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The Fall of Nikita Khrushchev

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> Yet well I remember
> The favours of these men. Were they not mine?
> Did they not sometime cry 'All hail!' to me?
> So Judas did to Christ. But he, in twelve,
> Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none.
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> *Richard II*, iv, 1

On 14 October 1964 Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev's 11-year period of dominance within the Soviet leadership came to an end. He was stripped of his party and state posts and sent into an obscure retirement by the very men who had been closest to him throughout his long career. Virtually overnight he became something of an 'un-person' in the Soviet Union: his name disappeared from the mass media and was scarcely mentioned even in such denunciations as followed his ouster. Nor were there even very many of these: there were no show trials, no ritual attacks at party congresses, no public confessions nor even any expulsions from the party. The circumstances surrounding his removal remained a mystery and the coup itself was euphemistically referred to as 'the October plenum'. The Khrushchev era had indeed ended not with a bang but a whimper and the long, debilitating reign of Leonid Brezhnev had begun.

In terms of Soviet history 'the October plenum' is an event of tremendous importance. It represents one of the key turning points along the path which has led the Soviet Union from the upheavals of 1917 to the crisis of the present day. The 'Great October Palace Revolution' inaugurated two decades of political stagnation, the effects of which are still painfully in evidence in the USSR today. Moreover, an understanding of Khrushchev's ouster in 1964 would contribute greatly to our broader understanding of Soviet politics in the post-war period. It is therefore most fortunate that a number of interviews, memoirs and analyses of Khrushchev's fall—many of them by the very men involved—have recently appeared in the Soviet Union. Though often contradictory, when taken together they present enough information to allow a fairly confident reconstruction of what took place. The picture which emerges is in many ways sharply at odds with accounts of the coup advanced by Western observers since 1964. It also challenges certain Western images of Soviet high politics during the post-Stalin era.

Much Western misunderstanding of the 1964 coup stems from the incorrect assumption that the plot to remove Khrushchev was hatched and executed with great speed, in October 1964. Michel Tatu, in what is arguably the best early reconstruction of Khrushchev's ouster, reckoned that the plot finally took shape

on or around 10 October, just three days before the Presidium summoned Khrushchev to Moscow and confronted him.[1] Recent Soviet sources, however, unanimously agree that talk of Khrushchev's replacement began very early in 1964.[2] V. E. Semichastnyi, then chairman of the KGB, claims that he was involved in the plot right from the start because the conspirators knew that they could not hope to succeed without KGB support; he says that discussions concerning the replacement of the leader began 'somewhere in the early spring of 1964'. Sergei Khrushchev believes it to have been between January and March 1964, a view which is compatible with the former Ukrainian boss Shelest's claim that he was approached for the first time in March.[3]

This is a particularly important point, as the question of dating the coup's beginnings has a significant impact on the interpretation of subsequent events. Tatu, for example, concluded that Podgorny was uninvolved in the plot altogether and that Brezhnev was drawn into it only late in the game. Both of these conclusions are based upon a reconstruction of events which assumes a very short time-frame indeed.[4] It is this point more than any other which led Tatu to give pride of place to Suslov in planning and executing the removal of the First Secretary. In fact, Suslov's role is problematic. It remains one of the points over which the various Soviet accounts diverge most sharply. Did the plot originate with Suslov and Shelepin, as Roy Medvedev maintains, or is Gennadii Voronov correct in saying that 'the threads led to Zavidovo', Brezhnev's hunting retreat?[5]

The 'Suslov camp' has traditionally been the dominant one in Western academic circles, where the long-time ideologist-in-chief has enjoyed a reputation as the Kremlin's king-maker of 1964. Yet among recent Soviet writers only Medvedev holds to this view. Burlatsky argues that neither Brezhnev nor Suslov instigated the plot, which he believes to have been primarily the work of Shelepin. He states that Shelepin brought Suslov on board first and Brezhnev only later.[6] All of the participants in the plot who have so far spoken out, however, have been unanimous in naming Brezhnev as the ringleader. In addition to Voronov, who was the premier of the Russian Federation at the time, Shelest and Semichastnyi credit Brezhnev and Podgorny with having initiated and led the coup.[7]

N. G. Egorychev and P. A. Rodionov, then first secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee and second secretary of the Georgian CP respectively, concur. Rodionov maintains that Shelepin played a lesser, though still significant, role. He does, however, believe that Shelepin himself had his eye on the top job.[8] In addition to Brezhnev and Podgorny, Sergei Khrushchev mentions Shelepin and Polyansky as having been involved from the very beginning.[9] The fact that the eyewitnesses and participants involved are unanimous in naming Brezhnev as the instigator and leader of the plot is strong evidence in favour of this view. Moreover, the two alternative candidates, Shelepin and Suslov, look rather unlikely for various reasons. Shelepin was still relatively young and despite his obviously powerful position—he was chairman of the Party–State Control Commission and a Central Committee secretary—he was not yet a member of the Presidium.[10] While his election to membership of that body after the coup suggests that he did indeed play an important role, it is hard to see him as the key figure.

Burlatsky argues that, on the contrary, it was precisely Shelepin's youth which led him to initiate the coup: Burlatsky attributes great importance to generational conflict within the leadership and names Shelepin as the leader of 'the post-war generation' of Soviet leaders, including men like Semichastnyi, Polyansky, Voronov and Andropov. Brezhnev, Suslov and Kosygin, by contrast, represented the 'class of '37', raised up at the height of the purges.[11] Yet both Semichastnyi and Voronov have spoken and written at length about the coup and neither advances anything like this interpretation.[12] Sergei Khrushchev, however, does believe Shelepin to have had special influence over the younger members of the leadership.[13] Semichastnyi, for example, had worked for Shelepin in the Komsomol and was the latter's hand-picked successor as chairman of the KGB. Rodionov could well be correct in reckoning that Shelepin's ambitions were aimed at Brezhnev. Shelepin may have believed that with Khrushchev out of the way, he would be able to deal with Brezhnev relatively easily.[14]

Suslov, on the other hand, presents a different problem. There is simply nothing in his career which suggests that he was ever much of a political risk-taker. As Rodionov argues, Suslov managed to survive in Kremlin politics for so long precisely because he always hedged his bets. In 1957 he did not rush to join the Anti-Party Group despite the fact that he shared many of their views. Neither does he appear to have joined Khrushchev, however, until the issue was more or less decided in his favour.[15] Voronov takes a similar view, pointing to Suslov's praise of Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev at the XIX, XXII and XXVI congresses as a reflection of his willingness to line himself up with whomever was strongest at any given moment.[16]

Shelest is particularly emphatic on this point, claiming that Suslov did not know what was afoot until very late and that when he was told of the impending coup, he replied, 'What are you talking about?! There'll be a civil war!'[17] Sergei Khrushchev suggests that Suslov's late initiation into the plot may have been a consequence of the fact that he was not closely aligned either with the Brezhnev–Podgorny 'Ukrainian group' in the leadership or with Shelepin's 'youth' faction.[18] Virtually all of the participants agree that Suslov himself did not prepare the report which he delivered to the Central Committee plenum detailing the reasons for Khrushchev's removal; there is, however, no clear consensus as to who did write it.[19]

There are, however, two considerations which might render the Suslov and Shelepin interpretations more attractive, particularly to writers like Medvedev and Burlatsky. The first is that Suslov and Shelepin had impeccable 'hard-line' credentials.[20] If they indeed were the leaders of the plot, then it is far easier to see the events surrounding Khrushchev's fall in terms of a neo-Stalinist reaction against a reforming leader. The presence at the centre of the plot of the more moderate figures of Brezhnev and Podgorny suggests that the coup was a much more broadly based affair. The catholicity of the opposition which arose in 1964 resembles nothing so much as that of the Anti-Party Group, which also embraced both Stalinist and (relatively) liberal wings within the leadership. Secondly, Brezhnev's reputation is now such that it is difficult to credit him with organising and leading the coup. There is perhaps an understandable reluctance to believe

that someone as apparently unimaginative and dull as Brezhnev is supposed to have been could possibly have been a master politician. Yet over the next 18 years Brezhnev saw off challenges from many men who seemed cleverer than he.

