

= Nikolai Tikhonov =

Nikolai Aleksandrovich Tikhonov (Russian : ??????? ?????????????? ??????? ; Kharkiv , 14 May [O.S. 1 May] 1905 ? Moscow , 1 June 1997) was a Soviet Russian @-@ Ukrainian statesman during the Cold War . He served as Chairman of the Council of Ministers from 1980 to 1985 , and as a First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers , literally First Vice Premier , from 1976 to 1980 . Tikhonov was responsible for the cultural and economic administration of the Soviet Union during the late era of stagnation . He was replaced as Chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1985 by Nikolai Ryzhkov . In the same year , he lost his seat in the Politburo ; however , he retained his seat in the Central Committee until 1989 .

He was born in the city of Kharkiv in 1905 to a Russian @-@ Ukrainian working @-@ class family ; he graduated in the 1920s and started working in the 1930s . Tikhonov began his political career in local industry , and worked his way up the hierarchy of Soviet industrial ministries . He was appointed deputy chairman of the Gosplan in 1963 . After Alexei Kosygin 's resignation Tikhonov was voted into office as Chairman of the Council of Ministers . In this position , he refrained from taking effective measures to reform the Soviet economy , a need which was strongly evidenced during the early ? mid @-@ 1980s . He retired from active politics in 1989 as a pensioner . Tikhonov died on 1 June 1997 .

= = Early life and career = =

Tikhonov was born in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on 14 May [O.S. 1 May] 1905 to a Russian @-@ Ukrainian working @-@ class family ; he graduated from the St. Catherine Institute of Communications in 1924 . Tikhonov worked as an assistant engineer from 1924 to 1926 . Four years later , in 1930 , Tikhonov graduated as an engineer , earning a degree from the Dnipropetrovsk Metallurgical Institute . From 1930 to 1941 , Tikhonov worked as an engineer at the Lenin Metallurgical Plant in Dnipropetrovsk ; he was appointed as the plant 's Chief Engineer in January 1941 .

It was during his stay in Dnipropetrovsk that he met Leonid Brezhnev , a future leader of the Soviet Union . Tikhonov joined the All @-@ Union Communist Party (bolsheviks) in 1940 and by the end of the decade , had secured a job as a plant director . As a director , Tikhonov was able to show off his organisational skills ; under his leadership the plant became the first in the region to reopen a hospital , organising dining rooms and restoring social clubs for workers caught up in the aftermath of the Eastern Front . Tikhonov was quickly promoted , and started working for the Ministry of Ferrous Metallurgy in the 1950s . Between 1955 and 1960 Tikhonov became a Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Ferrous Metallurgy , a member (and later chairman) of the Scientific Council of the Council of Ministers , and finally , a deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee . At the 22nd Party Congress Tikhonov was elected to the Central Committee as a non @-@ voting member . At the 23rd party congress in 1966 , Tikhonov was elected a member of the Central Committee . Tikhonov was awarded the Hero of Socialist Labour award for his first time .

During his tenure as Deputy Premier Tikhonov was in charge of metallurgy and chemical industry ; his responsibilities did not change with his ascension to the post of First Deputy Premier . However , he did provide a general coordination for heavy industry . When Alexei Kosygin , the Premier , was on sick leave in 1976 Brezhnev took advantage of his illness by appointing Tikhonov to the office of First Deputy Premier . As First Deputy Premier , Tikhonov was able to reduce Kosygin to a standby figure . Tikhonov was , however , one of the few who got along with both Brezhnev and Kosygin , both of them liked his candor and honesty . In 1978 Tikhonov was elected a candidate member of the Politburo and was made a voting member of the Politburo in 1979 . Tikhonov was not informed of the decision to intervene in Afghanistan ; the reason being his bad relationship with Dmitriy Ustinov , the Minister of Defence at the time .

= = Premiership (1980 ? 85) = =

= = = Appointment and the 26th Congress = = =

When Alexei Kosygin resigned in 1980 Tikhonov , at the age of 75 , was elected the new Chairman of the Council of Ministers . During his five @-@ year term as premier Tikhonov refrained from reforming the Soviet economy , despite all statistics from that time showing the economy was stagnating . Tikhonov presented the Eleventh Five @-@ Year Plan (1981 ? 85) at the 26th Party Congress , and told the delegates that the state would allocate nine million rubles for mothers who were seeking parental leave . In his presentation to the congress , Tikhonov admitted that Soviet agriculture was not producing enough grain . Tikhonov called for an improvement in Soviet ? US relations , but dismissed all speculations that the Soviet economy was in any sort of crisis . Despite this , Tikhonov admitted to economic " shortcomings " and acknowledged the ongoing " food problem " ; other topics for discussion were the need to save energy resources , boost labour productivity and to improve the quality of Soviet produced goods . Early in his term , in January 1981 , Tikhonov admitted that the government 's demographic policy was one of the weakest areas of his cabinet . In reality , however , he along with many others , were beginning to worry that not enough Russians were being born . The Era of Stagnation reduced the birth rate , and increased the death rate of the Russian population .

