indian hosts, Zhou made clear that Beijing had:
no objection to the Indian Government granting political asylum to the Dalai Lama. All countries have a right to do so. But the Dalai Lama is today carrying out anti-Chinese activities and encouraging the movement for an independent Tibet. This is beyond the definition of political asylum.26

To an extent, the parallel that Indian journalists drew between Berlin and New Delhi as Cold War cities where the East met the West, and espionage and intrigue were endemic, was understandable. India’s nonalignment accommodated the presence in New Delhi of large diplomatic and commercial missions from both sides of the Iron Curtain. In this, India’s capital was not unique. Cities in other leading countries of the Non-Alignment Movement, and notably Cairo, Jakarta, and Belgrade were, at various times, focal points for East–West competition. The Cold War’s shifting geography, however, guaranteed that India would assume an especially prominent role as a clearing-house for defectors. Directly to the north of the subcontinent lay the communist colossuses of the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. In 1955, an exchange of state visits between Nehru and Khrushchev invigorated moribund Indo-Soviet relations. Soviet economic and technical assistance to India boomed, while politically Moscow courted Indian goodwill by throwing its weight in the UN Security Council behind New Delhi’s claim on the disputed state of Kashmir. Moreover, by the end of Dwight D. Eisenhower’s second presidential term, in 1960, Washington had become concerned both by the growth of Soviet influence in India and the strengthen of indigenous communism in the subcontinent. Eisenhower’s efforts to bring India and the United States closer together, primarily through the provision of American economic assistance, were amplified by his successor, John F. Kennedy. Kennedy saw democratic India as a crucial strategic counterweight to the expansion of communist influence in Asia. At the beginning of the sixties, and most especially for a brief period following the Sino–Indian border war of 1962, the locus of Washington’s effort to contain Asian communism was located not in South Vietnam, but in South Asia.27 The neutral political space afforded by Indian non-alignment combined with the presence on the ground of thousands of government officials and functionaries from the United States and the Soviet Union acted as magnet for would-be-asylum seekers.

The Berlin analogy was also symptomatic of the extent to which foreign intelligence agencies were active in India. The former British SIS officer, and Soviet spy, George Blake, observed that alongside Berlin, India ranked highly in Western intelligence circles as it offered, ‘the most favourable conditions … for establishing contacts with Soviet citizens.’ The presence in India of so many diplomats, non-governmental organisations, technicians, businesspeople, and journalists from the Soviet Union, Britain, and the United States provided ample scope for encouraging defections. In cities such as New Delhi, Blake underlined, ‘there was a wider intercourse than elsewhere between Soviet
diplomatic personnel and local politicians and public and it would be easier therefore for our [SIS] agents to establish contact with them.28

What applied to SIS, also held for the CIA, and Soviet intelligence bodies, such as the Committee for State Security (KGB) and GRU, or foreign military intelligence. By the 1960s, the CIA had a sizable, growing, and active in-country presence in India. Having begun operations from a single ‘station,’ or office, in New Delhi, the Agency extended the geographical scope of its activities, establishing a network of out-stations in Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai. One U.S. diplomat, who served in New Delhi during this period, attested that the intelligence footprint in India was, ‘very large, and very invasive … the CIA was deeply involved in the Indian Government.’29 Indeed, Indian politicians, government officials, and intelligence officers had occasion to collaborate with the CIA, and other foreign intelligence services, when it suited their interests to do so. The Indian government elected to ‘look the other way’ as CIA aircraft violated its airspace in support of Agency sponsored resistance activities in Chinese controlled Tibet. Likewise, New Delhi tacitly approved a CIA operation to spirit the Dalai Lama out of Lhasa and into northern India, in 1959.30

At the same time, a series of young and dynamic KGB chairman, including Alexander Shelepin, Vladimir Semichastny, and the future Soviet leader, Yuri Andropov, enthusiastically supported Moscow’s policy of fermenting wars of national liberation and undermining Western influence across the global South. Under Andropov’s direction, Soviet foreign intelligence agencies concentrated a large proportion of their resources, outside of Europe and North America, in India.31 Oleg Kalugin, then a rising star in the KGB’s First Chief (Foreign Intelligence) Directorate, confirmed that, toward the end of the 1960s, the KGB ‘had scores of sources throughout the Indian government – in intelligence, counterintelligence, the defense and foreign ministries, and the police. The entire country was seemingly for sale, and the KGB and the CIA had deeply penetrated the Indian government.’32

In India and the West, public impressions that defectors were welcome, and would be treated sympathetically as victims of political persecution, belied the fact that national governments often approached the issue of asylum as an unwanted problem. This paper complicates the claim made by some intelligence historians that, ‘encouraging and exploiting defection … was a constant component of US policy toward the USSR throughout the Cold War.’33 Paradoxically, as Western intelligence services hatched plans to stimulate defections, the politicians that they served recoiled from the diplomatic tensions such activity fostered.34 A majority of the defectors moving from East to West were of limited value in strict intelligence terms.35 Moreover, the propaganda bonanza associated with parading defectors before the world’s media was frequently offset in the minds of politicians by the potential such events carried to upset broader foreign policy objectives.
The mere mention of defection induced neuralgic episodes in the British premiers Winston Churchill and Harold Macmillan. In 1954, Churchill expressed alarm that the defection of a KGB officer, Nikolai Khokhlov, would undermine that year’s Geneva summit, at which Britain, France, China, Russia, and the United States met to discuss the fate of Indochina, and the wider Cold War in Asia. Churchill’s ultimately abortive plan to exploit the death of the hard-line Soviet dictator, Joseph Stalin, which had occurred the previous year, and engineer a thaw in Cold War relations between East and West, led the prime minister to veto an SIS request to publicise Khokhlov’s defection. Concurrently, a dramatic escape to the West staged in Australia by Vladimir Petrov, a colonel in KGB, and his wife Evdokia, an official in the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs, provoked a schism in Canberra’s relations with Moscow. It was not until March 1959, that diplomatic contacts were re-established between Australia and the Soviet Union.

Although America’s politicians were generally less squeamish about the pitfalls of embarrassing Moscow by exploiting defectors for propaganda purposes, US President’s did find good cause to rue the politics of political asylum. In 1975, Gerald Ford became enmeshed in a damaging domestic controversy involving the Soviet dissident, and author of the acclaimed Gulag Archipelago, Alexander Solzhenitsyn. In the midst of a period of US-Soviet détente, Ford found himself excoriated by both the left and the right wings of American politics for bowing to pressure from Moscow and refusing to meet with Solzhenitsyn. Moreover, as we will see, in a South Asian context, Soviet defectors could prove as unpopular in Washington as they were reviled in Moscow.

Indian leaders found the challenges inherent in balancing the domestic and international dimensions of political asylum to be equally exacting. At home, officials in New Delhi struggled to maintain a delicate balance between retaining valuable economic and humanitarian assistance provided by the United States, while simultaneously managing a foreign and security policy that tilted increasingly towards the Soviet Union. In such circumstances, Cold War defections that threatened to upset the fragile equilibrium underpinning New Delhi’s relations with Washington and Moscow constituted a headache to policymakers in India, the United States, and the Soviet Union. As the Cold War’s battle-lines solidified in Europe in the early 1960s, and an era of East–West détente got underway, it was in Asia that the issue of political asylum coalesced with regional conflicts and local insurgencies to endanger an uneasy accommodation between the superpowers. The scandals, uncomfortable parliamentary questions, and press scrutiny of security and intelligence activity that habitually accompanied defections staged in Europe in the 1950s were, as we shall see, replicated a decade later in the Indian subcontinent.

**Vladislav Tarasov and the ‘Other’ Crisis of Autumn 1962**

On the evening of 25 November 1962, global tensions ran high. The Cold War superpowers were observing an uneasy truce in the immediate aftermath of the
Cuban Missile Crisis. In India, a shell-shocked nation licked its wounds following a humiliating military defeat at the hands of China in a short but bloody border war. Amidst a febrile international atmosphere, the actions of a young Russian sailor in the subcontinent ignited a political storm, setting off a chain of events that placed India at the centre of worldwide debates on political asylum. Under cover of darkness, Vladislav Stepanovich Tarasov, a twenty-five-year-old merchant seaman from the Ukraine, climbed out of a porthole on the Tchernovtei, a Soviet oil tanker anchored in Kolkata’s King George’s docks, and swam to a nearby American ship, the SS Steel Surveyor. Once aboard the American vessel, Tarasov, clad only a pair of swimming trunks, announced that his life was in danger and asked the ship’s captain for political asylum.40

The Soviet defector claimed to have become disenchanted with restrictions on personal freedoms behind the Iron Curtain. In a series of public statements crafted by America’s Cold War propagandists, Tarasov subsequently proclaimed it had been after listening to Voice of America broadcasts, and reading copies of America, a US magazine distributed in the Soviet Union under a cultural exchange agreement, that he determined to seek a new life in the United States.41 In fact, the Russian sailor, who had a wife and young child back in the USSR, had a troubled marriage, a history of complaining about poor pay and working conditions in the Soviet merchant fleet, and had fallen foul of a political commissar assigned to the Tchernovtei. The discovery in Tarasov’s possession of letters critical of the Soviet regime, and an accompanying threat made by the commissar that the papers would debar him from future voyages abroad, provided the catalyst for an impromptu decision to defect.42

In an effort to prevent Tarasov’s flight to the West, V. Londorev, the Soviet Consul in Kolkata, informed the Indian authorities that the sailor had stolen a small sum of money from his ship before disembarking, was a common criminal, and should be arrested and extradited back to the USSR. Tarasov’s case was the first of its kind in India. The Soviets had never previously submitted a request to the Indian authorities for the extradition of one of their nationals. On 28 November, after the Soviets had, somewhat improbably, provided twelve witnesses to Tarasov’s ‘crime,’ Indian policemen boarded the SS Steel Surveyor and removed the sailor to Kolkata’s central prison.43 Acting on instructions from Washington, local American officials made clear to the Indian administration in West Bengal that the United States regarded the Tarasov affair as political matter, that Soviet allegations of criminality were demonstrably false, and that the defector should be permitted to seek asylum in the West.44

The Indian government was aghast at being caught in the middle of a Cold War dispute between the United States and the Soviet Union, at a time when the nation’s survival appeared to hinge on retaining the support of both superpowers in its conflict with China. The New York Times reflected that New Delhi had been thrown into a panic by, ‘a Soviet sailor … put[ting] a new strain on
India’s embattled policy of non-alignment in the cold war by demanding asylum …

... the Government of India, now caught between the crossfire of two friendly governments, will not find it easy to take a decision on the issue. One of them [an Indian government official] remarked, ‘now it appears that a Sobolev has appeared in Calcutta [Kolkata].’

The allusion to Arkady Sobolev, Soviet ambassador to the United Nations in New York, in the late 1950s, underlined the concern that Indian officials harboured in relation to the Tarasov case. Sobolev had been at the centre of a diplomatic furore after he was charged by the US State Department with coercing five Russian sailors who had defected to the West into returning to the Soviet Union.

To the Nehru administration’s dismay, the Tarasov episode quickly descended into a high farce, every twist and turn of which was splashed across the pages of the world’s press. Having twice been refused bail by local Indian magistrates, Tarasov, with American assistance, took his case to the Indian High Court. On 5 January, as Nehru’s government came under intense pressure from both the Soviet and American embassies to intervene in the case, Tarasov was released on bail by an Indian judge and placed in the custody of Hugh Haight, a local US official. Back in Washington, the State Department poured scorn on Soviet attempts to portray Tarasov as a common criminal and to deny that his actions were politically motivated. Referencing previous Soviet attempts to pin false legal charges on defectors, a State Department spokesman, Lincoln White, defended Tarasov, and reminded journalists pointedly that, ‘we’ve heard of such charges [from Moscow] before.’ Indeed, in concert with colleagues in the IRD, American officials actively sought to leverage the world’s media to secure Tarasov’s defection. Rationalising the approach favoured in London and Washington to the Tarasov case, one IRD officer noted that the seaman’s enforced return to the Soviet Union, ‘would, inter alia, discourage other defections. We assume that TARASOV has useful information. It would appear that the best available means of accomplishing our objective is through international publicity.’