One cannot but see a certain irony in the fact that Khrushchev's replacement was engineered not by some neo-Stalinist opposition, but by his own closest confidants and supporters. The man who had defeated all comers in the battle for the Stalin succession after 1953 could not have anticipated that he would be ousted by his own clients, even as the triumphant Caesar fell not to Pompey's dagger but to Brutus's. Indeed, this fact may well have worked in the plotters' favour, for, as will be seen, Khrushchev at various points seems either to have placed too much trust in his colleagues or simply to have underestimated their ability to mount a challenge to his leadership. Having defeated Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich and others, he is unlikely to have trembled with fear at the news that N. G. Ignatov was plotting against him.[21] This overconfidence was to cost Khrushchev everything. Not without reason has Burlatsky written in this connection, 'Save us, O God, from our friends; we can cope with our enemies by ourselves'.[22]

One of the most important points upon which all accounts agree is the manner in which the plotters set about securing support for Khrushchev's removal in the Central Committee. Evidently having learned the lessons of 1957, Khrushchev's opponents spent considerable time and energy enlisting supporters for their cause among the territorial party apparatus. According to Rodionov, everyone involved in the plot was to 'work on' certain committee members: Egorychev, the Moscow first secretary, was to deal with the Muscovites, Rodionov's boss in Georgia, V. P. Mzhavanadze, was to line up support in Transcaucasia, and so on.[23] In the Ukraine, this task belonged to Shelest.[24] The Stravropol *kraikom* secretary, Kulakov, played an important role in lobbying within the RSFSR, as did Ignatov, then chairman of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. Occupying a largely ceremonial post, Ignatov had little real political power, but his job enabled him to travel extensively around the country meeting with local officials, and he was therefore quite useful to the plotters.[25] Ignatov seems to have been rather too enthusiastic about his new role, for word of his activities soon reached the ears of the first secretary.[26] Semichastnyi has stated that Ignatov simply talked too much.[27]

Brezhnev and Podgorny were also, by all accounts, active in soliciting support for their position. Shelest was approached by both of them in March and again in July by Brezhnev alone. It was at this latter meeting that he agreed to back the opposition.[28] Khrushchev himself managed unwittingly to facilitate his opponents' plans on more than one occasion. According to his son Sergei, he alienated the Belorussian party leader, K. T. Mazurov, with ill-considered talk of Mazurov's removal after a trip to Minsk. Khrushchev later cooled off and took no action, but his remarks found their way back to Mazurov, who was then enlisted in the plot.[29] The demotion of the Ukrainian premier, Shcherbitsky, to the rank of *obkom* first secretary did Khrushchev's cause no good either. Although dropped from his candidate membership in the Presidium, Shcherbitsky remained a full member of the Central Committee.[30] Khrushchev also did his enemies no small favour by

travelling as much as he did: he was away from Moscow a total of 135 days during the first nine months of 1964.[31]

Sergei Khrushchev maintains that his father's colleagues were also about the business of deliberately manoeuvring Khrushchev into unpopular positions throughout this period. Thus, for example, he asserts that Adzhubei was duped into persuading his father-in-law to delay the planned introduction of a five-day working week in the USSR. The younger Khrushchev also claims that his father had come to accept the necessity for economic reforms along the lines of those proposed by the Kharkov economist Evsei Liberman and others; this initiative, too, was delayed and was introduced only after Khrushchev had been pensioned off. The Khrushchev 'cult' boomed in 1964, primarily as a result of the efforts of Brezhnev, Podgorny and Shelepin, efforts which Sergei Khrushchev now sees aimed at weakening his father. The food supply problems of 1964 are also attributed to a deliberate campaign of sabotage, designed to undermine the First Secretary's popularity.[32]

As the foregoing makes clear, the movement to oust Khrushchev was far more extensive than has previously been realised and was by no means limited to his colleagues in the Kremlin, although they, of course, provided the leadership. The October plenum was not arranged until solid majorities in both the Presidium and the Central Committee were known to favour Khrushchev's replacement.[33] The number of people privy to the plot must therefore have been enormous; indeed, virtually the entire Central Committee apart from a few Khrushchev loyalists appear to have been targeted by this lobbying effort. Even Khrushchev's long-time personal assistant G. T. Shuisky joined the plot; at one point he intercepted an attempt to warn Khrushchev of the danger to his rule.[34] Much of the plotting seems to have taken place at various southern resorts over the summer, as members of the party elite tended to frequent the same places when on holiday and could therefore meet without arousing suspicion.[35] Given that the risk of exposure rose as more and more people were brought into confidence, it must have been the case that the support of these men really mattered.

This would indicate that the territorial party elite and other officials making up the bulk of the Central Committee enjoyed far more power than was hitherto thought. Despite the First Secretary's attempts to undermine it after 1958, the Central Committee (CC) remained a powerful body, largely as a result of Khrushchev's own resuscitation of it in the mid-1950s. As Semichastnyi has observed, it is somewhat paradoxical that Khrushchev himself had created the conditions within the party which made it possible for his removal to be so plotted:[36] in addition to restoring the authority of the CC, he had brought an end to the use of terror in Soviet politics, a change which must have greatly increased the propensity of elite members to scheme and plot against one another and against their superiors. Knowing that the ultimate penalty was no longer enforced, they were that much more likely to play politics for very high stakes.

There were, of course, leaks in this process. More than one attempt seems to have been made to warn the First Secretary of the impending crisis. Olga I. Ivashchenko, a member of the Ukrainian party secretariat, tried unsuccessfully to warn Khrushchev and it is alleged that the Uzbek official Yadgar Nasriddinova

made a similar attempt. Khrushchev's daughter, Rada Adzhubei, received more than one warning about the impending coup but remained unconvinced by her informers.[37] As noted above, word of Ignatov's activities did indeed reach Khrushchev after the latter's bodyguard approached Khrushchev's son Sergei.[38] In the first two instances, the callers never succeeded in getting through to him, while in the case of Ignatov, Khrushchev himself simply miscalculated. According to some accounts, he did not guess that Ignatov was not acting on his own initiative and he therefore made the mistake of telling Podgorny and others what he knew.[39] Adzhubei says that Khrushchev promised to 'clear everything up' after his holiday in Pitsunda.[40]

Others suggest that he threatened his Presidium colleagues as well, promising, according to one account, that he would toss them out 'like whelps'.[41] Egorychev claims that Brezhnev was afraid to return from East Germany after he heard that Khrushchev knew of the plot.[42] In either case, Khrushchev played into their hands: while his promise to 'clear everything up' placed them under a certain time pressure, his trip to Pitsunda gave them the opportunity they needed to act. Given that these conversations took place prior to Khrushchev's late September departure for Pitsunda, it is reasonable to accept Semichastnyi's claim that the pace of events accelerated in the second half of that month. The final decision to convene the Central Committee in October was taken at Brezhnev's Moscow flat, apparently on 12 October. There had already been a number of false starts on account of Brezhnev's cold feet. Semichastnyi, on being summoned to Moscow in late September, asked Shelepin: 'Is it the real thing?' To which the latter replied: 'This time it's on'.[43]

According to Semichastnyi, not all of the false starts had been concerned with convening the Central Committee and voting Khrushchev out of office. In his interview with Starkov, he states that Brezhnev was at one stage obsessed with the idea of poisoning his boss. It is difficult to know how much to credit Semichastnyi's account on this point—especially since Brezhnev would probably have thought twice about setting such a precedent just before taking over the top job himself. He also charges that Brezhnev suggested arranging a plane crash while Khrushchev was abroad or a car crash. More plausible is his assertion that Brezhnev suggested simply arresting Khrushchev in June on his return from a trip to Sweden.[44] Whether these charges are true or not, it seems to be relatively clear that the role of the security organs was, by all accounts, a critical one. Semichastnyi claims that he insisted on removing Khruschev by legal means and that he realised that any illegal action taken against the First Secretary would not remain secret for very long.[45] Nevertheless, he seems to have made considerable use of the KGB's powers to ensure that nothing went wrong.

