

= Mikhail Suslov =

Mikhail Andreyevich Suslov (Russian : ????? ? ? ????? ? ????? ? ? ? ? ? ; 21 November [O.S. 8 November] 1902 ? 25 January 1982) was a Soviet statesman during the Cold War . He served as Second Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1965 , and as unofficial Chief Ideologue of the Party until his death in 1982 . Suslov was responsible for party democracy and the power separation within the Communist Party . His hardline attitude toward change made him one of the foremost anti @-@ reformist Soviet leaders .

Born in rural Russia in 1902 , Suslov became a member of the All @-@ Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1921 and studied economics for much of the 1920s . He left his job as a teacher in 1931 to pursue politics full @-@ time , becoming one of the many Soviet politicians who took part in the mass repression begun by Joseph Stalin 's regime . Suslov impressed the Soviet leadership to such an extent in the pre @-@ Eastern Front Soviet Union that he was made First Secretary of Stavropol Krai administrative area . During the war , Suslov headed the local Stavropol guerrilla movement . He became a member of the Organisational Bureau (Orgburo) of the Central Committee in 1946 and , four years later , was elected to the Presidium (Politburo) of the All @-@ Union Communist Party .

Suslov lost much of the recognition and influence he had earned following the reshuffle of the Soviet leadership after Stalin 's death . However , by the late 1950s , Suslov had risen to become the leader of the hardline opposition to Nikita Khrushchev 's revisionist leadership . After Khrushchev was ousted in 1964 , Suslov supported the establishment of a collective leadership . He also supported inner @-@ party democracy and opposed the reestablishment of the one @-@ man rule as seen during the Stalin and Khrushchev Eras . During the Brezhnev Era , Suslov was considered to be the Party 's Chief Ideologue and second @-@ in @-@ command . His death on 25 January 1982 is viewed as starting the battle to succeed Leonid Brezhnev in the post of General Secretary .

= = Early years and career = =

Suslov was born in Shakhovskoye , a rural locality in Pavlovsky District , Ulyanovsk Oblast , Russian Empire on 21 November 1902 . Suslov began work in the local Komsomol organisation in Saratov in 1918 , eventually becoming a member of the Poverty Relief Committee . After working in the Komsomol for nearly three years , Suslov became a member of the All @-@ Union Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) in 1921 . After graduating from the rabfak , he studied economics at the Plekhanov Institute of National Economy between 1924 ? 1928 . In the summer of 1928 , after graduating from the Plekhanov institute , he became a graduate student (research fellow) in economics at the Institute of Red Professors , teaching at Moscow State University and at the Industrial Academy .

In 1931 he abandoned teaching in favour of the party apparatus . He became an inspector on the Communist Party 's Party Control Commission and on the People 's Commissariat of the Workers ' and Peasants ' Inspectorate . His main task there was to adjudicate on large numbers of " personal cases " , breaches of discipline , and appeals against expulsion from the party . In 1933 and 1934 Suslov directed a commission charged with purging the party in the Ural and Chernigov provinces . The purge was organised by Lazar Kaganovich , then Chairman of the Soviet Control Commission . Author Yuri Druzhnikov contends that Suslov was involved with setting up several show trials , and contributed to the Party by expelling all members deviating from the Party line , meaning Trotskyists , Zinovievists , and other left @-@ wing deviationists . On the orders of Joseph Stalin , Suslov purged the city of Rostov in 1938 . Suslov was made First Secretary of the Stavropol Krai 's Communist Party in 1939 .

= = = Wartime activities = = =

On the Eastern Front in World War II (also known in Russia as the " Great Patriotic War ") , Suslov

was a member of the Military Soviet of the Northern Group of Forces and led the Stavropol Krai Headquarters of the Partisan Divisions (the local guerrilla movement) . According to Soviet historiography , Suslov 's years as a guerrilla fighter were highly successful ; however , testimonies from participants differ from the official account . These participants claim that there were a number of organisational problems which reduced their effectiveness on the battlefield . During the war , Suslov spent much of his time mobilising workers to fight against the German invaders . The guerrilla movement he led was operated by the regional party cells . During the liberation of the Northern Caucasus , Suslov maintained close contact with the Red Army .