To Moscow’s consternation, the Soviet case against Tarasov appeared compromised after embarrassed Russian officials discovered that a criminal act committed within Indian territorial waters did not constitute legal grounds for extradition. An Indian Extradition Act had passed through the country’s parliament a few months before, but it remained pending government ratification when Tarasov sought asylum. In an exchange of diplomatic notes between Indian and Soviet officials in November and December, the MEA provided the Russians with a copy of the Extradition Act and, more significantly, indicated the precise evidence that an Indian magistrate would expect to see before approving a request for extradition. By coaching the Soviets in the intricacies
of Indian asylum law, the MEA created the impression of having sacrificed its impartiality in the pursuit of national security. Legal advice offered by the MEA to the Soviets was later decried by Indian jurists as tantamount to ‘providing the Russians with a ready-made machine for achieving their object.’

On 10 January 1963, having finished taking evidence, a Kolkata court dismissed the initial Soviet extradition motion against Tarasov. Emerging from the court a free man, Tarasov, in full view of a large contingent of international reporters, was immediately rearrested by the Indian authorities on the basis of new information provided by the Soviet embassy. This asserted that, contrary to previous witness statements, and in line with the MEA’s counsel, the alleged theft committed by Tarasov had, in fact, occurred on the high seas. The extradition case, which by now had assumed the appearance of a cause célèbre in the subcontinent’s media, returned to India’s courts. Two of the country’s leading criminal lawyers, Jai Gopal Sethi and Diwan Chaman Lal, the latter a member of the Upper House of India’s parliament, were engaged by the Soviet and the American embassies in a legal tussle that, as one Western newspaper noted, had ‘all the nuances of a Cold War issue.’

In the background, Soviet and American officials continued to impress upon the MEA the imperative of concluding legal proceedings swiftly, before the global news media latched on to the Tarasov drama and international press coverage complicated New Delhi’s relations with Moscow, Washington, or possibly both the superpowers. An apprehensive US Embassy shared concerns with British colleagues that the Indian government was, ‘under heavy Soviet pressure to hand him [Tarasov] back and may in fact do so.’ The MEA had, the Americans suspected, ‘probably imposed press censorship which would explain [an] absence of further reports on the subject.’ In the circumstances, the Americans ensured that Indian officials were ‘clear that they [the US] will promote widespread publicity for the case if Tarasov is returned [to the Soviets].’ One Indian stringer for the London Daily Express, Prakash Chandra, added weight to the notion that New Delhi was actively obstructing journalist’s efforts to publicise the Tarasov case. Chandra advised contacts in the British High Commission that, ‘he and several other correspondents have been trying to file this story [on Tarasov] since early December but have been frustrated by censorship.’ Meanwhile, the New York Times’ correspondent in India, Tom Brady, who had managed to circumvent Indian government restrictions and file copy on the defection saga, was threatened with deportation by the Indian government.

To the MEA’s irritation, the ponderous wheels of Indian justice in faraway West Bengal continued to turn slowly. During January and February, a series of open court hearings saw Tarasov’s defence counsel call a succession of Soviet officials as witnesses, and pillory each in turn for fabricating documents, withholding material evidence, and committing acts of perjury. To the amusement of the public gallery, one unfortunate Soviet diplomat was asked in court to explain how, precisely, Tarasov could have managed to steal money
from his crewmates, when he had been fished out of Kolkata’s harbour wearing nothing but a pair of flimsy swimming trunks. In the background, as the Tarasov hearing ground slowly on, British IRD officers worked closely with colleagues at the US embassy in London to stimulate media coverage of the Tarasov case, and to keep pressure firmly on the Indian government. During early January, the IRD reassured American officials that Reuters and the BBC had been coopted to shine a spotlight on Tarasov’s plight. Inside the subcontinent, British propagandists channelled background information on the Soviet defector to the Indian press. The IRD’s covert field officer in New Delhi, Peter Joy, informed Whitehall that a number of Indian newspapers, including the Kolkata Current, had ‘made good use of our [IRD] material.’ ‘Press publicity [in] this case is progressively increasing,’ the IRD noted with satisfaction, and was likely to continue to grow unless New Delhi changed tack and facilitated Tarasov’s safe passage to the West.

New Delhi’s patience eventually snapped. At the end of February, a special magistrate, N. L. Bakkar, was appointed by the Indian government to rule on the Soviet case for extradition. Tarasov was put on to a Viscount aircraft and flown to the capital. The denouement to the Tarasov saga played out in a small, dingy court room close to the national parliament. The large press corps of Indian, British, American and Soviet journalists that had now gathered to cover the case endured further weeks of tedious legal argument. To keep press interest in Tarasov alive, the IRD continued to pass unattributable and off-the-record snippets of information to the media. Notably, shortly after Tarasov’s transfer to New Delhi, the IRD tipped off local press contacts, and quietly let it be known on ‘the diplomatic “grapevine,”’ that Anton Fedoseev, Cultural Attaché of the Soviet embassy, and someone who had come to play a prominent role in lobbying the Indian government to return Tarasov to the USSR, was an intelligence officer of the GRU.

After a month of testimony, and four long months since Tarasov had jumped ship, Bakkar dismissed all charges levelled by the Soviets against the defector, who was promptly spirited out of the country by American officials. In a damning verdict, delivered in a detailed 40-page judgement, Bakkar undoubt-edly went much further in condemning Soviet actions than his own government would have wished, given India’s ongoing dependence on Moscow to provide a deterrent against renewed Chinese aggression. Soviet officials, the Indian magistrate concluded, had ‘manufactured evidence’ against Tarasov, had failed to produce credible witnesses, and had concocted a case that was ‘wholly inadequate and rife with contradictions.’

The Soviets appealed Bakkar’s ruling in the Indian High Court. The appeal was heard on 7 March 1963 in the imposing marble chambers of the Punjab High Court building in Old Delhi. The judge presiding was Chief Justice Donald Falshaw, a former colonial official who had stayed on in the subcontinent after Indian independence, and was the last British judge serving in
India. What faith, if any, the Soviets retained in British administered Indian justice remains uncertain. Falshaw dismissed the Soviet appeal in less than an hour, and confirmed Tarasov’s right of asylum in the United States.  

To New Delhi’s discomfort, India’s press and, more predictably, its counterparts in the West, represented the outcome of the Tarasov affair in stark, binary terms. On 30 March, Prem Bhatia, the influential and anglophile Indian civil servant-turned-journalist, and editor of the Indian Express, a publication that took delight in sniping at the left-leaning Nehru government, pronounced in the Guardian that ‘a cold war ended today between the Russian and American Embassies over a Russian who wanted to live in the West. The Americans seem to have won.’ Two days later, Kolkata’s Statesman, a newspaper owned by consortium of India’s leading business houses, and which had established a tradition for fiercely independent reporting and outspoken criticism of illiberal government policies, roundly condemned ‘Socialist legality’ in an editorial entitled ‘The Ways of Justice.’ The Tarasov case had, the newspaper informed its readership, accentuated fundamental differences between India’s appreciation of individual freedoms and the absence of rights and justice behind the Iron Curtain, ‘a grim reality of which there have been many reminders in recent years.’ The doyen of the national press, the Times of India, which was generally more accommodating of Indian governments, went further still, editorialising that the ‘shocking features’ of the Tarasov case suggested that ‘even after Mr. Khrushchev’s much publicised de-Stalinisation campaign … the Soviet authorities are still not able to distinguish between prosecution and persecution.’ Taking a swipe at the MEA, India’s oldest daily suggested that satisfaction at Tarasov’s acquittal, ‘will be shared by all who believe that justice is not a matter than can be subordinated to political expediency.’  

After 1947, Western policymakers made much of the growth of communist propaganda and influence in the India press. Three decades after independence the daily circulation of Indian newspapers stood at a little over nine million, in a country with a population exceeding 600 million. Even accounting for a generous readership ratio of five readers to every newspaper sold, less than 8 per cent of Indians accessed the daily press. Nevertheless, British and American diplomats maintained that the historic role played by newsprint in advancing the cause of Indian nationalism, and wider anti-imperialism, ensured that, ‘its [the print media’s] influence is disproportionate to the size of its readership.’ Frequent complaints were voiced to Indian governments by London and Washington over the pernicious political influence wielded by a string of Moscow-sponsored Indian publications, such as Blitz, Patriot, Link, Mainstream, and New Age. However, in the Tarasov case, Western propagandists, such as the IRD, proved equally willing and adept at working through, and often in concert with, sympathetic sections of the Indian media to leverage the issue of Cold War asylum in an effort to undermine Communism inside and outside the subcontinent.
'The Most Sensational Defector that the United States has Ever Attracted': Svetlana Stalin Heads West

As the 1960s progressed, the challenges that incidents of Cold War asylum presented to the Indian government multiplied. Most notably, the defection of Svetlana Alliluyeva in New Delhi, in March 1967, sparked a diplomatic uproar that tested India’s delicate relations with the West and the Soviet Union. In January the previous year, Lal Bahadur Shastri, who had come to power on Nehru’s death, in May 1964, suffered a fatal heart attack in the Soviet city of Tashkent. Shastri had been in the USSR to sign a Moscow-sponsored peace treaty with Pakistan, following an outbreak of Indo-Pakistani hostilities over the disputed state of Kashmir. Nehru’s daughter, Indira Gandhi, was subsequently co-opted by Congress Party leaders to serve as India’s third prime minister. In New Delhi, troubled British officials soon began to refer to the emergence of a new and alarming ‘Gandhi factor’ in India’s international relations. Specifically, India’s new leader was suspected of having acquired a considerable ‘chip on the shoulder’ when it came to the West. Under the direction of the left-leaning Gandhi, India’s diplomatic, economic, and military ties with the Soviet Union blossomed. Diminishing Western influence in India, a dispirited John Freeman, Britain’s High Commissioner, counselled London, in 1966, left his mission with little choice other than to, ‘lie low for the time being and leave it to the Russians to make the running [in India], in the hope of gradually recovering our [Western] influence and eventually making a comeback later.’