First, the KGB seems to have kept Khrushchev isolated from almost all news of the plot; thus, attempts by people like Nasriddinova and Ivashchenko to reach him failed.[46] While Khrushchev was isolated in Pitsunda, he also seems to have been under constant surveillance. Semichastnyi evidently monitored the situation from Moscow.[47] Secondly, it was Semichastnyi's job to replace Khrushchev's security details in his office at the Kremlin, his flat and his dacha. Burlatsky claims that Khrushchev fully understood what was afoot only at the time of his departure

from Pitsunda when he saw that his *okhrana* had been changed.[48] Finally, Semichaştnyi claims that it fell to him to prevent any interference on Khrushchev's behalf from the military units stationed in and around Moscow. He states that he had already warned the heads of the KGB special sections in the Moscow military district:

> In the next few days, if as much as one armed soldier on a motorcycle leaves his barracks, whether with a machine gun or anything else..., keep in mind, it will cost you your head... You are not to allow anyone to undertake anything without reporting to me.[49]

In stressing the critical importance of the KGB, Semichastnyi goes so far as to allege that Kosygin, on being approached in early October, merely asked: 'On whose side is the KGB?' When told that they were on board, he agreed to back the plot. While it is difficult to evaluate this claim, the notion that he was drawn in very late in the going seems at least to be compatible with the traditional Western view of Kosygin as a man who generally avoided involvement in factional intrigues. No one else mentions Kosygin as having played any role whatsoever in the conspiracy. Semichastnyi also presents the military as having been essentially uninvolved, claiming that Malinovsky was told only two days in advance.[50] Shelest, however, states that Podgorny approached Malinovsky two or three weeks prior to the coup and was told by the defence minister that the army was apolitical and would support neither Khrushchev nor his enemies.[51] It is impossible to verify what Malinovsky knew and when, but other accounts also fail to accord the armed forces an important role. The other participants do not mention the military at all, while Medvedev simply states that Malinovsky's agreement was necessary 'to exclude the possibility of an accident'.[52] As will be seen, the grievances against Khrushchev listed by both eyewitnesses and historians also give surprisingly short shrift to military concerns. This state of affairs could not contrast more sharply with 1957, when Marshal Zhukov played a key role in the defeat of the Anti-Party Group.

Having carefully laid the groundwork, Khrushchev's Presidium colleagues telephoned him in Pitsunda and called him back to Moscow for an urgent meeting to discuss the agricultural measures to be presented at the coming Central Committee plenum in November. The call appears to have taken place on the evening of Monday 12 October. Medvedev states that it was made the following morning, but Sergei Khrushchev, who was with his father in Pitsunda, and Semichastnyi, who was with the plotters in Moscow, agree that Khrushchev received the call on Monday evening. It is not entirely clear who made the call, as the two eyewitnesses disagree. Sergei Khrushchev claims that Brezhnev balked at the last minute and that it fell to Suslov to telephone Pitsunda; Semichastnyi acknowledges that the reluctant Brezhnev was 'dragged to the telephone, almost by force', but insists that he was present when Brezhnev himself made the call. Medvedev also believes that Brezhnev made the call.[53]

All accounts agree that Khrushchev initially refused to come; he was on vacation, after all, and could not see the urgency of discussing the matters in question. Brezhnev (or Suslov?) insisted that his presence was required, however, and at last he gave in and agreed to come. Shelest has stated that there were two

telephone calls by Brezhnev to Pitsunda before Khrushchev was persuaded to return.[54] Medvedev says that the First Secretary gave way only when Brezhnev told him that they would proceed without him if necessary. Sergei Khrushchev states that by the end of this conversation, his father understood something more was to be discussed at the Presidium meeting in Moscow than agriculture; he told Mikoyan: 'If I'm the issue, I won't make a fight'. Semichastnyi also hints that Khrushchev became suspicous in the course of the conversation. He quotes the First Secretary as saying to Brezhnev: 'Why are you in such a hurry there? I'll come—and we'll find out'. There remained only the matter of ordering a plane for Khrushchev, a matter which seems to have generated no little confusion in Moscow. Although Khrushchev ordered a plane during the early evening, Semichastnyi, who was monitoring the situation, did not learn of it until midnight. In the meantime, he received hourly phone calls from a nervous Brezhnev checking up on the situation. Only after learning that Khrushchev had indeed ordered a plane did the plotters feel somewhat relieved.[55]

Semichastnyi's account of the evening of 12 October conveys a vivid sense of the nervous tension felt by the plotters. Sergei Khrushchev is almost certainly correct in saying that even then the conspirators continued to fear his father.[56] Although he was physically and politically isolated, with the leaders of virtually every important institution in the Soviet political system arrayed against him, his adversaries worried that he might take some sort of retaliatory action. Hence the concern over the ordering of Khrushchev's plane; the Presidium was keen to ensure that the First Secretary did indeed return from Pitsunda as promised. The delay in conveying news of the order to Semichastnyi no doubt created the impression that Khrushchev was trying to delay his departure for some reason. To be sure, the plotters could have brought him back to Moscow by force, but there was a strong consensus that the appearance of a coup must not be created. All must be done in good order, by 'democratically' resolving the issue at a CC plenum.[57] For this to be achieved, the victim's own cooperation, at least to a limited extent, was necessary.

The following day Khrushchev received the French minister of state Gaston Palewski at Pitsunda before flying back to Moscow. As noted above, Burlatsky claims that Khrushchev realised what was going on when he saw that the security detail on his plane had been replaced and tried unsuccessfully to order the plane to Kiev.[58] Sergei Khrushchev, who was there at the time, has stated categorically that this is an invention. Semichastnyi, moreover, claims to have replaced Khrushchev's security details in the Kremlin, at home and in his dacha only *after* the latter's arrival in the Kremlin. In doing this, however, he does appear to have enjoyed the assistance of Khrushchev's deputy chief of security; Semichastnyi had managed to send the chief of the First Secretary's *okhrana* on leave some time earlier.[59] It would thus appear reasonable to accept Semichastnyi's claim that he had effective control of Khrushchev's security detail in Pitsunda even without replacing it.[60]

Khrushchev was met at the airport only by Semichastnyi, the head of the KGB security administration, V. Chekvalov, and the secretary of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, Mikhail Georgadze. Khrushchev went directly from the airport to the

Kremlin, where the Presidium was awaiting him.[61] To all external appearances, the situation in the Kremlin was perfectly normal on 13 October. No additional troops or security forces were deployed in or around the Kremlin grounds, which remained open to visitors all day. Semichastnyi did, however, take the precaution of warning his deputy not to issue a single order or directive without informing him.[62] Even within the Presidium, a certain appearance of normality was maintained, as Khrushchev himself chaired the meeting called to remove him from office.[63]