= = = Andropov and Chernenko = = =

Leonid Brezhnev awarded Tikhonov the Hero of Socialist Labour , after being advised to do so by Konstantin Chernenko . Upon Brezhnev 's death in 1982 , Tikhonov supported Chernenko 's candidacy for the General Secretaryship . Chernenko lost the vote , and Yuri Andropov became General Secretary . It has been suggested that Andropov had plans of replacing Tikhonov with Heydar Aliyev . Historian William A. Clark noted how Aliyev , a former head of the Azerbaijani KGB , was appointed to the First Deputy Premiership of the Council of Ministers without Tikhonov 's consent ; however , Andropov 's death in 1984 left Tikhonov secure in his office . Some Western analysts speculated that the appointment of Andrei Gromyko to the First Deputy Premiership , again without Tikhonov 's consent , was a sign that his position within the Soviet hierarchy was weakened . Tikhonov was on a state visit to Yugoslavia when Gromyko was appointed to the First Deputy Premiership .

With his health failing , Andropov used his spare times to write speeches to the Central Committee . In one of these speeches Andropov told the Central Committee that Mikhail Gorbachev , and not Chernenko , would succeed him upon his death . His speech was not read out to the Central Committee plenum because of an anti @-@ Gorbachev troika consisting of Chernenko , Dmitriy Ustinov and Tikhonov . During Andropov 's last days , Tikhonov presided over the Politburo sessions , headed the 1984 Soviet delegation to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance conference in East Berlin , conducted bilateral relations with the Eastern Bloc states , and hosted the Prime Minister of Finland when he visited the Soviet Union . In short , in @-@ between Andropov 's last days and Chernenko 's rise to power , Tikhonov was the dominant driving figure of the Soviet Union . However , Tikhonov peacefully stepped away , and supported Chernenko 's candidacy for General Secretary . When Chernenko died in 1985 , Tikhonov tried , but failed , to find a contender to Gorbachev 's candidacy to the General Secretaryship .

= = = Gorbachev and resignation = = =

Upon Gorbachev 's ascension to power , Tikhonov was elected chairman of the newly established Commission on Improvements of the Management System . The title of chairman was largely honorary , and its de facto head was its deputy chairman , Nikolai Ryzhkov . On 23 May 1985 Tikhonov presented his development plan for 1985 to 1990 , and up until 2000 , the plan was criticised by co @-@ workers , and Gorbachev told his colleagues that Tikhonov was " ill @-@ equipped " for the Premiership . Tikhonov forecast estimated growth of 20 ? 22 percent growth in

Soviet national income , an increase of 21 ? 24 percent in industrial growth and doubling Soviet agriculture output by 2000 . As part of Gorbachev 's plan of removing , and replacing , the most conservative members of the Politburo , Tikhonov was compelled to retire . Ryzhkov succeeded Tikhonov in office on 27 September 1985 . His resignation was made official at a Central Committee plenum in September 1985 . It is noteworthy that by the time of his resignation , Tikhonov was the oldest member of the Soviet leadership . Tikhonov was active in Soviet politics , albeit in a much less prominent role , until 1989 when he lost his seat in the Central Committee .

= = Later life and death = =

After his forced resignation from active politics in 1989 , Tikhonov wrote a letter to Mikhail Gorbachev which stated that he regretted supporting his election to the General Secretaryship . This view was strengthened when the Communist Party was banned in the Soviet Union . After his retirement , he lived the rest of his life in seclusion at his dacha . As one of his friends noted , he lived as " a hermit " and never showed himself in public and that his later life was very difficult as he had no children and because his wife had died . Prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union Tikhonov worked as a State Advisor to the Supreme Soviet . Tikhonov died on 1 June 1997 and was buried at the Novodevichy Cemetery .

According to Time magazine , Tikhonov was a " tried and tested yes man " who had very little experience in foreign and defence policy when he took over the Premiership from Alexei Kosygin . A bust dedicated to Tikhonov can be found in Kharkiv , his birthplace . Tikhonov , when compared to other Soviet premiers , has made little impact on post @-@ Soviet culture and his legacy is remembered by few today . During his lifetime Tikhonov was awarded several awards ; he was awarded nine Order of Lenins , two Order of the Red Banner of Labour , one Red Star , two Stalin Prizes and several medals and foreign awards .

= = Decorations and awards = =

Hero of Socialist Labour (1975 , 1982)

Nine Orders of Lenin

Order of the October Revolution

Two Orders of the Red Banner

Order of the Red Star

Stalin Prize ;

1st class (1943) - a radical improvement of the production of pipes and mortar ammunition

3rd class (1951) - for the development and commercial production of seamless pipes of large diameter

Doctor of Technical Sciences (1961)