Moreover, shifts in India’s domestic political landscape provided an added incentive for Gandhi to tack to the left and build bridges with Communists at home and abroad. Popular discontent with the economic mismanagement of successive Congress governments, that manifested in failures to tackle rampant graft, youth unemployment, and food shortages, weakened the ruling Party’s grip on power. National parliamentary elections, held at the beginning of 1967, saw Gandhi’s majority slashed at the polls. In the states of Bengal in eastern India, and Kerala, in the west of the country, electorates returned communist governments to office. Disenchantment over Gandhi’s leadership increased amongst conservative elements within her own party, and began a process that would eventually see the Indian premier’s administration come to rely on parliamentary support from the Moscow sponsored wing of the Communist Party of India (CPI). For much of the next two decades, the ‘world’s largest democracy’ was to be governed by a leader predisposed, both personally and politically, to exhibiting a marked circumspection in dealing with Britain and the United States. In the context of Cold War intelligence this, as one former CIA officer, who served in India in the early seventies, recalled sardonically, meant that ‘CIA agents … were to be found according to Madame Gandhi, beneath every charpoy and behind every neem tree.’
It was against this backdrop, that the Alliluyeva drama unfolded early on the evening of 6 March. Taking advantage of the distraction provided by two receptions inside the Russian embassy, one of which, appropriately enough, was celebrating Soviet ‘Women’s Day,’ a neatly dressed woman carrying a small suitcase slipped quietly into the streets of India’s capital. Her destination was the United States’ chancery building. On arrival, speaking in good but heavily accented English, Alliluyeva informed the marine guard on duty, Corporal Daniel Wall, that she was a Russian citizen, and wished to see an embassy officer. Having been shown to the office of the US deputy chief of mission, Svetlana Alliluyeva confirmed to stunned American officials that she was the daughter of the former Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, and his second wife, Nadezhda Alliluyeva.72 As the London Economist observed, Alliluyeva was nothing less than ‘the most sensational defector that the United States has ever attracted.’ Reflecting on the political conundrum that Stalin’s daughter had presented to the American, the Soviet, and the Indian governments, the Economist added presciently that Alliluyeva constituted a surprise package that ‘is plainly marked “Handle with care.”’73

Alliluyeva was the common law wife of an Indian communist, Brajesh Singh, who she met while working at the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow. She had travelled to India following Singh’s death to scatter his ashes into the river Ganges. Claiming to have become disillusioned with communism, Alliluyeva asked the Soviet ambassador, Ivan Benediktov, for leave to remain in India. Her request was refused and, under orders to return to home, Alliluyeva took an impulsive decision to defect. Having received a written request from Alliluyeva for political asylum Chester Bowles, took a momentous step. Reasoning that it would be only a matter of hours before the Soviets discovered that Alliluyeva was missing, Bowles sent a flash cable to the State Department. The US ambassador informed his superiors that ‘unless advised to the contrary’ he would attempt to place Alliluyeva on a commercial Qantas flight leaving New Delhi for Rome that evening. Having previously served as Under Secretary of State in Washington, Bowles experience told him, correctly, as it transpired, that the US bureaucracy was unlikely to react with sufficient speed to countermand his decision. Shortly after midnight, Alliluyeva was issued with an American B-2 tourist visa, bundled into an embassy car, and driven to Palam airport in the company of a CIA officer, Robert Rayle. Following a moment of high tension when the Qantas flight was delayed for ninety minutes due to a mechanical fault, at 2.45 am, on 7 March, Svetlana Alliluyeva departed from India and into political exile.

Bowles decision to facilitate Alliluyeva’s defection was motivated by several factors. Denying her assistance and directing Alliluyeva back to the Soviet embassy was rejected by the ambassador as, ‘completely contrary to our [US] national tradition.’ The option of exfiltrating Stalin’s daughter from India was deemed to involve, ‘unacceptable and unnecessary risks.’ It was preferable,
Bowles concluded, to openly and legally put Alliluyeva on a commercial flight to the West.\(^7^4\) The fact that Alliluyeva’s Soviet and Indian documentation was in order, and that she could be demonstrated to have departed from India of her own volition, provided some protection against charges ‘of another CIA plot and against the accusation of kidnapping her [Alliluyeva] against her will.’ Moreover, the ambassador rationalised that were it to become known that the American government had turned its back on, ‘an appeal for assistance from the daughter of Joseph Stalin, the public outcry in the United States and elsewhere would have been overwhelming.’ Equally, given the legal uncertainty surrounding diplomatic asylum, keeping Alliluyeva inside the US embassy compound risked provoking a prolonged and unwelcome standoff between Washington, Moscow and New Delhi.\(^7^5\)

Early optimism voiced by Bowles that his embassy had successfully pulled off a ‘ticklish’ operation, proved to be premature.\(^7^6\) On 8 March, India’s foreign secretary, Chandra Shekhar (C. S.) Jha, informed the American ambassador that the Soviet Embassy was ‘extremely upset’ and had ‘stated to Indian officials that American secret agents abducted her [Alliluyeva] from India by force.’\(^7^7\) Coming in the wake of recent failures in the Soviet Soyuz space programme, Alliluyeva’s defection threatened to tarnish Moscow’s long-planned celebrations to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet revolution. One Indian newspaper noted that thousands of books, stage plays, exhibitions, lectures, and press articles were already ‘being churned out in an unending stream by the official [Soviet] propaganda machine.’\(^7^8\) The Soviets made clear their displeasure with Bowles by breaking off all contact with American officials in India. One moment of light relief amidst the diplomatic turmoil occurred a week after Alliluyeva departure, when Bowles literally bumped into Benediktov at a social function. The scowling Soviet ambassador taunted Bowles by asking if anyone calling at the US embassy would be issued with a visa and a ticket to America? Quick as a shot, a smiling Bowles replied, ‘For you, we will.’ At which point, the tension was broken as Benediktov dissolved into fits of laughter.\(^7^9\)

The Indian government continued to be less amused by Alliluyeva’s defection. On 9 March, the MEA served the US embassy with a formal note of protest. The note complained that Bowles’s decision to act, ‘in such haste, without giving any inkling to the Ministry of such impending action, is a source of serious embarrassment to the Government of India in their relations with the Soviet Union and the United States.’ The MEA expressed particular concern that the Alliluyeva affair could adversely impact the ‘close and friendly relations with the Soviet Union’ that the Indian government ‘greatly value.’ Ending with a flourish of indignation, the Indian government’s admonition underlined that it could not but, ‘regret this action of the US Embassy which may put in jeopardy relations between India and the Soviet Union and may have serious repercussions on Indo-US relations.’\(^8^0\)
Bowles was sufficiently disturbed by the MEA’s strident tone to fire off a mollifying letter to Jha. Addressing his palliative to ‘Dear C.S.,’ the ambassador disclosed that Alliluyeva had threatened to take her case to the world’s press and appeal directly to the people of India and the United States, were her appeal for asylum denied. In the circumstances, the ambassador suggested, he had been left with little option but, ‘to give her a visa to the United States and help her on her way.’ Attempting to turn the tables on his Indian hosts, Bowles presented his action as motivated primarily by a desire, ‘to avoid putting the Indian government in an embarrassing position’ and prevent India, the United States, and the Soviet Union from becoming embroiled in ‘a legalistic and contentious public controversy.’ Bowles also hinted that India’s role in the Alliluyeva story was more complicated than publicly acknowledged. Specifically, the ambassador stated that Alliluyeva, whose deceased husband’s nephew, Dinesh Singh, was minister for state at the MEA, claimed to have approached the Indian government for asylum. Dinesh Singh and colleagues at the MEA had, Alliluyeva informed the US embassy, indicated that India would take no action on the matter of asylum that ran contrary to the wishes of the USSR. Far better given this state of affairs, Bowles volunteered, for the Indian government to have been presented with a fait accompli by the Americans.81

Back in Washington, US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, confirmed the Johnson administration’s willingness to play hardball with the Indians over Alliluyeva. On 10 March, Rusk authorised Bowles to inform Jha that were the Indian government to ‘publish false allegations or distortions’ concerning Alliluyeva’s departure from India the United States would be forced to release its version of events, ‘including [the] initial [Indian] denial of asylum.’82 The impact of an American threat to expose Indian involvement in the Alliluyeva saga was enhanced by the work of Western journalists in India. By the second week of March, Indian ministers, including prime minister Indira Gandhi, had begun to face uncomfortable questions from the international media on their contacts with Alliluyeva who, the press learned with interest, had spent a month living in the house of Dinesh Singh after arriving in India, in December 1966.83

It was not only the Indians that were keen to keep the Soviets on side. The State Department, too, had no desire to see such a high-profile defection dislocate wider US-Soviet relations. The importance of securing Soviet goodwill on matters ranging from Vietnam and the Middle East, to arms control and consular conventions, ranked far higher on the Johnson administration’s list of priorities than Soviet apostates, no matter how prominent. Undersecretary of State Foy Kohler, who had served a term as America’s ambassador to the USSR, and was committed to engineering a thaw in US-Soviet relations, reacted with fury to the news of Alliluyeva’s defection. ‘Tell them [Bowles’ staff] to throw that woman out of the embassy,’ Kohler had raged, ‘Don’t give her any help at all.’84
Bowles’ unpopularity in the Johnson White House added grist to the mill of critics back in Washington who felt that the ambassador had been reckless and unwise in taking an executive decision to offer Alliluyeva refuge. Appointed to India by the Kennedy administration in 1963, Bowles impact in New Delhi was hampered by an indifferent relationship with Rusk. More significantly, Kennedy and his closest coterie of advisers quickly concluded that the ambassador’s advice on a range of issues, from Kashmir to military aid, was unhelpful and out-of-step with US policy towards the subcontinent. Under Johnson’s tenure, Bowles standing continued to deteriorate. In July 1965, when Bowles returned to Washington for consultations, Johnson, whose focus was switching away from South Asia and towards the looming crisis in South Vietnam, made it clear that, ‘he didn’t want to see Bowles.’ Alarmed that Bowles risked becoming a lame duck in New Delhi, officials were reduced to pleading with Johnson to offer his ambassador a face-saving interview. ‘I know how much of a nuisance seeing Chet [Bowles] must seem to LBJ,’ one White House staffer noted, ‘but the hard fact is that Chet’s credibility would go way down if LBJ didn’t see him …’

Within a year, however, even Bowles’ allies had come to tire of his inclination to issue hectoring policy sermons. In March 1966, Robert Komer, Johnson’s adviser on South Asian affairs, informed the president that, ‘Chet is back [in Washington] full of piss and vinegar and eager to tell you how to handle our Indian affairs.’

Concerned to remove some of the political heat from the Alliluyeva affair by denying it the oxygen of publicity, Washington sought to limit Bowles continued involvement in the defection episode. The defection, the British were advised by American colleagues, was ‘being handled very restrictively indeed within the [Johnson] Administration and that only three to four people in the State Department and White House are au courant.’ Likewise, the US embassy in New Delhi was ‘instructed not to talk to people about the [Alliluyeva] episode.’

Encouragingly for Washington, signals coming out of the Soviet Union indicated that Moscow was equally keen to downplay events. On 21 March, in a meeting with Indian diplomats, the Soviet deputy foreign minister, Nikolay Firyubin, adopted a ‘relatively mild’ attitude to Alliluyeva’s defection, at one stage making light of the fact that, by neglecting to confiscate Alliluyeva’s passport, Benediktov had unwittingly facilitated her defection. On reflection, Indian officials indicated to American colleagues that the differences between Benediktov’s aggressive response to the Alliluyeva affair, and Firyubin’s more relaxed reaction, appeared reflective of the Soviet ambassador’s personal insecurities rather than official Soviet thinking.

Such thinking appeared justified when, in April, Benediktov was demoted and transferred to Yugoslavia. More broadly, British officials in Moscow advised London that, ‘It is of course assumed here [by the Soviets] that in deciding not to give Svetlana Alleyuyeva [sic] asylum the U.S. Government was motivated by the wish not to damage Soviet-U.S. relations at this important juncture.’
Nevertheless, the Soviets did indicate to the American embassy in Moscow that their forbearance would last only so long as the United States continued to display sensitivity to the embarrassing position in which the USSR had been placed by Alliluyeva’s actions. Notably, a KGB officer warned American counterparts that were Alliluyeva be granted asylum in the US, as opposed to another Western country, the Soviet intelligence agency would conduct a disinformation campaign, complete with forged documents, detailing how the CIA had coerced her into defecting.91

With the Indian government choosing not to comment publicly on Alliluyeva, ‘except to announce that India had nothing to do [with her defection],’ it appeared that the incident might soon blow over. However, just as the diplomatic storm appeared set to subside, a statement made to the Indian parliament by M. C. Chagla, India’s foreign minister, reignited the affair. In February 1967, the American west-coast magazine, Ramparts, had exposed the CIA’s financial relationships with a number of international educational institutions and cultural bodies. In a series of damning articles, which were reproduced in The New York Times and The Washington Post, Ramparts documented the CIA’s provision of covert funding to, among others, the National Students Association, Asia Foundation, and Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF). In India, where a general election campaign was then in full swing, an outpouring of public indignation ensued when it became clear that the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, a local offshoot of the CCF, had accepted money from the CIA.