In addition to the members and candidate members of the party Presidium, most accounts agree that the meeting was attended by the Central Committee secretaries, the Minister of Defence, Malinovsky, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gromyko, and several provincial first secretaries.[64] No stenographic report of the meeting was taken, although Shelest did take personal notes on it.[65] Suslov and Shelepin put the question of Khrushchev's removal to the meeting and were the most outspoken representatives of the prosecution.[66] Shelest was apparently also quite forceful.[67] The accusations directed at the First Secretary will be considered below; as Tatu has observed, once it had been decided to have a trial, there was no shortage of charges.[68] Brezhnev and Podgorny apparently said nothing the first day, but Voronov is reported to have been quite aggressive.[69] Khrushchev initially rejected the attacks of his colleagues but it was not long before he was put on the defensive and, ultimately, gave way to the superior strength of his opponents.[70] Mikoyan alone appears to have favoured allowing Khrushchev to retain one of his two posts, arguing that Khrushchev's activities represented a great store of political capital for the party.[71]

The issues raised in the Presidium meeting were many and varied, ranging from serious questions of policy and questions about Khrushchev's leadership style to insinuations of petty corruption. In the main, the conspirators' reasons for removing the First Secretary seem to have paralleled closely those advanced in Western writings on the coup. The *sovnarkhoz* system, the 1962 bifurcation of the party apparatus, Khrushchev's attitude towards his colleagues and towards local party organs and his often rude public behaviour were all discussed. Shelepin claimed that Khrushchev's son Sergei had received the degree of doctor of science without having defended a thesis. The First Secretary was criticised for taking members of his family on overseas trips and for awarding the title 'Hero of the Soviet Union' to Egypt's President Nasser and Vice President Amer. Khrushchev was accused of advancing a personality cult of his own within the Soviet Union and violating the norms of collective leadership.[72]

The above list is by no means comprehensive. As Adzhubei has correctly observed, by 1964 every political and social group had its own grievances against Khrushchev.[73] One thing that is remarkable about the complaints listed by various Soviet sources on the coup is the relative lack of importance attached to foreign policy and defence issues.[74] Few of the Soviet sources mention them and none seem to regard them as particularly important. It can scarcely be doubted that Khrushchev's defence policies had alienated many in the Soviet High Command, but, with the military apparently on the sidelines of the conflict, only Adzhubei actually mentions their grievances.[75] According to Shelest, the Suez, Berlin and

Cuban crises of 1956, 1961 and 1962, respectively, came up in the Presidium meeting, as did the question of economic relations with the PRC.[76] None of these issues seems to have been at the centre of the debate, however, probably because Khrushchev himself was speaking the truth when he reminded his colleagues that the decisions in question had been reached collectively.[77]

The foreign issue which generated the most discussion seems to have been Adzhubei's trip to Bonn earlier in the year. During his visit, he was reported to have predicted that the Berlin Wall would disappear in the wake of a future Khrushchev trip to Germany. Needless to say, his words generated a minor crisis for the leadership of the GDR, a crisis for which his father-in-law was held responsible. Adzhubei denies ever making such remarks and states that the rumours about his trip were quashed so thoroughly that they never came up at the October plenum.[78] Nevertheless, Gromyko is alleged to have told one of his visitors at the time: 'Why was Khrushchev overthrown? Because he sent Adzhubei to Bonn, of course'.[79] To some extent, Gromyko's answer no doubt reflects the position from which he viewed events. What is more important, however, is that the Adzhubei issue had less to do with substantive foreign policy questions than with Khrushchev's leadership style. For many in the leadership, the episode epitomised the problems created by Khrushchev's increasing concentration of power in his own hands and in the hands of a few close personal supporters. The issue was neither Adzhubei nor the German question but Khrushchev.[80]

In contrast to the relative lack of attention paid to foreign and defence policies, recent Soviet accounts have placed strong emphasis on those domestic issues which affected most directly the interests of the party elite which made up the overwhelming majority of the Central Committee membership. Dissatisfaction with the huge and unwieldy structure of economic administration built up over the *sovnarkhozy* after 1960, resentment at the bifurcation of the party apparatus adopted two years earlier and the rules adopted at the XXII Congress in 1961 concerning the 'systematic renewal of cadres' all figure prominently in the accounts of Khrushchev's ouster.[81] The bifurcation and the turnover rules were particularly sore points because they undermined the security of tenure of sitting Central Committee members, whose prospects for re-election at the XXIII Congress were no longer by any means certain. Voronov writes of the resentment generated by Khrushchev's circumvention of local party officials when dealing with local economic and state organs.[82]

Adzhubei reckons that the rules requiring minimum rates of turnover in party bodies and limiting the terms of officeholders were particularly damaging. He states that during his stay at Pitsunda Khrushchev was preparing a proposal to extend this system to include state posts as well.[83] Egorychev emphasises, *inter alia*, the frustration with Khrushchev's constant 'leapfrogging of cadres' from place to place.[84] Barsukov also writes that Khrushchev alienated many members of the Central Committee when he began to undermine its authority after 1958. The enlargement of plena to include numerous outsiders, the publication of stenographic records and other measures intended to 'democratise' the work of the committee served only to lend its proceedings the same theatrical air which characterised Supreme Soviet sessions. To this injury was added the insult of

Khrushchev's frequent interruptions of speakers and his generally high-handed manner in dealing with the Committee.[85]

To some extent, of course, the grievances listed in any given account reflect the perspective of its author. Since we have no accounts from military men or diplomats and quite a few from party men who were in the CC at the time, it is not surprising that these are the complaints most commonly cited. Yet even those who write from no particular bureaucratic perspective stress these same kinds of issues.[86] Moreover, the relative emphasis given to different groups' complaints tends to confirm the impression created by all of these accounts that the coup was essentially an internal party affair. The secret police, to be sure, were involved, but the military seem to have been kept very much in the background.

Two other policy issues seem to have been important. The first was Khrushchev's proposed reorganisation of agricultural management along branch lines. He had already sprung this idea on the CC in July and had only afterwards circulated a memorandum concerning it to his colleagues in the leadership.[87] This next reorganisation was to establish 17 union–republican agricultural administrations based in Moscow, each of which would supervise the planning and procurement of a specified range of agricultural products. The territorial-production associations of 1962 were to be abolished. Khrushchev's cause was not helped by the fact that his announcement of the new proposal to the July plenum was accompanied by a stinging attack (including a few threats) directed at local party leaders for their alleged failures in agricultural management.[88] This 'reform' was to be adopted in November, a fact which set an effective deadline for action by the anti-Khrushchev forces.[89] Given that the new reorganisation was both foolish economically and threatening politically from the point of view of the territorial party apparatus, it is not difficult to see how it became a focus for anti-Khrushchev resentment.

The other issue is somewhat more surprising. Two sources attribute a significant role to the bitter attack made by Khrushchev against the USSR Academy of Sciences and its president at the (hitherto unknown) July plenum. The First Secretary went so far as to question the need for the academy's very existence and implied that a future plenum might have to consider its future.[90] Politically this issue was far less of a threat to the elite than the agricultural reorganisation, but taken together the two issues exemplified everything that his colleagues and erstwhile supporters thought was wrong with Khrushchev. For in the end, it appears that the First Secretary did not so much fall over any particular issue or set of issues; rather, he fell because his comrades-in-arms had concluded that he was in some sense out of control. The voluntarism, the impulsiveness and the increasing authoritarianism of Khrushchev were wearing on them; they were 'stuffed to their throats' with his ill-considered reorganisation schemes and they wanted, above all else, a stable collective leadership.[91]

Finally, recent Soviet discussions of the reasons for Khrushchev's removal lay a remarkable amount of stress on his declining personal popularity with the Soviet public.[92] As noted above, Sergei Khrushchev believes that the food shortages and the delay in the introduction of the shorter working week were intended to undermine his father's popularity.[93] Adzhubei has acknowledged that virtually

every social group in the country had a reason to be dissatisfied with Khrushchev's rule.[94] Anatolii Strelyanyi, a journalist, describes his colleagues throwing a party at work on hearing of Khrushchev's ouster. Some even danced on the tables.[95] This concern with popular opinion suggests that the elite felt as insecure in power in 1964 as it had at the time of Stalin's death in 1953. It is entirely consonant with John Miller's suggestion that:

> It makes sense to picture Soviet leaders as convinced and thoroughgoing Hobbesians, so persuaded of the precariousness of social cohesion and so appalled at the prospect of social breakdown as to rate the absolute position of the sovereign as a supreme value in politics. They are Hobbesians, moreover, not Machiavellians, because they seek the bulwark against social breakdown in an institutional arrangement, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and not in the personal qualities of the sovereign.[96]

Khrushchev's continuation in power was thus seen as a threat not only to the political fortunes of his fellow oligarchs, but to the very stability of the entire Soviet regime. On the one hand, his policies' failures might give rise to social unrest, while, on the other, his increasing personal dominance within the leadership undermined the oligarchical arrangements around which the post-Stalin leadership had attempted to build a stable political order.