Fresh from the campaign hustings and scenting a political opportunity, India’s parliamentarians fed off the rumour and suspicion surrounding America’s foreign intelligence service, competing with each other to exhibit the toughest and most populist anti-CIA line possible.

British officials reflected that the Svetlana case had coalesced with the Ramparts reporting to spark, ‘a renewal of public interest in the actual and conjectural activities of the C.I.A. in India.’ In the Lok Sabha, India’s lower house of parliament, Communist MP’s accused Morarji Desai, the deputy premier and finance minister, and other members of the government Front Bench, of having enjoyed CIA patronage. In turn, Congress parliamentarians levelled counter-allegations that members of the Opposition had been unwitting recipients of CIA funds.92 Uncomfortably for the British, Indian suspicions of CIA misdeeds fuelled unwelcome enquiries into the organisation and remit of the United Kingdom’s foreign intelligence services. In the midst of a diplomatic reception held just after the Ramparts story broke, John Freeman was startled when, Triloki Nath Kaul, India’s Secretary at the Ministry of External Affairs, directed ‘a sharp question’ in his direction, asking pointedly, ‘What is the British equivalent of the C.I.A.?’. The same question was repeated by a second Indian at a lunch hosted by Britain’s Information Counsellor a few days later. ‘We do not want to read too much into Kaul’s behaviour,’ Freeman advised London, ‘but it certainly shows the way in which his mind, for whatever practical objectives, tends to work.’93
On 20 March, Bowles was drawn back into the Alliluyeva maelstrom. Summoned to the MEA by C. S. Jha, the US ambassador was asked to account for a fresh accusation of CIA foul play that had been levelled by Benediktov. The Soviets, Jha informed Bowles, claimed to have received, ‘information from U.S. sources that there had been correspondence between U.S. and Indian officials and that this had indicated there was some kind of Indo-American complicity [in Alliluyeva’s defection].’ Bowles rebutted the Soviet charge. Whether the US had, or had not, enticed Alliluyeva to defect, a dispirited Jha responded, was now a moot point. The Soviet embassy, the American ambassador was instructed, ‘simply cannot believe that Indian officials did not know that Svetlana was leaving when she did. They have therefore convinced themselves of Indian duplicity.’

Speculating on a sudden hardening in Moscow’s attitude to India’s handling of Alliluyeva’s defection, T. N. Kaul suggested that that Soviet premier, Alexei Kosygin, had come under scrutiny in the Kremlin for his role in Alliluyeva’s flight. At the time, Kosygin was in the midst of a power struggle with rivals in the Soviet leadership, including the general secretary of the communist party, Leonid Brezhnev, and chairman of the presidium, Nikolai Podgorny. It had been Kosygin, Kaul reminded Jha, who ‘had personally permitted Svetlana to come to India against the advice of some other members of the politburo.’

To Jha’s consternation the Indian government found itself at the centre of a tussle between competing factions within the Soviet government. Some in the politburo and Soviet foreign ministry, such as Firyubin, sought to play down India’s role in the Alliluyeva incident. Other Soviet officials, most notably Benediktov and Kosygin, had good reason to do precisely the opposite. Complaining that it was ‘absurd’ for the Soviets to persist in ‘accusing the Indian government of having worked in cahoots with United States Embassy,’ Jha nonetheless conceded that the MEA was facing ‘heavy’ pressure from Benediktov and the Communist Party of India to act on purported US interference in India’s internal affairs.

On March 23, Chagla bowed to a mounting clamour for government action and confirmed that a ‘thorough’ official inquiry would be conducted into CIA activity in the subcontinent. Indian communist MPs immediately called for the expulsion of a number of US embassy officials, including Robert Rayle, who they named as Agency officers. Dean Rusk bemoaned that Chagla’s statement had placed the United States, ‘under great pressure to amplify … [the] U.S. role in the Svetlana case …’ British officials in New Delhi confirmed that their colleagues in the US embassy:

have been embarrassed by the fact that Svetlana was accompanied from India by an American Second Secretary, Rayle, who is assumed, in the Indian press, and elsewhere in private conversation, stimulated in part by the New York Times correspondent, to be a C.I.A. representative.
Toward the end of March, Benediktov’s complaints about Indo-US complicity in the Alliluyeva case, which the ambassador now claimed he was making on Kosygin’s behalf, began to strain Indian patience. With celebrations to mark the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the USSR looming, British officials identified a lack of mutual ‘sympathy’ between Moscow and New Delhi. One senior Indian diplomat confided to British colleagues that he had been treated ‘very frigidly’ on a recent visit to the Soviet capital as a direct consequence of the Alliluyeva incident. Meanwhile, Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet foreign minister, adopted an unfamiliarly firm line with Indian interlocuters on the sensitive issue of nuclear non-proliferation. Calling the Soviet deputy chief mission, Smirnov, into the MEA, R. Jaipal, India’s joint secretary for external affairs, reiterated testily that the Indian government had provided Moscow with an official undertaking that it had played no part in Alliluyeva’s defection. Should the Soviet government persist in discounting India’s assurances, Jaipal stated curtly, there would no longer ‘be [a] proper basis for the development of future relations between the two countries.’ Appraised of his encounter with Smirnov by a piqued Jaipal, Bowles advised Washington that, ‘It is clear that Indians are starting to get their dander up over continued Soviet pressure.’

Matters were made worse from the Indian government’s perspective when, in early April, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, the leader of Samyukta Socialist Party, and one of the incumbent Congress administration’s most strident critics, publicly charged that New Delhi had turned down a request for asylum from Alliluyeva. Flourishing a hand-written letter from Alliluyeva, Lohia informed fellow parliamentarians that it confirmed Dinesh Singh had vetoed an offer of asylum on the basis that ‘the strongest opposition from the Soviet Government … would inevitably arise.’ Indira Gandhi, Chagla, and Dinish Singh were on record as stating that Alliluyeva had made no approach to the government of India, formally or informally, in respect of asylum. To the embarrassment and irritation of Indian ministers, Lohia garnered news headlines by tabling a parliamentary motion that proclaimed government officials had ‘misled’ the House and ‘lied’ about the circumstances of the Alliluyeva affair.

On 5 April, in a ‘tempestuous’ four-hour debate in the Lok Sabha opposition MP’s almost came to blows with colleagues on the government benches, and an embattled Chagla was repeatedly accused of misrepresenting facts relating to Alliluyeva’s departure from India. As jeers of derision echoed around India’s parliamentary chamber, the foreign minister insisted that the government had not been complicit in a secret pact with the United States to have the CIA smuggle Alliluyeva out of the country before her wish to remain in India became public, and provoked a crisis in Indo-Soviet relations. Observing that political gossip in New Delhi suggested Indian officials had been ‘less than frank’ about their dealings with Alliluyeva, British officials concluded that the MEA had most likely tried to persuade their Soviet guest to return
home, subsequently attempted to cover up the fact and, in doing so, created a public relations disaster of its own making. Quite apart from the ‘strain’ on Indo-Soviet relations occasioned by Lohia’s refusal to let the Alliluyeva story subside, the British High Commission reflected that, in seeking to ‘brazen out the difficulty,’ their Indian colleagues had ‘done no credit … to the functioning of Indian democracy.’

Back in Whitehall, Sir Paul Gore-Booth, permanent under-secretary of state at the Foreign Office, hatched plans to make political capital from the Alliluyeva episode. Gore-Booth praised the manner in which American colleagues had taken the ‘very wise step of not giving the defection what might be called “routine exploitation”’ and unduly ruffling Soviet feathers. However, the veteran diplomat, who served as British High Commissioner in India in the early 1960s, suggested that there were ‘ways in which, so to speak, the free countries should “exploit this non-exploitation.”’ Arguing that the Alliluyeva defection ‘was of quite a different order’ from anything the West had seen in recent memory, Gore-Booth underscored that it had been rationalised in humanitarian rather than ideological terms. By encouraging and amplifying press comment that echoed Alliluyeva’s emphasis on Soviet constraints upon individual liberties, he added, the inequities of the communist system could be illuminated without London or Washington being accused of crude political point scoring. ‘This [universal human rights] may not be a new doctrine,’ Gore-Booth reasoned, ‘but its relaunching by the daughter of Stalin, in the fiftieth year of the Communist Revolution in Russia, is immensely important.’

The Foreign Office quickly set about putting Gore-Booth’s idea to ‘exploit’ American ‘non-exploitation’ into action. Whitehall’s strategy was to stimulate contacts in the press ‘not to play this [Alliluyeva’s defection] as a cold-war operation,’ but rather to stress the ‘absence of personal and cultural freedom’ in the Soviet Union that Stalin’s daughter had referenced as fundamental to her decision to seek exile in the West. Alliluyeva had, the Foreign Office noted, criticised Moscow’s decisions to proscribe Boris Pasternak’s novel, Doctor Zhivago, and to sentence the writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel to hard labour for publishing satirical works critical of the Soviet regime. In India, the IRD worked covertly with one of its contacts, Gopal Mittal, owner of the National Academy Publishing House in New Delhi, to issue an article entitled, ‘Unending Soviet War on Intellectuals.’ Reproduced in a slew of periodicals across northern India in English, Urdu, Hindi, and Punjabi versions, the article observed that by persecuting its intellectuals and assaulting fundamental human rights, Moscow was ‘slapping public opinion, at home and abroad, in the face.’

Nearer home, senior journalists from the Sunday Times, which intended to serialise an autobiographical manuscript that Alliluyeva had persuaded T. N. Kaul to smuggle out of Moscow, were encouraged by British officials to keep the story alive and on the newspapers front pages. Commentators in the press speculated that the Kremlin would ‘undoubtedly’ be worried by the impact that an illicitly
distributed book written by Alliluyeva would have inside the Soviet Union. The effect, one Indian journalist suggested, could be ‘comparable to Khrushchev’s “secret speech,”’ the publication of which by the US State Department in 1956 had helped to ferment unrest in Poland and Hungary, and contributed to ‘other political troubles which beset the Soviet empire.’

Utilising Alliluyeva to keep throwing the Soviets off-balance appealed to the IRD. In September 1967, a proposal from the department to have Shirley Williams, the minister of state for education and science, review Alliluyeva’s memoir on the flagship BBC Radio 4 programme, Women’s Hour, was turned down by the Foreign Office ‘because of the extreme sensitivity of Soviet Government on this matter.’ The IRD had more success in selling the merits of unattributable propagandising, or activity that could not easily be traced back to Whitehall. Through its covert presence in the High Commission in New Delhi, the IRD arranged to distribute copies of Alliluyeva’s book, Only One Year, to sympathetic Indian politicians and journalists. The book, which America’s propaganda agents in South Asia had declined to circulate for fear of antagonising Moscow, was, IRD officers crowed, ‘practically unobtainable in India … as the Indians, at Soviet insistence … were holding up imports.’

Officially, the Foreign Office maintained a ‘policy to have no policy about the Svetlana story.’ Being seen to openly encourage or intervene in the Alliluyeva defection risked poisoning Anglo-Soviet relations, and was deemed likely to diminish rather than enhance the impact of what was being presented as essentially a non-political humanitarian issue. Although more active than the American government in working behind the scenes to keep media interest in the incident alive, the British managed to remain largely under the Soviet radar, and to avoid Moscow’s ire. In May, Whitehall reinsured itself against charges of exploiting the Alliluyeva affair by persuading the BBC’s Russian Service to temporarily suspend the broadcast of a ‘Letter to Boris Pasternak’ recorded by Alliluyeva. With the UK Foreign Secretary, George Brown, due in Moscow for talks on a developing Arab-Israeli crisis in the Middle East, Whitehall signalled its intention not to let the defection disrupt wider diplomatic priorities. Britain’s action, one journalist noted at the time, was likely to reinforce the Kremlin’s impression that the Soviet Union, ‘might be able to buy Svetlana’s silence as part of a political deal with the West.’

In contrast, in the United States, the Johnson administration faced criticism from the American press for its passivity in respect of Alliluyeva. In an article entitled, ‘Svetlana Lost or Found?’, conservative Conservative magazine, National Review chided Lyndon Johnson for ignoring the fact that,

... Svetlana Alliluyeva is playing out a momentous role in history ... [while Washington had decreed that] Svetlana’s defection must be neutralized, drained of its large historical meaning ... so that the image of an increasingly benign Communist Russia may be permitted to stand undisturbed.
At the same time, the Soviet press lambasted ‘ruling-circles’ in Washington for indulging in ‘provocations of the highest level’ that were designed to derail Soviet-American détente. A succession of press conferences, media interviews, and public appearances made by Alliluyeva in the United States, coupled with the revelation that a tell-all memoir would shortly be rolling off American presses, shattered Soviet complacency that an accommodation could be reached with the Johnson administration to minimise political fallout from the defection. The fact that George Kennan, a former US ambassador to the Soviet Union, whom Stalin had declared persona non grata, and who had provided the intellectual rationale for America’s policy of Cold War containment, was known to be assisting Alliluyeva with her book, did little to assuage Moscow’s sense of American bad faith. On 27 May, Pravda accused the CIA and United States Information Service of exploiting ‘the Svetlana affair … [to orchestrate] a massive anti-Soviet propaganda campaign.’ ‘In short,’ the official newspaper of the Soviet communist party declared, ‘Washington is stooping to use anything … [in] making use of Soviet citizen S. Allelueva [sic].’

In an ironic twist, after two unhappy decades spent living in the United States and the United Kingdom, Alliluyeva eventually returned to Russia. In late 1984, the year in which year George Orwell had set his dystopian vision of a future totalitarian state, Svetlana Stalin came home. Anticipating a dose of their own propaganda medicine, one Western commentator, who had known Alliluyeva well, observed ruefully that, ‘Naturally, she'll be expected and indeed required [in the Soviet Union] to make violently abusive attacks on America and Britain.’ The game of Cold War asylum, it seemed, had turned full circle. In more immediate terms, the Svetlana Alliluyeva affair had a profound influence on the manner in which the Indian government approached the defection of another Soviet citizen, Aziz Saltimovitch Ulug-Zade, in December 1967. With the political fallout from Alliluyeva’s decision to use New Delhi as a staging-post to the West still reverberating through the corridors of India’s Ministry of External Affairs, Indira Gandhi’s government adopted a heavy-handed, legalistic, and ultimately ineffective response to the increasingly vexing issue of political asylum. In the process, the Indian government drew censure from domestic critics, and embittered its relations with the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union.

‘To Have Three Russian Defections Occur in Your Country within Three Years Is Embarrassing … ’: Ulug-Zade and the Containment of Cold War Asylum

On 21 December 1967, with newsprint barely dry on the acres of paper that India’s press had devoted to Svetlana Alliliuyev’s defection, New Delhi was greeted by a raft of unwelcome and sensationalist headlines in the wake of
Aziz Ulug-Zade’s disappearance. The *Times of India*’s front-page pronounced dramatically, ‘Soviet youth vanishes in Delhi and causes Diplomatic sensation.’ The MEA, the leading Indian daily reported, had taken a ‘very serious view of this incident, since it does not want India to be turned into a cold war arena by the Big Powers in their game of international espionage and psychological warfare.’ Moreover, Indian government officials were said to be concerned that, coming just eight months after the Alliluyeva episode, Ulug-Zade’s defection would have ‘wider political repercussions’ for Indo-Soviet relations.\(^{121}\)

Revealingly, the Soviet press made no mention of the Ulug-Zade case. From Moscow, Indian diplomats reported that the Soviet foreign ministry had maintained an icy silence on the matter. Instead, the Soviet ambassador in New Delhi was employed to exert maximum pressure on the Indian government to see that the latest defection incident was dealt with quickly, quietly, and to Moscow’s satisfaction.\(^{122}\)

The Soviet embassy’s immediate reaction to Ulug-Zade’s flight reinforced Indian anxieties that Russian patience on the issue of political asylum had worn thin. Nikolai Pegov, the Soviet ambassador, stormed into the MEA and demanded that the youth leader be returned to his custody. Having rescinded Ulug-Zade’s passport, Soviet officials informed Indian, American, and British counterparts that it would be considered an unfriendly act were they to facilitate his defection to the West. Under Soviet pressure, the MEA instructed Delhi’s police to find Ulug-Zade, and to ensure that he remained in India until the facts surrounding his disappearance could be established. As Indian journalists were quick to point out, however, the extent to which their government could satisfy Soviet demands in respect of Ulug-Zade were limited. Under Indian law, and in accordance with international conventions on asylum, New Delhi had no authority to compel the defector to return to the Soviet Union. Having entered the country legally on a visa issued by the Indian embassy in Moscow, and following the cancellation of his Soviet passport, Gandhi’s government was empowered only to deport Ulug-Zade to a country of his choosing.\(^{123}\)

Soviet indignation at the latest defection to take place in India was magnified by a familiar suspicion that the CIA may have been behind the Ulug-Zade affair. Eastern bloc diplomats in New Delhi confided to Indian officials that Moscow suspected the US intelligence agency of getting even for the recent defection of an American citizen, John Discoe Smith. Before seeking political asylum behind the Iron Curtain, Smith had served as a communications clerk in the US embassy in Delhi. The Soviets subsequently arranged for a communist publishing house in India to release a salacious account of purported CIA misdeeds in South Asia, under Smith’s name.\(^{124}\) Moreover, as the Indian Embassy in Moscow underlined to the MEA, in using the Smith ‘revelations’ to attack Indian right-wing politicians, Soviet propagandists over reached themselves and alienated Indian opinion.
There was quite a lot of resentment in India of critical references of the broadcasts of
the [Soviet] ‘Radio Peace and Progress’ and the publication in the [Moscow] Literary
Gazette of John Smith’s article in which some distinguished Indian leaders were
maligned,

Indian diplomats in the Soviet capital reported. ‘It was explained to Soviet
officials in Moscow that such partisan articles by Soviet publicity media were
bound to affect relations between the two countries.’

For its part, the IRD worked hard to exacerbate Indo-Soviet friction occasioned by the Smith affair. In January 1968, David Lancashire, who had succeeded Peter Joy as the resident IRD officer in New Delhi, informed London that the local Indian press had been busily ‘debunking’ Smith’s work and Moscow’s ham-fisted campaign to publicise it. The efforts undertaken by Indian newspapers in this regard had, Lancashire reflected, ‘been bolstered by facts supplied by you [IRD headquarters].’ In employing IRD’s extensive network of Indian contacts to discredit Smith’s narrative, Lancashire added tellingly, ‘the horse had been flogged pretty hard for the present.’

Allegations of CIA interference in India’s internal affairs had featured prominently in the Indian national elections that spring, and had been amplified by the Agency’s association with Alliluyeva’s defection. Consequently, fresh rumours of American intelligence involvement in the Ulug-Zade case were politically explosive, and spread panic inside the Indian government. Moreover, from an Indian perspective, other worrying echoes of the Alliluyeva case emerged. Specifically, the international press began to insinuate that Ulug-Zade had been motivated to leave the Soviet Union by a denial of freedom of expression, constraints imposed on fundamental human rights, and the ‘treatment of Soviet writers and intellectuals.’ The Russian defector, one newspaper emphasised pointedly, was the son of a well-known Uzbek poet.

In part, the diplomatic frenzy sparked by the Ulug-Zade affair explains the decision taken by John Freeman to turn the Soviet teacher away when he came calling on the evening of 19 December. London’s relations with India remained tense following a spat between Harold Wilson’s government and New Delhi during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965. Consequently, Freeman baulked at taking in the Soviet defector and risking the Gandhi administration’s ire. Any thoughts that Freeman may have entertained about offering Ulug-Zade sanctuary were further complicated by the intervention of Nikolai Pegov. Having been alerted by companions of Ulug-Zade that he might seek sanctuary at the UK High Commission, the Soviet ambassador contacted Freeman directly and made clear that Moscow would react strongly were the British mission to harbour a Soviet citizen. To add to Freeman’s problems, his communication links back to London were temporarily compromised. At the time, Stella Rimington, a future director-general of the British Security Service, MI5, was working as an assistant to the Service’s resident Security Liaison Officer (SLO) in India. Rimington recalled how, with a defector standing on their doorstep,
the SLO was unable to locate the duty cypher clerk and dispatch a request to London for instructions. It later transpired that, anticipating a quiet night at work, the cypher clerk had slipped off to be with a Sikh boyfriend, and ignored repeated telephone calls and frantic knocks on her door.\footnote{130}

Isolated and under pressure to act, Freeman turned to colleagues at the American embassy for advice. Although wary that the United States might be subject to a Soviet deception exercise designed to compromise Washington’s relations with New Delhi, Chester Bowles agreed to take-in Oulug-Zade while enquiries were made as to his \textit{bona fides}. One senior US embassy official later recalled that, ‘the British ducked and he [Oulug-Zade] wound up as a houseguest in the American Embassy residential compound … We wanted to be more forthcoming than the British so we granted him asylum while we debated [what to do].’\footnote{131} Alarmed that Chester Bowles might act precipitately, as in the case of Alliluyeva, the MEA sought an assurance from the US embassy that Oulug-Zade would ‘not be whisked out of the country without its knowledge.’

Having been stung by political fallout from the Alliluyeva affair, the last thing that the Johnson administration wanted was a second defection crisis on its hands. Accordingly, Galen Stone, senior counsellor at the US embassy, was quick to reassure Indian government officials that Washington would ensure every ‘effort was made to find a way out of this tangle without undue embarrassment to either side.’\footnote{132}

To its intense discomfort, the Indian government soon found itself embroiled in yet another diplomatic standoff between the US and Soviet embassies. This centred on a disagreement between Bowles and Pegov over the appropriate means of insulating Oulug-Zade from exposure to personal threats or political inducements either to defect to the United States, or to return home to the Soviet Union. The Soviet ambassador insisted that the MEA return Ulug-Zade’s to his care to enable the would-be defector to reconsider his position before taking a final decision over whether to seek asylum in the West. Reasoning that his Russian guest would at best be subject to coercion and, at worst, be spirited out of the country, Bowles flatly refused to turn Oulug-Zade over to the Soviets.\footnote{133}

The impasse between Bowles and Pegov witnessed the Indian government engage in ‘intense diplomatic activity’ in an effort to avert a scenario akin to that of Cardinal Mindszenty. In 1956, following the Hungarian uprising, Mindszenty, head of the country’s Catholic church and an outspoken critic of communism, sought refuge in the US embassy in Budapest. Denied safe passage to the West, over the following fifteen years the Cardinal served as a cause célèbre for political asylum from inside the embassy compound. The MEA warned Bowles, Freeman and Pegov that it expected their missions to respect Indian law ‘and do nothing which even remotely violated the sovereignty of the country.’ In a tense face-to-face interview with Freeman and his deputy, Roland Hunt, an irritated T.N. Kaul underlined that ‘the Indian Government
did not regard it as a “legitimate” function of foreign Missions for them to be used as places of refuge.” More pertinently, the government of India insisted on the right to satisfy itself that the Ouloug-Zade was acting of his own free will. In order to satisfy this condition, Bowles was asked by Kaul to surrender the Soviet defector to Indian custody. Bowles was assured the Russian would be provided with personal protection by the MEA, and given time to consider his actions before reaching a decision on whether to proceed with an application for asylum.