At the end of the first day of the Presidium meeting, the members went home to prepare for the next round. According to Sergei Khrushchev, the First Secretary's opponents agreed not to answer the phone, in case Khrushchev began calling around trying to win them back over one by one. Adzhubei apparently did attempt to get in touch with Shelepin, Polyansky and others but got no answer.[97] Semichastnyi says that Brezhnev was particularly nervous, fearing that Khruschev might 'call in help'. The KGB chief assured Brezhnev that Khrushchev could go nowhere, call no one, without the knowledge and consent of the security organs.[98] Unbeknownst to both his supporters and his enemies, Khrushchev himself concluded that evening that he could not carry on the struggle. He telephoned Mikoyan and explained that he would resign all his posts the following day.

The Presidium meeting resumed early on 14 October. The criticism of the First Secretary was concluded and he delivered his final address to the Presidium. Acknowledging the validity of some criticisms while denying others categorically, Khrushchev sought to explain and justify himself at the last. He apologised for his behaviour towards other members of the leadership and stressed the collective nature of the decisions for which he alone was now being called to account, claiming even that the decision to make him Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers had been proposed by others and that he had acceded only reluctantly. The First Secretary also accused his colleagues of having been dishonest with him, of having lacked the 'principles and boldness' to speak frankly to him about his shortcomings. He briefly answered a few of the criticisms made against him before turning to the subject of his removal:

> ... I rejoice that there has come a time when the members of the Presidium have begun to control the activity of the First Secretary and speak with a full voice ... Today's meeting of the CC Presidium is a victory for the party. I thought that I would have to leave ... I have lost touch with you. You have criticised me vigorously for that today and I myself

have suffered from it. I thank you for the opportunity which you are granting me to resign.[99]

Khrushchev later repeated this expression of thanks to his colleagues for being allowed to retire, which suggests that he may have feared that more serious measures would be taken against him. At the same time, however, he revealed that he had harboured still higher hopes than a safe retirement: 'I thought that you perhaps would consider it possible to create some sort of honorary post for me, but I will not request that of you'.[100] It was at this point that Khrushchev offered to leave Moscow, if his successors so desired; someone replied, 'Why do that?'[101] Acknowledging that his address to the Presidium was his 'swan song', Khrushchev stated that he would not speak to the Central Committee, but asked that he be allowed 'to approach the plenum with a request...'. Brezhnev cut him off abruptly: 'There will be no request!' According to Shelest, Brezhnev was afraid of what Khrushchev would ask the plenum. He might attempt to answer the charges, debates might get started and the new leadership might lose control of events before it had safely dispatched the old.[102]

The relative speed of Khrushchev's capitulation surprised some observers. His enemies seem to have taken every precaution on the assumption that he would fight as he had done in 1957. Most attempts to account for the First Secretary's behaviour stress that he was old and tired by late 1964 and that he was thinking of retirement anyway. Several sources suggest that he intended to step down at the XXIII Congress, due in less than two years.[103] Strelyanyi describes Khrushchev as tired, disillusioned and frustrated by the failure of the leadership to make good on its promises to the people. He cites evidence that Khrushchev intended to step aside in favour of younger men. Adzhubei agrees. Some of the First Secretary's remarks, moreover, suggest that he planned to purge the leadership in order to introduce 'new blood' prior to his retirement. If his collegues feared that such was his intent, it can only have hastened his demise. In any case, Strelyanyi argues, the conservatives in the leadership feared the example of a leader voluntarily confessing his failures and resigning.[104]

In addition to fatigue, Voronov, the only actual participant in these events to address this question, suggests that Khrushchev realised that his opponents had access to the same weapons which he himself had used against his own enemies in better times. Specifically, he states that Khrushchev's colleagues were prepared to use his own Stalin-era past against him: his activities in both Moscow and the Ukraine at the height of the purges left him quite vulnerable on this point.[105] Apparently documents relating to Khrushchev's involvement in certain arrests of 1935–37 had aready been prepared for just such a contingency.[106] It may have been the fear that such weapons would be employed against him which led Khrushchev to thank his colleagues for allowing him to resign.[107]

While all of this (and more) was under discussion in the Kremlin, the tension outside it was building. It was not yet widely known—if it was known at all—that Khrushchev had already agreed to resign. As the Presidium meeting continued into its second day, Semichastnyi phoned Brezhnev to warn him that the meeting was going on too long. He himself was receiving a steady stream of calls from Central Committee members and others demanding to know what was happening.

Some wanted to save Khrushchev, others to support Brezhnev and the opposition. Brezhnev told him that the Presidium had almost completed its deliberations and that Semichastnyi would need only to stall a bit longer. The plenum was set for 6.00 pm, the members of the CC having already been summoned to Moscow on false pretences in order to make sure that they were on hand when the session was called.[108]

Khrushchev himself returned home after the Presidium meeting and informed his family of what had happened. According to his son Sergei, he stated simply that he had been retired. After a pause, he added: 'Didn't want to have lunch with them any more'.[109] The plenum convened that evening at 6.00 pm in the Kremlin. Brezhnev opened and Mikoyan chaired it. Khrushchev sat on his own to one side, while Suslov delivered an hour-long report on his failings as leader. Most of the committee members simply sat in silence; a few shouted from the floor, calling for Khrushchev's expulsion from the party, or even his arrest and trial. There was no discussion following the report. Suslov simply stated: 'To judge by the comments of the members, the plenum clearly approves the Presidium's decision with respect to Khrushchev, and there is no need for a debate'. The resolution releasing Khrushchev from his duties on account of his age and health was put to the committee and adopted unanimously. It was also resolved that the posts of First Secretary of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers would never again be united in one person. Brezhnev and Kosygin were chosen to replace Khrushchev as party leader and premier respectively. The latter gave a short speech and the plenum's proceedings were brought to a close. The Khrushchev era had ended.[110]

Suslov's report, which has not yet been published, covered all the main points, both great and small, for which the Presidium had indicted Khrushchev. The most complete reconstruction of it available is Medvedev's, which Semichastnyi has said is accurate 'in the main'.[111] None of the actors involved believes that Suslov himself wrote the report. Shelest says that it was prepared by Polyansky, to be given either by Brezhnev or Podgorny. In the event, the former 'simply chickened out' and the latter 'categorically refused'. Having made their careers under Khrushchev for so many years, they were concerned about 'how it would look' if they delivered the report. It thus fell to Suslov, as the chief ideologist, to address the plenum.[112] Others have put forward Shelepin's name as the author of Suslov's speech.[113] Semichastnyi knows only that it had been worked on in the CC apparatus.[114] Whatever its authorship, the report did not originate with Suslov; Voronov is emphatic on the point, stating that the ideologist's sole contribution to the whole thing was to read the text with which he had been presented.[115]

The new leaders took no chances whatsoever when organising the plenum. Several prominent Khrushchev supporters in the Central Commitee, including Z. T. Serdyuk and O. I. Ivashchenko, were barred from attending.[116] The decision not to allow Khrushchev to speak or to permit a discussion of Suslov's report appears to have been taken in the same vein. Egorychev stresses that 'in the heat of discussion' much might have been said which would have tied Brezhnev's hands.[117] Semichastnyi thinks that the new leadership simply did not know where the discussion might lead and was determined at all costs to maintain control of

events. He laments the inertia of the Central Committee, which allowed them to do this and thereby reinforced the dominance of the Presidium over the Central Committee, to which it was—in theory at least—accountable.[118] Voronov suggests that had Khrushchev defended himself at the plenum, his supporters would have rallied to his defence and things might well have got out of hand.[119]

Can it be that even at this late stage Brezhnev and his allies still feared Khrushchev? One may infer from an anecdote later related by Mzhavanadze that indeed they did. On his return journey to Tbilisi, the Georgian first secretary stepped off his train to buy a newspaper in one of the stations along the route south. The paper contained no report of the plenum whatsoever and therefore frightened Mzhavanadze considerably. Only when he subsequently heard the announcement of the plenum on the radio did he at last relax.[120] Mzhavanadze's story underlines the sense of insecurity which the plotters felt throughout the execution of Khrushchev's overthrow.