While the MEA awaited Bowles’ response, the British, having previously spurned Ouloug-Zade, changed tack. Freeman informed Kaul that the British government had received, and accepted, an application for political asylum from Ouloug-Zade. It remains uncertain what prompted London’s volte-face. Averting the media spectacle of a second Soviet defector transiting from the subcontinent to the United States within the same year, may well have seemed more palatable to Moscow and New Delhi. Ouloug-Zade had previously expressed a preference for relocating to the United Kingdom, and had made the British High Commission his first port of call after deciding to defect. The British reversal was, therefore, able to be couched in humanitarian terms. Whatever the reason, it seems likely that some form of deal was struck between Bowles, Freeman, Pegov and Kaul to recast the Ouloug-Zade issue as something other than a direct confrontation between the US and Soviet superpowers. The effect, as undoubtedly intended, was to remove much of the political heat from the defection.

That is not to say that the end-game of the latest Soviet defection in India passed off without incident. As frustrated officials inside the MEA worked to bring the Ouloug-Zade case to a satisfactory conclusion, opponents of the Gandhi administration again sought to score political points from the country’s latest defection drama. On 22 December, during a three-hour foreign affairs debate in the Lok Sabha, Indira Gandhi was repeatedly thrown on the defensive. Minocher Rustom ‘Minoo’ Masani, a leading figure in the conservative Swatantra Party, baited the Indian premier over her government’s failure to confirm that Ouloug-Zade would be allowed full freedom to determine his own destiny. Linking the Ouloug-Zade case to a recent agreement reached by the Indian government with the Soviet news agency, Novosti, which had links to covert Russian intelligence activity, Masani lambasted Gandhi’s tendency to ‘lean over backwards to please the Soviet Government.’ In addition, Masani arranged for an open letter in support of Ouloug-Zade to be signed by prominent Indian figures, including Koka Subba Rao, a former Chief Justice of India, and G. L. Mehta, one-time Indian ambassador to the United States. The letter appealed to India’s prime minister:

on the grounds of fundamental human rights embodied in our Constitution and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which India is a signatory to allow Aziz
[Ooulog-Zade] to go to the United Kingdom without further delay and in accordance with his choice.

Asserting that it would be a ‘disgrace’ to India were the Soviet defector coerced into returning home, the document warned Gandhi’s government against ‘injuring’ India’s international prestige by succumbing to pressure from Moscow.138

The question of how best to exploit Indian criticisms of the Gandhi government’s position on Ooulog-Zade occupied the attention of Western propagandists and, not least, those working within the IRD. The department debated passing unattributable material to Indian contacts in the press that highlighted growing political dissent amongst Soviet youth, noted resistance to Moscow’s rule within the Soviet Central Asian Republics, and repackaged elements of the Tarasov and Svetlana defections. In some quarters of the British intelligence community, Ouloug-Zade’s intellectual credentials were seen to offer up an excellent opportunity for publicising the suffocating cultural constraints imposed by the Soviet regime on its citizens. A senior officer of the British Security Service subsequently categorised Ooulog-Zade as, ‘a man of great intelligence – in fact the most intelligent defector with whom he had ever had contact.’ It was Ulugzade’s [sic] intellectual penetration,’ colleagues in MI5 concluded, ‘which had made him no longer content to endure the various shame imposed on him in the Soviet Union and so led him to defect.’139

In an Indian context, further efforts to capitalise on the theme of Soviet persecution of writers and intellectuals was, however, dismissed as unwise on two grounds. Firstly, bringing additional pressure to bear on Gandhi and her ministers, it was reasoned, risked damaging delicate bilateral relations and making the Ouloug-Zade imbroglio ‘harder to solve’ by ‘provoking those inside and outside the [Indian] Government who stand to lose most by Ouloug-Zade’s unwavering preference for Britain.’ Secondly, Indians were doing an excellent job by themselves of holding their government to account. ‘As you will doubtless have noticed from the [local] press coverage,’ the resident IRD office informed London:

the facts of the case have been sufficient both to provide a condemnation of Communism and to place the Indian authorities in a position where they would risk compromising themselves and their democratic freedoms if they had refused to accede to Ouloug-Zade’s wish [to resettle in the UK].140

In the circumstances, the IRD was content to bide its time and delay public exploitation of Ouloug-Zade’s defection until after the Soviet national had departed from the subcontinent.141 As the chairman of the British Joint Intelligence Committee reasoned, while ‘it would be quite normal for Mr. Ulugzade [sic] to give modest publicity to his experience … we would not want to mount an operation on his behalf. He is not our answer to Philby … & the K.G.B.’142

Recent scholarship has engaged with the emergence of human rights as a feature of the Cold War in the late 1960s and early 1970s, principally in the
context of the Nixon administration in the United States, the Vietnam War, and the advent of superpower détente.\textsuperscript{143} Much of the work in this area has presented human rights in an exclusively East–West framework.\textsuperscript{144} The extent to which Indians interpreted the issue of Soviet defections staged in the subcontinent in terms of human rights, suggests that its impact on international relations needs to be reperiodized, and to be considered from a North–South, as well as an East–West perspective. Notably, as the year 1967 drew to a close, Indira Gandhi remained under sustained pressure from domestic political opponents determined to characterise the Indian government’s ‘equivocal attitude’ to the issue of political asylum as a fundamental ‘breach of human rights.’ On 27 December, addressing a press conference called under the auspices of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom and the Indian Group of the Liberal International, Masani accused the MEA of inhumane and illegal behaviour in seeking to deny Ouloug-Zade a ‘sanctified right’ to asylum in the West. The ministry of external affairs, the Indian MP imputed, ‘was acting illegally to please the Soviet Government.’\textsuperscript{145}

Attacks from the Indian right rattled Gandhi’s administration which, with limited success, attempted to recast the issue of political asylum as a problem of the United States’ making. Government allies in the Communist Party warned the Indian public that Washington was utilising Soviet defectors to destabilise New Delhi’s relations with Moscow. Meanwhile some of Gandhi’s own MPs, such as Arjun Arora, lamented that as a consequence of American machinations, ‘India was becoming a Cold War arena.’ The time had come, Arora stated bluntly, to put an end to foreign powers abusing India’s goodwill, and using the country to score cheap propaganda points at the expense of India’s wider political and economic interests.\textsuperscript{146}

The Ouloug-Zade affair touched an especially sensitive nerve inside the MEA. As one Indian newspaper noted, the country’s diplomats resented ‘allow[ing] Indian soil to be used for cold war propaganda and thereby embarrass itself in its relations with other friendly [Eastern bloc] countries.’\textsuperscript{147} However, as Indian lawyers deputised to advise Ouloug-Zade made perfectly clear, the MEA could expect legal challenges were attempts made to return the defectors to the Soviet Union. Referencing the Tarasov case back at the beginning of the decade, Gandhi’s government was reminded that the State had come off badly when the issue of defectors rights had last been placed before the judiciary.\textsuperscript{148}

Still, piqued by what it regarded as an abuse of freedoms prevailing in India by three Soviet defectors over the previous five-years, the MEA formally notified all diplomatic and consular missions in the country that it did not recognise their right to grant asylum. ‘The Government of India do not recognize the right of … Missions to give asylum to any person or persons within their premises,’ a directive drafted by the MEA’s Legal and Nationality department stated bluntly. Insisting that it was ‘well established international practice’ that ‘the affording of asylum is not within the purposes of a Diplomatic Mission,’
foreign diplomats were told not to grant, ‘any request for asylum, or temporary shelter, or refuge.’

In a private discussion with Freeman, Kaul went further, and confirmed that New Delhi was examining existing legislation with a view to making the sheltering of defectors an offence under Indian law. British and American officials in India concluded that the MEA’s threat was unenforceable, and ignored the trial balloon. In London and Washington, analysts concurred that ‘the main purpose of the Indian circular was to discourage other would-be defectors from using India as their take-off point.’ The terms of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, it was noted, legitimised asylum on humanitarian grounds. Accordingly, British diplomats in New Delhi were instructed, ‘not in any way concede to the Indian authorities that asylum may not be granted on this ground.’ Although ‘anxious to promote friendly relations’ with India, and ‘willing to accommodate the Indian Government as far as possible’, the British stopped short of publicly qualifying their support for cold war asylum. Following the State Department’s lead, and after ‘a considerable amount of inter-departmental consultation,’ Whitehall disregarded the MEA’s approach. In fact, as Indira Gandhi was forced to concede on 14 February during a debate in the Lok Sabha, the MEA failed to receive a single formal reply to its circular on asylum from any foreign mission in New Delhi. In response to the noise generated by the Indian government on political asylum, the international diplomatic community elected to turn a collective deaf ear.

Although sympathetic toward the Gandhi government’s concern over the unwelcome diplomatic tensions that accompanied defections staged on Indian soil, India’s press questioned the wisdom of New Delhi’s attempts to constrain individual human rights. An editorial in the influential daily, Hindustan Times, cautioned the government that the problem of defection could not simply ‘be wished away,’ and represented ‘a continuing, human offshoot of the cold war.’ India’s non-alignment and close relations with both cold war blocs, the newspaper underlined, made it impossible to ‘avoid being a possible jumping off place for potential defectors.’ While regrettable, such a situation was not deemed reason enough for the Indian government to compromise a long-established commitment ‘to honour individual rights and freedoms,’ and to ‘force anyone on Indian soil to return or go to any country against his wishes.’ It was both ‘unnecessary’ and unfortunate, the Hindustan Times argued, that the MEA had sought to overturn the principle that foreign missions could grant asylum, and which governments elsewhere had upheld ‘in far more difficult circumstances.’ Moreover, the decision risked setting a dangerous precedent that saw India equated with authoritarian regimes abroad, ‘that do not share India’s commitment to individual freedom and are unsure of the loyalty of the vast majority of their citizens.’ A letter sent to Times of India by one of its readers echoed the sentiment that Gandhi’s government had erred, and
taken this hasty and possibly ill-considered step to cover its embarrassment over the defection of three Soviet citizens in a short period of time.'

**Conclusion**

Recovering the history of political asylum within the hitherto elided context of the developing world illuminates the extent to which leading non-aligned states, such as India, were compelled to assume prominent roles in the high drama of defection as the Cold War spread outwards from Europe and into Africa and Asia. Significantly, the Indian government’s engagement with the thorny diplomatic problem posed by political asylum exposed the existence of deep fault-lines between Indian domestic sentiment, which broadly favoured a liberal and compassionate policy on asylum, and New Delhi’s conviction that the nation’s wider interests were best served by an uncompromising and legalistic response to political refugees originating from the Eastern bloc. Indian officials invariably found themselves squeezed by seemingly contradictory demands to defend New Delhi’s post-independence commitments to freedom of political expression, individual liberty, and universal human rights while, simultaneously, pursuing national security interests that hinged on the maintenance of constructive relationships with the Cold War superpowers.