Brezhnev's own address to the plenum was relatively brief, but it seems to provide some insight into the reasons for his election to succeed Khrushchev. After thanking the plenum for his election, Brezhnev affirmed his commitment to collective leadership and promised to devote all his strength to justifying the trust which his comrades had placed in him. He then emphasised the new leadership's commitment to increasing the role of party organs in all spheres of economic and social life. It is noteworthy that he laid stress not so much on the leading role of the *party*, as on the leading role of *party organs*. Brezhnev promised more than once to 'stick up for cadres'. The tone of his speech further confirms the impression that the driving force behind the coup was the party apparat.[121] Brezhnev's commitment to the interests of this constituency was critical in his rise to power.

Most of the participants in the events of October 1964 seem to feel that, once it had been decided to remove Khrushchev, Brezhnev's election was a foregone conclusion. Barsukov states flatly that Brezhnev had no real rivals; he was acknowledged to be the second man in the leadership.[122] More that one source cites Khrushchev's 1963 conversation with the French Socialist leader Guy Mollet, in which the First Secretary named Brezhnev as his probable successor.[123] According to Semichastnyi, there were simply no other candidates. Brezhnev was already second secretary, he had long experience in party work and it was thought that he could lead the Central Committee in collegial work.[124] Shelest, perhaps arguing from a uniquely Ukrainian perspective, argues that there was an alternative: Podgorny. He states that Podgorny enjoyed considerable support but chose nevertheless to back Brezhnev. It was Podgorny who nominated Brezhnev for the post of First Secretary and during the early part of Brezhnev's rule helped the new party leader to maintain himself in power. Shelest states that Brezhnev would not have lasted more than a year without Podgorny.[125] Egorychev emphasises Brezhnev's perceived 'decency'. He seemed a man who could provide much more stability at the top than had Khrushchev. Egorychev himself claims to have had doubts about Brezhnev and to have favoured Kosygin for the post, but he was persuaded by his fellow committee members that Brezhnev was a suitable candidate.[126]

Burlatsky sees Brezhnev essentially as a compromise figure acceptable both to the older generation of leaders like Suslov and Kosygin and to younger men like

Semichastnyi and Voronov. He claims that Suslov and others feared the ambitions of Shelepin. Brezhnev was also seen by the CC apparatus as a man neither able nor inclined to interfere in its workings; in Brezhnev's weakness and lack of competence, the apparat saw increased power and freedom of action. Brezhnev stood at 'the intersection' of a complex set of cleavages involving both generational conflict and different policy agendas. He himself, moreover, had no particularly strong political convictions of his own and was thus an ideal compromise candidate. Various groups no doubt expected to manipulate him for their own ends, and some may have thought they could remove him at will.[127]

Yet it does not seem to have been only the *apparatchiki* who welcomed Brezhnev's election; most intellectuals seem to have 'expected political, economic and cultural reform to continue under Brezhnev, but without the fits and starts associated with Khrushchev'.[128] The military and security organs certainly must have welcomed the change and, with the advent of the Kosygin reforms of 1965, the new leadership addressed the interests of the Soviet Union's economic managers.

One point on which there does seem to be agreement is that Brezhnev's position was shaky at the start. Shelest was not alone in seeing Brezhnev as a transitional figure. Egorychev did not expect him to last either, while Burlatsky stresses that Shelepin expected to remove Brezhnev with relative ease. Rodionov agrees, although he remarks that even before the coup Brezhnev had begun to secure his position by quietly installing his supporters in key positions.[129] The prospect of a Shelepin challenge backed by the likes of Semichastnyi and, perhaps, Voronov, goes a long way towards explaining Brezhnev's fear of younger members of the leadership, described by Shelest.[130]

From the standpoint of Western views of Soviet politics, the most significant thing about the accounts of the coup now being published is the light they cast on the role of regional and republic party leaders in Soviet politics. The inclusion in the conspiracy of dozens, probably even hundreds of members of the territorial party elite suggests that their voice counted for a great deal in the corridors of the Kremlin. The risks involved in drawing so many people into the plot were such that the leaders of the opposition would only have followed such a strategy if they had felt it to be necessary, no doubt not only to ensure their successful seizure of power, but also to establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the elite. It was critically important to carry out all decisions according to rule, to avoid the appearance of a *coup d'état.*

Throughout this article, the events of October 1964 have nevertheless been referred to as a coup. It should be stressed that this evaluation is by no means a non-controversial one, nor is it intended to be an absolute one. The issue continues to be debated in the Soviet press.[131] The argument for calling the October plenum a coup stems primarily from the conspiratorial nature of the preparations for it and from the involvement of the KGB. Yet the significance of the Central Committee's involvement and of the orderly conduct of the Presidium meeting and the plenum ought not to be overlooked. The fall of Khrushchev remains the only succession in the history of the Soviet Union to date which did

not require the death of the leader. It was, moreover, a bloodless and orderly transfer of power and the fact that it occurred at all bears witness to the extent of the change in Soviet politics wrought by Khrushchev and his colleagues in the 11 years since Stalin's death.

Not everything had changed, to be sure; Soviet leadership politics remained a rough-and-tumble game in which the rules were unclear and the composition of the various teams often changed. As Mikoyan later put it, 'Khrushchev forgot that the struggle for power can also be conducted under socialism'.[132] But as Barsukov argues, one must not overlook the many things which had changed. The October plenum was a direct consequence of the XX Congress.[133] Khrushchev himself contributed greatly to creating the environment in which both his colleagues and the middle level elite of the provinces and republics could plot his overthrow. Nor was this irony lost on him. After his retirement, Khrushchev, who does not seem to have regarded his removal as a coup, observed: 'Perhaps the most important thing I did was just this—that they were able to get rid of me simply by voting, whereas Stalin would have had them all arrested'.[134]

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[1] Michel Tatu, *Power in the Kremlin: From Khrushchev's Decline to Collective Leadership* (London, Collins, 1969), p. 405.

[2] Roy Medvedev advanced this position several years ago in his biography of Khrushchev. R. Medvedev, *Khrushchev* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1982), p. 227.

[3] V. E. Semichastnyi, 'Kak smeshchali N. S. Khrushcheva', *Argumenty i fakty*, 20 (1989), p. 5. Excerpts from the unpublished transcript of this interview (conducted by V. A. Starkov) as well as unpublished excerpts of Starkov's interview with Shelest appear in Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev on Khrushchev: An Inside Account of the Man and His Era*, tr. William Taubman, (Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1990). In Starkov's transcripts, Semichastnyi is even more specific, dating preparations for the coup from about February; Khrushchev, p. 46. For Shelest's and Sergei Khrushchev's accounts, see Khrushchev, pp. 45–47.