New Delhi’s political geography as a ‘neutral’ Cold War city, where East met West, and large numbers of British, American, Soviet, and Eastern European diplomats, engineers, academics, scientists, aid workers, and intelligence officers mingled freely, served as a lodestone for prospective defectors. Moreover, the international profile of Eastern bloc citizens that utilised the subcontinent as a conduit to a new life in the West, and that of Svetlana Alliluyeva, above all, forced Indian governments to respond to defections at tremendous speed and under extreme duress. Intense global and domestic press interest, and a fractious parliament increasingly split along progressive and reactionary lines, limited New Delhi’s room for diplomatic manoeuvre. At the same time, as both Washington and Moscow came to view India as an especially significant prize in the Cold War’s zero-sum game, the likelihood grew that cases of political asylum would complicate and disrupt broader foreign policy objectives, be they American, Russian, or Indian. In point of fact, and despite public exhortations to the contrary, government officials in the East and the West shared a sense of deep unease with their Indian colleagues over the unanticipated and disruptive political baggage that invariably accompanied defections. Indeed, the crucial, yet habitually understated contributions made by non-aligned states to the history of Cold War asylum, merits more sustained attention from scholars. Interventions made by the Indian government in the field were reluctant and seldom effective. Nonetheless, New Delhi exercised considerable agency in respect of Cold War asylum and functioned as a critical interlocutor between East and West.
Into the early-1970s, Soviet military and economic ties to India strengthened after a schism in Indo-US relations occasioned by the Nixon administration’s tilt to Pakistan during the East Pakistan/Bangladesh crisis of 1971. At the time, one of Indira Gandhi’s closest foreign policy advisors, P. N. Haksar, informed the Indian premier, ‘I personally believe that our relations with the Soviet Union are of cardinal importance and they are going to acquire increasing importance in the years to come.’ The use of India by Eastern bloc defectors as a convenient route to the West continued, however, to inject tension into bilateral relations between India and the Soviet Union. In February 1970, a year prior to the conclusion of an Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, a fourth Soviet citizen, Youri Bezemenov, slipped quietly out of the Indian capital and into political exile. An official posted to the USSR’s Information Centre, Bezemenov had, appropriately enough, spent his last evening in the subcontinent watching an American film in a Connaught Place cinema, before disappearing into the Indian night. By 1972, the Times of India had become blasé in reporting the latest Soviet to abscond on Indian soil. Informing its readership that Mr. A. V. Tereshkov, a Russian engineer working at the Bokaro steel plant, in the east of the country, had disappeared with his family, the Times reflected ruefully that a nationwide alert and stringent checks placed on airports and border posts had failed to turn up the Russians. ‘It is believed,’ the newspaper added, ‘that they [the Tereshkov family] had already left India with the help of a foreign mission.’

Indian domestic politics also came to ensure that the issue of political asylum remained a choleric component of North–South dialogue. In June 1975, having come under investigation for electoral malpractice, and with protestors having taken to India’s streets in almost equal numbers both to support and denounce her government, Indira Gandhi declared a national state of emergency, suspended civil liberties, censured the press, and jailed political opponents. The large-scale and arbitrary detention of opposition politicians and activists, including Morarji Desai, prompted Amnesty International to categorise the Indian government’s action as, ‘perhaps the most significant event of the year in terms of human rights in Asia.’ The British and American governments found themselves inundated with applications for political asylum from Indian critics of Gandhi’s government who had managed to evade arrest. In turn, the sympathetic line taken in London and Washington to requests from Indian citizens for political asylum garnered New Delhi disapprobation.

Considerable scholarship has been expended on interrogating defection in an East–West framework in the late 1940s and 1950s, but more expansive geo-political considerations of the issue remain opaque and are much less well understood. If the Indian government’s campaign to inhibit Cold War defections in the subcontinent did not yield tangible results in the long 1960s, it nevertheless represented a significant event. The MEA’s involvement provides evidence of a democratic government reinterpreting international law to suit diplomatic
exigencies; and, taken together with recent disclosures of ubiquitous and active covert foreign intelligence operations in India, it reinforces the scale of the Cold War’s impact on South Asia. Furthermore, the episode also enhances understanding of how Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and India approached political asylum in a non-European context. Not least, the considerable costs that Indian governments confronted in respect of East–West defections, both in domestic political terms and in the context of broader national security, can be seen to have contributed to the emergence within Indira Gandhi’s government of a conviction that non-alignment had come to outlive its utility as an instrument of international relations.

The approach of Indian governments to political asylum after 1947 was shaped by a combination of domestic and Cold War factors. These influences, combined with the deteriorating security situation in South Asia that prompted New Delhi’s tilt towards the Soviet Union, magnified India’s importance as an escape route for Eastern bloc defectors bound for the West. The transformation of India’s capital city into a Far Eastern Berlin at the height of the Cold War was always going to be problematic for a nascent non-aligned nation burdened with a colonial history of political oppression and human rights abuses. Striving to balance national security concerns against prevailing domestic sentiment resulted in a measure of hedging and obfuscation on the part of Indian governments. Once enmeshed in the politics of Cold War asylum, New Delhi sought to actively discourage and disrupt defections on Indian soil while, at the same time, working assiduously to minimise any adverse impact on its relationship with Moscow. In the process, Indian officials floundered in the face of competing local pressures, domestic political rivalries, and diplomatic exigencies. The politics of Cold War asylum presented a problem to which New Delhi could find no satisfactory solution.

Notes
1. Peter Joy to C.F.R. Barclay, 8 May 1964, FO 1110/182; 'India,' Visit of Nigel Clive to India and Pakistan, 5 Dec. 1967, FCO 95/290. Unless otherwise cited, all archival references are to the National Archives, London.

2. S. Mulgaokar, ‘The Right of Asylum,’ Weekend Review, (2, 5), 6 Jan. 1968, 3–4.

3. Cole (New Delhi) to Hunt (Commonwealth Office), ‘Political Asylum in India,’ 5 Jan. 1968, FCO 37/62.

4. Mulgaokar, 'Right of Asylum,' 3–4.

5. The Times of India, 21 Dec. 1967, 1.

6. A. R. Wic, ‘The Ulug-Zade affair,’ Weekend Review (2, 5), 6 Jan. 1968, 6–7.

7. See, for example, Andrew, Defence of the Realm; Jeffreys-Jones, Cloak and Dollar; and Prados, Safe for Democracy. Some works have sought to engage with the intelligence Cold War from a broader global perspective, notably, Davies and Gustafson (eds.), Intelligence Elsewhere.

8. Scholarship addressing India’s Cold War relations has largely ignored the issue of political asylum. The otherwise authoritative account of US-Indian relations produced by
former American diplomat, Denis Kux, avoids the issue. See, Kux, *India and the United States*. Howard Schaffer, who served in the US Embassy in India in the 1960s, provides a brief account of the Alliluyeva episode in *Chester Bowles*. Rosemary Sullivan offers up an insightful view of Alliluyeva’s defection from the Soviet citizen’s perspective in, *Stalin’s Daughter*. See also, Svetlana Alliluyeva’s own account of her defection in, *Only One Year*.

9. See, Westad, *The Cold War*; Chamberlin, *Cold War’s Killing Fields*; and, McMahon, ed., *Cold War in the Third World*.

10. Mišković et al., *Non-Aligned Movement*; Abraham, “From Bandung to NAM”; Lee, ed., *Making a World After Empire*; Bott et al., *Neutrality and Neutrality*. See also, Lewis and Stolte, eds., “Other Bandungs.”

11. Lüthi, “The Non-Aligned” in Mišković et al., *Non-Aligned Movement*, 97.

12. See, for example, Carruthers, *Cold War Captives*; Volodarsky, *Stalin’s Agent*; Knight, *How the Cold War Began*. On the ‘Cambridge Five’ see, Knightley, *Philby*; Macintyre, *Spy Amongst Friends*; and Lownie, *Stalin’s Englishman*.

13. For instance, Cherkashin, *Spy Handler*; Woodward, *The Secret Wars of CIA*; and Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*.

14. Krasnov, *Soviet Defectors*, 116. In 1954, one prominent incident saw nine Soviet sailors from the tanker, Tuapse, which had been sized by Nationalist China off the cost of Formosa, defect to the US rather than return home. See, *The New York Times*, 14 Jan. 1956, 2.

15. Le Carrè, *Tinker Tailor, Soldier Spy*.

16. Krasnov, *Soviet Defectors*, 109–120.

17. Aldrich, “Policing the Past,” 1.

18. Notably, official histories of British intelligence authored by the late Keith Jeffrey and Christopher Andrew have cast some light on the post-war operations of SIS and MI5. See, Jeffrey, *MI6*, and Andrew, *Defence of the Realm*.

19. Recent scholarship has examined facets of the secret intelligence dimension of South Asia’s Cold War. However, this work has not yet touched upon defection or political asylum as a component of intelligence activity. See, for example: Pullin, “Congress for Cultural Freedom”; McGarr, “Quiet Americans.”

20. See, Kaul’s work in *Reporting the Raj: Media and the British Empire*; and *Media and the Imperial Experience*. Also, Finkelstein and Peers, eds., *Negotiating India*; and Codell, ed., *Imperial Co-Histories*.

21. See, for example, Baghavan’s emphasis on the centrality of human rights to early Indian foreign policymaking, in *The Peacemakers*.

22. Balachandran, *National Security and Intelligence*, 112.

23. See, Den Heijer. “Diplomatic Asylum”; UN Secretary-General, “Survey of International Law”; and, International Law Commission, ‘Summaries of the Work.’

24. ’Draft declaration on right of asylum,’ 14 May 1959, Ministry of External Affairs [MEA], United Nations-I, File No.151(109)-UNI, National Archives of India, New Delhi [NAI].

25. Jawaharlal Nehru to Apa Pant, 11 Jul. 1958, Subject File 6, Apa B. Pant Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi [NMML]; ‘Chinese Intentions against India,’ Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) report, 22 Nov. 1962, CAB 158/47. For a wider discussion of the Cold War politics associated with Chinese asylum seekers, see, Jacobs, “Exile Island.”

26. Memorandum of Conversation between Ambassador R. K. Nehru and Chou En-lai, 21 Apr. 1960, Subject File 26, NMML. See also, Guyot-Réchard, *Shadow States*, 185; and, Wasif Khan, *Muslim, Trader, Nomad, Spy*. 
27. The evolution of Indo–U.S. relations under Eisenhower and Kennedy has received significant scholarly attention. See, for example, McGarr, *Cold War in South Asia*; McMahon, *Cold War on the Periphery*; and Dauer, *North-South Mind*.

28. Blake, *No Other Choice*. 167.

29. Ambassador Mary Seymour Olmsted, Oral History, 8 Apr. 1992, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. INTERNET, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/ (accessed 7 Feb. 2013).

30. Conboy and Morrison, *CIA’s Secret War*, and Knaus, *Orphans of the Cold War*.

31. Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II*, 9–10 and 312–14.

32. Kalugin, *Spymaster*, 141.

33. Tromly, “Ambivalent Heroes,” 1.

34. See, for example, ‘Working Party on Russian and Satellite Defectors and Refugees,’ CAB 301/136.

35. At the beginning of the 1950s, British officials conceded that, ‘The greater number of Soviet refugees who leave the service of their country and place themselves under our protection have relatively little or no long-term intelligence value …’ Donaldson (MOD), 4 Aug. 1950, CAB 301/136. See, also, Richelson, *US Intelligence Community*, 328–32.

36. Macmillan’s distaste for the secret world’s work is documented in, amongst others, Horne, *Macmillan*, 457, and. Thorpe, *Supermac*, 310.

37. Minute of a meeting between Churchill, Nutting, Rennie and Kirkpatrick, 1 May 1954, PREM 11/773. A fictional rendering of SIS’s proclivity for using the United States to extract propaganda value from Soviet defectors, that bears more than a passing resemblance to the Khokhlov case, appears in Le Carrè’s, *Secret Pilgrim*, 152.

38. ‘Petrov Defection Policy,’ The Royal Commission on Espionage, 1954–55, Series Number A4940, C926, National Archives of Australia, Canberra. See also, Petrov, *Empire of Fear*.

39. Dick Cheney to Donald Rumsfeld, ‘Solzhenitsyn,’ 8 Jul. 1975, Box 10, folder ‘Solzhenitsyn, Alexander,’ Richard B. Cheney Files, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library (GFPL). See also, ‘The Ronald Reagan Column,’ 18 Jul. 1975, Box 39, Folder ‘Reagan – Newspaper Columns,’ Ron Nessen Papers, GFPL.

40. ‘Defection of a Russian Seaman,’ 790.

41. ‘Russian Defector Gives Witness to the Effectiveness of the Voice of America,’ Congressional Record, A5978, 23 Sep. 1963, CIA FOIA, CIA-RDP65B00383R000100050038-7.