[4] Tatu, pp. 405–409.

[5] Roy Medvedev, 'N. S. Khrushchev: 1964 god: Neozhidannoe smeshchenie', in Yu. V. Aksyutin, ed., *N. S. Khrushchev: materialy k biografii* (Moscow, Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1988), p. 194; Gennadii Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli do zastoya' (interview), *Izvestiya*, 18 November 1988, p. 3.

[6] F. Burlatsky, '"Mirnyi zagovor" protiv N. S. Khrushcheva', in Aksyutin, ed., p. 211; elsewhere Burlatsky has stated that it was CC Secretary P. N. Demichev who told him that Shelepin was behind the plot; see F. Burlatsky, *Vozhdi i sovetniki: o Khrushcheve, Andropove i ne tol'ko o nikh*... (Moscow, Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1990), p. 275.

[7] P. E. Shelest, 'O Khrushcheve, Brezhneve i drugikh', *Argumenty i Fakty*, 2 (1989), pp. 5–6; Semichastnyi, p. 5. The historian Yu. Aksyutin accepts this interpretation as well; Yu. Aksyutin 'Khrushchev: 1964 god', *Trud*, 26 November 1989, p. 4.

[8] N. G. Egorychev, 'Napravlen poslom', *Ogonek*, 6 (1989), p. 7; P. A. Rodionov, 'Kak nachinalsya zastoi', *Znamya*, 8 (1989), p. 185.

[9] Khrushchev, pp. 45–46.

[10] Sergei Khrushchev reports that his father considered making Shelepin his heir apparent but felt that he needed some experience in party administrative work first. He therefore offered Shelepin Kozlov's job heading the Leningrad *obkom*. Shelepin apparently viewed the transfer away from Moscow as a demotion and declined to accept it, at which point Khrushchev became disillusioned with him. Khrushchev, p. 31.

[11] Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 214; see also Burlatsky, *Vozhdi*..., p. 169.

[12] Semichastnyi, pp. 5–6; Voronov, p. 3; G. Voronov, 'Nemnogo vospominanii', *Druzhba narodov*, 1 (1989), pp. 200–201.

[13] Khrushchev, p. 136.

[14] Rodionov, p. 185. To judge from his actions after the coup, it would appear that Brezhnev shared Rodionov's view of Shelepin's intentions.

[15] For an account of Suslov's role in the 1957 crisis, see N. Barsukov, 'Proval "antipartiinoi gruppy" (1957) god', *Kommunist*, 8 (May 1990), pp. 98–108; Barsukov's account is based on the stenogram of the June 1957 plenum and other materials. Rodionov, p. 185, agrees with Barsukov's assessment of Suslov's behaviour.

[16] Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3.

[17] Shelest, p. 6.

[18] Khrushchev, p. 136.

[19] Shelest, pp. 5–6; Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3; Semichastnyi, p. 5; Khrushchev, p. 158.

[20] Rodionov, p. 188; Semichastnyi has challenged this view as regards Shelepin, arguing that there is no evidence to support the charge that the latter was a Stalinist; Andrei Karaulov, *Vokrug kremlya: kniga politicheskikh dialogov* (Moscow, Novosti, 1990), pp. 36–37.

[21] Aleksei Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', *Znamya*, 7 (1988), p. 129.

[22] Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 212.

[23] Rodionov, pp. 189–190. Egorychev, p. 7, confirms that he was indeed an active 'lobbyist'. Melor Sturua, 'Dve fotografii k odnomu portretu', *Nedelya*, 43 (1988), p. 17, states that Mzhavanadze's services were never forgotten by Brezhnev, who was reluctant to remove Mzhavanadze from office and did so only in 1972, by which time he had little choice in the matter.

[24] Aksyutin, p. 4.

[25] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 194; Khrushchev, pp. 93–96; Rodionov, pp. 185–186.

[26] Khrushchev, ch. 2; Rodionov, pp. 185–186; Adzhubei, p. 129; A. Strelyanyi, 'Poslednii romantik', *Druzhba narodov*, 11 (1988), pp. 225–226.

[27] Semichastnyi, p. 5.

[28] Khrushchev, pp. 46–47, 93–96; Shelest, p. 5.

[29] Khrushchev, pp. 49–50. Mazurov himself has confirmed that Khrushchev more than once raised the subject of his removal; 'Ya govoryu ne tol'ko o sebe', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 19 February 1989, p. 3.

[30] Khrushchev, pp. 49–50.

[31] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 194.

[32] Khrushchev, pp. 18–19, 47, 70, 72, 75–76. A. Adzhubei, 'Po sledam odnogo yubileya', *Ogonek*, 41 (October) 1989, p. 9.

[33] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 195.

[34] Khrushchev, p. 89. Shuisky had been with Khrushchev since about 1942 and his loyalty was thought to be beyond question. Ironically, his other personal assistant, V. S. Lebedev, who had a reputation as a hard-liner and a Suslov man, was loyal to the end. Khrushchev, p. 138.

[35] Khrushchev, pp. 77, 93–96; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 194.

[36] Semichastnyi, p. 5.

[37] Khrushchev, pp. 88–89.

[38] Khrushchev, p. 160; Rodionov, p. 189; Sturua, p. 17.

[39] Strelyanyi, p. 226.

[40] Adzhubei, p. 129; Khrushchev, p. 107–109.

[41] Rodionov, p. 186.

[42] Egorychev, p. 7; Semichastnyi also claims that Brezhnev panicked at this point; Khrushchev, p. 135.

[43] Semichastnyi, p. 5; a fuller account of this episode can be found in Starkov's transcript, cited in Khrushchev, p. 135.

[44] Semichastnyi, p. 5; Khrushchev, pp. 68–69 (Starkov transcript). Aksyutin, p. 4, seems to accept Semichastnyi's account.

[45] Aksyutin, p. 4.

[46] Khrushchev, p. 160; Sturua, p. 17; Semichastnyi, p. 5.

[47] Semichastnyi, pp. 5–6; Khrushchev, pp. 137, 139. Semichastnyi has recently disputed Sergei Khrushchev's account of the surveillance at Pitsunda, however; see Karaulov, pp. 35–37.

[48] Khrushchev, p. 148 (Starkov transcript [Semichastnyi]); Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 211. In contrast to Burlatsky's account, neither Sergei Khrushchev (who was there) nor Semichastnyi mentions a change in the security detail at Pitsunda.

[49] Khrushchev, p. 136 (Starkov transcript).

[50] Semichastnyi, p. 5; Khrushchev, p. 136 (Starkov transcript). Aksyutin, p. 4, presents a

slightly different version of Semichastnyi's story concerning the approach to Kosygin, suggesting that he may have had another source (probably Voronov) corroborating Semichastnyi's account.

[51] Interview with Shelest, Moscow, 26 December 1990.

[52] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 194.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 195; Khrushchev, pp. 133–136; Semichastnyi, p. 5; Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 129, echoes Khrushchev's account: Suslov called. Shelest supports Semichastnyi on this point; Aksyutin, p. 4.

[54] Karaulov, p. 146.

[55] Khrushchev, pp. 134, 139–140n; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 195; Semichastnyi, p. 5.

[56] Khrushchev, p. 140.

[57] Semichastnyi, p. 5; Khrushchev, pp. 69–70.

[58] Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 211.

[59] Khrushchev, pp. 4n, 148 (Starkov transcript); Semichastnyi, p. 5.

[60] Karaulov, p. 36.

[61] Khrushchev, pp. 144–145; Semichastnyi, p. 5; Semichastnyi denies that Chekvalov was there; Karaulov, p. 36.

[62] Semichastnyi, p. 5.

[63] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 195; N. A. Barsukov, 'Kak byl "nizlozhen" N. S. Khrushchev', *Obshchestvennye nauki*, 6 (1989), p. 133; Egorychev, p. 7.