42. Mr. Wye, ‘Vladimir Stepanovich Tarasov,’ 20 Dec. 1962, FCO 168/911; ‘Defection of a Russian Seaman,’ 790.

43. Sareen, *Bid for Freedom*, 13–16.

44. *The New York Times*, 22 Dec.1962, 2.

45. *The New York Times*, 20 Dec. 1962, 4.

46. *Jugantar* (Calcutta), 29 Nov. 1962.

47. Eastland to Ambassador Lodge (United Nations), Washington, 1 May 1956, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957*, United Nations and General International Matters, Volume XI, Document 23 https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v11/d23. See also, *Life*, 7 May 1956, 45–6.

48. *The Times of India*, 7 Jan. 1963, 7.

49. *The Washington Post*, 5 Jan. 1963, A6.

50. Mr. Wye, ‘Vladimir Stepanovich Tarasov,’ 20 Dec. 1962, FCO 168/911.

51. See, Soviet Embassy to MEA, no. 155, 30 Nov. 1962; MEA to Soviet Embassy, 30 Nov. 1962; and, MEA to Soviet Embassy, 29 Dec. 1962, NAI.
52. G. D. Khosla, ex-Chief Justice, Punjab High Court, foreword in Sareen, *Bid for Freedom*, iii–iv.
53. *The Times of India*, 11 Jan. 1963, 8.
54. *The Guardian*, 11 Jan. 1963, 9.
55. Allen (Delhi) to Norris (Calcutta), No. 2402, 24 Dec. 1962, FCO 168/911.
56. Delhi to IRD (London), No. 2429, 27 Dec. 1962, FCO 168/911.
57. *The New York Times*, 31 Jan. 1963, 2.
58. Peter Joy (New Delhi) to J. L. Welser (IRD), 18 Jan. 1963, FCO 168/912.
59. J. L. Welser (IRD) to P.W. Kaufman (American Embassy, London) 28 Dec. 1962; New Delhi to CRO, No. 131, 12 Jan. 1963, FCO 168/911.
60. J. Rayner (IRD) to Peter Joy (New Delhi), 7 Feb. 1963, FCO 168/913.
61. *The Times of India*, 4 Mar. 1963, 3.
62. Sareen, *Bid for Freedom*, 153–4.
63. *The Guardian*, 30 Mar. 1963, 7.
64. *The Statesman*, 1 Apr. 1963.
65. *The Times of India*, 1 Apr. 1963, 6.
66. W. F. King (BIS, New Delhi) to A. H. ‘Alec’ Joyce (CRO), ‘Communist Propaganda in the Indian Press,’ 27 Nov. 1948, FO 1110/44.
67. I. W. Mackley, ‘The Press in India: Some Statistics,’ 3 Jan. 1977, FCO 37/2000.
68. N. R. Patel to Jawaharlal Nehru, ‘Action against Blitz for Miscellaneous Article,’ File No. 2/392, Private Papers of Sardar Patel, NAI.
69. Memorandum of meeting between James and Freeman, Karachi, 1 and 2 Feb. 1966, FO 371/186952.
70. ‘India: Dec. 1966,’ Despatch no. 27, John Freeman, 22 Dec. 1966, DO 196/310.
71. Smith, *Unknown CIA*, 13.
72. Bowles, ‘Defection of Svetlana Alliloueva,’ [sic], 15 Mar. 1967, N[ational] S[ecurity] F[ile] Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin, Texas [LBJL].
73. *The Economist*, 29 Apr. 1967, 465.
74. Bowles (Delhi) to Rostow (Washington), 18 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
75. Bowles, ‘Defection of Svetlana Alliloueva,’ [sic], 15 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
76. Bowles (Delhi) to Rostow (Washington), 18 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
77. Delhi to Washington, 8 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
78. *The Times of India*, 7 Jun. 1967, 8.
79. Schaffer, *Chester Bowles*, 301.
80. Delhi to Washington, 9 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
81. Ibid.; Bowles to Jha, 10 Mar. 1967, see also ‘Defection of Svetlana Alliluyeva,’ 15 Mar. 1967, Box 326, Bowles Papers, Yale University Library.
82. Rusk (Washington) to Bowles (Delhi), 10 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
83. *The Times*, 13 Mar. 1967.
84. Sullivan, *Stalin’s Daughter*, 9.
85. Komer to McGeorge Bundy, 26 Jul. 1965, NSF, Robert W. Komer Files, Box 13, Folder 1 Bowles 11-3-63-1965 [1 of 4], LBJL.
86. Komer to LBJ, 23 Mar. 1966, NSF Country File, India, Box 133, Folder 3 Prime Minister Gandhi Visit Papers [2 of 2] 3-27-30-66, LBJL.
87. Bendall to Smith, 'Svetlana Stalin,' 17 Mar. 1967, FCO 28/397; Trench (Washington) to Duff (Commonwealth Office), 'Stalin’s Daughter,' 31 Mar. 1967, FCO 37/76.
88. Waterfield (New Delhi) to Duff (Commonwealth Office), 'Stalin’s Daughter,' 17 Mar. 1967, FCO 37/76.
89. Thompson (Moscow) to Rusk (Washington) 21 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
90. Maxey (Moscow) to Clift (FO), 'Svetlana Alleyuyeva,' 17 Mar. 1967, FCO 28/397.
91. Thompson (Moscow) to Rusk (Washington) 21 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
92. See, Lok Sabha Starred Question no. 125, 29 May 1967, AMS, WII/125/47/68, MEA; Lok Sabha exchange between M. C. Chagla and P. Ramamurti, 29 May 1967, AMS, WII/125/47/68, MEA; and Lok Sabha Starred Question No.1, George Fernandes regarding activities of CIA, 20 Mar. 1967, WII/125/11/76 P&I, AMS Division, MEA, NAI.
93. J. P. Waterfield (New Delhi) to A.A. Duff (SAD, CO), 'The C.I.A. in India,' 31 Mar. 1967, FCO 168/2649.
94. Bowles to Rusk, 20 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
95. Ibid.
96. Bowles to Rusk, 21 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
97. The New York Times, 24 Mar. 1967.
98. Rusk to Bowles, 21 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
99. Waterfield (New Delhi) to Duff (Commonwealth Office), 17 Mar. 1967, FCO 37/76.
100. 'Record of conversation between High Commissioner and L.K. Jha,' 15 May 1967, FO 37/76.
101. Waterfield (New Delhi) to Duff (Commonwealth Office), 18 Apr. 1967, FCO 37/76; Fall (Moscow) to Eastern Department FO, 19 Apr. 1967, FCO 28/397.
102. Bowles to Rusk, 31 Mar. 1967, NSF, Box 3, Folder Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin), LBJL.
103. The Times, 5 Apr. 1967.
104. The Times of India, 5 Apr. 1967, 12.
105. The Times of India, 6 Apr. 1967, 1.
106. Simons (New Delhi) to Purcell (South Asia Department), 7 Apr. 1967, FCO 37/76.
107. Gore-Booth to Lord Hood, 'Miss Stalin’s Defection,' 27 Apr. 1967, FO 95/14.
108. Memorandum, 'Svetlana,' unsigned and undated, FO 95/14.
109. J. G. McMinnies, 'Publicity in India for Soviet Writers Trial,' 3 Apr. 1968; Gopal Mittal, 'Unending Soviet War on Intellectuals,' FCO 168/3402.
110. Greenhill to P.U.S., 'Miss Stalin’s Defection,' 28 Apr. 1967, FO 95/14.
111. The Times of India, 7 Jun. 1967, 8.
112. Giffard (FO) to Greenhill, 'Svetlana Stalin’s Book,' 20 Sep. 1967, FCO 28/397; Day (FO) to Stewart (Education and Science), 22 Sep. 1967, FCO 28/397.
113. Minute by McMinnies (IRD), 20 Oct. 1969, FCO 37/375.
114. Peck to Permanent Under-Secretary, ‘Svetlana,’ 25 May 1967, FO 95/14.
115. Sunday Telegraph, 28 May 1967.
116. The Times of India, 7 Jun. 1967, 8.
117. The National Review, 19 (18), 9 May 1967, 1.
118. The Times of India, 7 Jun. 1967, 8.
119. Harrison (Moscow) to FO, ‘Svetlana Stalin,’ 27 May 1967, FCO 28/397.
120. Daily Mail, 3 Nov. 1984.
121. The Times of India, 21 Dec. 1967, 1.
122. Indian Embassy (Moscow) Political Report for Dec. 1967, 9 Jan. 1968, Monthly Political Reports (Other than Annual) from Embassy of India, Moscow, File No. HI/1012 (57)/67, R& I, MEA, NAI.

123. Ibid.

124. See, Smith, CIA Agent in India.

125. Indian Embassy (Moscow) Political Report for Dec. 1967, 9 Jan. 1968, Monthly Political Reports (Other than Annual) from Embassy of India, Moscow, File No. HI/1012 (57)/67, R& I, MEA, NAI.

126. H. H. D Lancashire (New Delhi) to Miss C. Stephenson (FO/CO), 4 Jan. 1968, FCO 168/2649.

127. The Times of India, 21 Dec. 1967, 1.

128. The Times, 22 Dec. 1967, 1.

129. The Times of India, 21 Dec. 1967, 1.

130. Rimington, Open Secret, 74.

131. Joseph N. Greene, JR., interview with Charles Stuart Kennedy, 12 Mar. 1993, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, INTERNET, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/ (accessed 7 Feb. 2013).

132. The Times of India, 22 Dec. 1967, 1.

133. Ibid.

134. Cole (New Delhi) to Hunt (Commonwealth Office), 'Political Asylum in India,' 5 Jan. 1968, FCO 37/62.

135. The Times of India, 23 Dec. 1967, 9.

136. Ibid.

137. Ibid.

138. The Times of India, 27 Dec. 1967, 9.

139. N. D. Clive (IRD) to Mr. Jackson (PUSD) 'Publicity for Mr. Oualouzade,' 5 Jan. 1968; N. P. Payne (IRD) to Mr. Welser and Mr. Clive, 8 Jan. 1968, FCO 168/2850.

140. J. G. McMinnies (London) to H.H.D Lancashire (New Delhi), 22 Dec. 1968; Lancashire to McMinnies, 4 Jan. 1968, FCO 168/2850.

141. After securing asylum in the UK, Oulog-Zade was employed by the BBC's Russian section and actively cooperated with the British intelligence services in publicising intellectual discontent behind the Iron Curtain in a series of articles carried by the British and the wider international press. H. H. Tucker (IRD) to Mark Hamilton, 20 Feb. 1968; J. O'Connor Howe minute to Mr. Bayne, 29 Nov. 1968, FCO 168/2850.

142. Handwritten note from Edward Peck to Sir Denis Greenhill, on N. D. Clive to Mr. Peck, 'Publicity for the Soviet Defector Mr. Aziz Ulugzade,' 12 Feb. 1968, FCO 168/2850.

143. Notably, Keys, Reclaiming American Virtue, and, Bradley, World Reimagined.

144. See, for example, Synder, Human Rights.

145. The Times of India, 28 Dec. 1967, 6.

146. The Times of India, 28 Dec. 1967, 12.

147. The Times of India, 28 Dec. 1967, 1.

148. The Times of India, 29 Dec. 1967, 5.

149. 'Foreign and Commonwealth Missions in India: Instructions against Grant of Asylum,' 30 Dec. 1967, Pakistan-I, File No. PI/452/1/68, MEA, NAI.

150. Cole (New Delhi) to Hunt (Commonwealth Office), 'Political Asylum in India,' 5 Jan. 1968, FCO 37/62.

151. Hunt to Cole (New Delhi), 4 Mar. 1968, FCO 37/62.

152. Cole (New Delhi) to Hunt (Commonwealth Office), 'Political Asylum in India' 9 & 13 Mar. 1968, FCO 37/62.
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