[64] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 195; Semichastnyi, p. 5; Barsukov, p. 133; Semichastnyi (who was not there) states that no one was present except the members of the Presidium and the Secretariat; Karaulov, p. 36.

[65] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 195; Shelest, p. 5, Khrushchev, p. 155.

[66] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 194; Khrushchev, p. 153. Khrushchev's information on the Presidium meeting is based on an account given to him by the Academician Anushavan Arzumanyan, who claimed to have got his information straight from Mikoyan.

[67] Khrushchev, p. 153. Shelest himself denies this; Karaulov, p. 146.

[68] Tatu, p. 413.

[69] Khrushchev, p. 154; Aksyutin, p. 4.

[70] Medvedev, '1964...', p. 195; Rodionov, p. 190; Voronov, 'Vospominanii...', pp. 200–201.

[71] Medvedev, '1964', p. 195; Shelest, p. 5; Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3; Rodionov, p. 190; Aksyutin, p. 4. Sergei Khrushchev claims that at the end of the first day of the Presidium meeting his father had only been asked to give up one of his posts, although the elder Khrushchev seems at that stage already to have understood that he would be asked to resign the other as well. See, Khrushchev, p. 149.

[72] Khrushchev, pp. 151–154; Medvedev, '1964', pp. 197–198.

[73] Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 130.

[74] Thomas Sherlock, 'Khrushchev Reconsidered', *Report on the USSR*, 8 June 1990, p. 15.

[75] Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 130.

[76] Shelest, p. 5; Khrushchev, pp. 156–157 (Starkov transcript).

[77] Shelest, p. 5.

[78] Adzhubei, 'Po sledam...', p. 8.

[79] Tatu, p. 389.

[80] Khrushchev, pp. 132–133; Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 211.

[81] See, for example, Barsukov, pp. 124–133; Voronov, 'Vospominanii...', p. 199–201; Rodionov, pp. 188, 191; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 197.

[82] Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3.

[83] Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 129. Adzhubei's account receives indirect support on this point from the fact that the November plenum was to discuss constitutional reform as well as agriculture. Aksyutin, p. 4. Sergei Khrushchev agrees that rule 25 undermined his father and links it to the latter's attempts to curtail the privileges of the *apparat*; Khrushchev, p. 24.

[84] Egorychev, p. 7.

[85] Barsukov, p. 125; Adzhubei concurs; see 'Po sledam...', p. 8.

[86] See, for example, Barsukov; Medvedev, '1964...', and Strelyanyi.

[87] Rodionov, p. 191; Strelyanyi, p. 225; Aksyutin, p. 4. Barsukov, pp. 130–131, states that Khrushchev also intended to return to vertical management in industry.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[89] Khrushchev, p. 95; Tatu, pp. 394–398; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 193–194.

[90] Barsukov, p. 130; Egorychev, p. 7.

[91] Rodionov, p. 188; Strelyanyi, p. 225; Egorychev, p. 7; Barsukov, p. 133.

[92] See, for example, N. Mikhailov, 'Vozmozhen li segodnya Oktyabr' 1964 goda?', *Moskovskaya pravda*, 18 August 1989, p. 2; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 199; E. Zubkova, 'Oktyabr' 1964 goda: povorot ili perevorot?', *Kommunist*, 13 (September) 1989, pp. 93–94.

[93] Khrushchev, pp. 70–72, 75–76.

[94] Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 130.

[95] Strelyanyi, p. 226.

[96] John H. Miller, 'The Communist Party: Trends and Problems', in A. Brown & M. Kaser, eds., *Soviet Policy for the 1980s* (London, Macmillan, 1982), p. 1.

[97] Aksyutin, p. 4; Khrushchev, pp. 149–150.

[98] Khrushchev, p. 150 (Starkov transcript).

[99] Barsukov, pp. 133–134. Barsukov's excerpts from Khrushchev's final remarks are taken from a tape recording deposited in the Central Party Archive of the Institute of Marxism–Leninism by Shelepin. The passages quoted by Barsukov parallel quite closely those which Shelest has reconstructed from his notes. Excerpts from Shelest's account of Khrushchev's speech may be found in Shelest, p. 5 and Khrushchev, pp. 155–158 (Starkov transcript). Though less accurate, these are more extensive than anything quoted by Barsukov, whose material nevertheless strongly confirms the essential reliability of Shelest's reconstruction.

[100] Barsukov, p. 134.

[101] *Ibid*; Shelest, p. 5.

[102] *Ibid.*

[103] Khrushchev, pp. 28, 125; Rodionov, p. 192.

[104] Strelyanyi, p. 226; Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 7.

[105] Voronov, 'Vospominanii...', p. 201.

[106] Adzhubei, 'Po sledam...', p. 9.

[107] Sherlock, p. 14.

[108] Semichastnyi, pp. 5–6; Khrushchev, pp. 158–159 (Starkov transcript). If, as he has asserted, Semichastnyi had bugged the First Secretary's phone, then he ought to have known about the latter's phone call to Mikoyan on the night of 13 October. Presumably his impatience grew out of the fear that if all was not done quickly, Khrushchev's supporters might have time to turn the tables on the conspirators.

[109] Khrushchev, p. 155.

[110] Medvedev, '1964...', pp. 196–202; Semichastnyi, p. 6; Barsukov, p. 133. All these accounts agree on all the main points. Egorychev, p. 7, and Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3, also agree that there was no debate. Ex-Presidium member N. A. Mukhitdinov, however, remembers there being two or three brief speeches in support of Suslov. N. A. Mukhitdinov, '12 let s Khrushchevym', *Argumenty i fakty*, 44 (1989), p. 6. Adzhubei agrees: 'Po sledam...', pp. 8–9.

[111] Medvedev, *Khrushchev...*, pp. 237–244; Semichastnyi, p. 6. *Izvestiya TsK KPSS* has promised to publish the stenographic account of the October plenum in late 1991.

[112] Shelest, p. 6; Khrushchev, p. 158 (Starkov transcript).

[113] Shelest, p. 6; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 196.

[114] Semichastnyi, p. 6.

[115] Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3.

[116] Khrushchev, p. 160. The Medvedevs also name Leningrad *obkom* first secretary Tolstikov and CC secretary for agriculture V. S. Polyakov; Roy & Zhores Medvedev, *Khrushchev: The Years in Power* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 172.

[117] Egorychev, p. 7.

[118] Semichastnyi, p. 6; Khrushchev, pp. 159–160 (Starkov transcript).

[119] Voronov, 'Ot ottepeli...', p. 3.

[120] Rodionov, p. 191. Although the plenum concluded early on the evening of 14 October, it was not announced for almost 24 hours—until the evening of 15 October. It first appeared in the newspapers on the morning of 16 October. Mzhavanadze evidently expected to see it in the newspapers of 15 October; no one seems to know the reasons for the delay in announcing the change.

[121] Barsukov, pp. 135–136.

[122] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

[123] Tatu, p. 385n; he also praised Kosygin and Podgorny. Rodionov, p. 185; Medvedev, '1964...', p. 196.

[124] Semichastnyi, p. 6.

[125] Shelest, p. 6.

[126] Egorychev, p. 7. Egorychev claims that his expression of these doubts contributed to Brezhnev's decision to remove him from office in 1967.

[127] Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 214.
[128] Sherlock, p. 15.
[129] Egorychev, p. 7; Burlatsky, 'Mirnyi zagovor...', p. 212. Rodionov, pp. 185, 188.
[130] Shelest, p. 6.
[131] For the best expositions of opposing sides in this debate, see Barsukov, who believes that the October plenum was not a coup, and Rodionov, who answers this position.
[132] Adzhubei, 'Te desyat' let', p. 130.
[133] Barsukov, p. 136.
[134] Medvedev, *Khrushchev*, p. 245.