During the war , Suslov supervised the deportations of Chechens and other Muslim minorities from the Caucasus . In 1944 - 1946 , he chaired the Central Committee Bureau for Lithuanian Affairs . Anti - Soviet samizdat literature from the height of his power in the 1970s would accuse him of being personally responsible for the deportation and killings of nationalist Lithuanians who became political opponents of the Soviets during the course of Soviet re - entry into the Baltic states on their drive to Berlin in 1944 . Suslov , in the words of historian Simon Sebag Montefiore , " brutally purged " the Baltics in the aftermath of the Great Patriotic War .

= = = Stalin 's protégé = = =

In 1946 , Suslov was made a member of the Orgburo , and immediately became the Head of the Foreign Policy Department of the Central Committee . Within a year , Suslov was appointed Head of the Central Committee Department for Agitation and Propaganda . He also became a harsh critic of the Jewish Anti - Fascist Committee in the post - war years . In 1947 Suslov was transferred to Moscow and elected to the Central Committee Secretariat ; he would retain this seat for the rest of his life . Suslov had the full confidence of Stalin , and in 1948 , he was entrusted with the task of speaking on behalf of the Central Committee before a solemn meeting on the twenty - fourth anniversary of Vladimir Lenin 's death . From September 1949 to 1950 he was editor - in - chief of the central Party daily Pravda .

In 1949 Suslov became a member , along with Georgy Malenkov , Lavrentiy Beria , and Lazar Kaganovich , of a commission created to investigate charges levied against Moscow 's local Communist Party First Secretary , Georgy Popov . Russian historian Roy Medvedev speculates in his book , *Neizvestnyi Stalin* , that Stalin had made Suslov his " secret heir " . In June 1950 Suslov was elected to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet . He was promoted to the CPSU Presidium (later known as the Politburo) in 1952 following the 19th Party Congress . He suffered a temporary reversal when Stalin died , and was dismissed from the Presidium in 1953 . He continued to work in the Supreme Soviet , even becoming Chairman of the Commission of Foreign Affairs in the years immediately following Stalin 's death .

= = Khrushchev era = =

Suslov recovered his authority in 1955 , and was elected to a seat in the Presidium , bypassing the customary candidate membership . In the 20th Party Congress of 1956 , Khrushchev delivered the famous Secret Speech about Stalin 's cult of personality . In Suslov 's ideological report on 16 February , he updated his criticism of Stalin and his personality cult :

" (They) caused considerable harm to both organisational and ideological party work . They belittled the role of the masses and the role of the Party , disparaged collective leadership , undermined inner - party democracy , suppressed the activeness of party members , their initiative and enterprise , led to lack of control , irresponsibility , and even arbitrariness in the work of individuals , prevented the development of criticism and self - criticism , and gave rise to one - sided and at times mistaken decisions . "

During the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 , Suslov , along with Anastas Mikoyan , operated in close proximity to Budapest in order to direct the activities of the Soviet troops and to lend assistance to the new Hungarian leadership . Suslov and Mikoyan attended the Politburo meeting of the Hungarian Socialist Workers ' Party which elected János Kádár to the General Secretaryship . In a

telegram to the Soviet leadership , Suslov and Mikoyan acknowledged that the situation had become more dire , but both were content with the dismissal of Ern? Ger? as General Secretary and the choice of Kádár as his successor . The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet criticised Suslov 's and Mikoyan 's concessions to the new revolutionary government in the People 's Republic of Hungary . Despite his initial reservations , Suslov eventually supported the Presidium 's decision to intervene in Hungary militarily and replace the counterrevolutionary government 's leadership there .

In June 1957 Suslov backed Khrushchev during his struggle with the Anti @-@ Party Group led by Georgy Malenkov , Vyacheslav Molotov , Lazar Kaganovich , and Dmitry Shepilov . Mikoyan later wrote in his memoirs that he convinced Suslov to support Khrushchev by telling him that Khrushchev would emerge the winner even if he did not have enough support in the Presidium . The following October Suslov accused Georgy Zhukov , the Minister of Defence , of " Bonapartism " at the Central Committee plenum that removed him from all Party and government posts . The removal of Zhukov had the effect of firmly subordinating the armed forces to Party control .

In a speech on 22 January 1958 , Khrushchev officially proposed to dissolve the Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS) . This reform had a particular salience on Soviet ideology . In a socialist society , cooperative ownership of property was considered a " lower " form of public ownership than state ownership . Khrushchev 's proposal to expand cooperative ownership ran contrary to the Marxist theory as interpreted by Stalin . Suslov , who supported Stalin 's economic policy , regarded Khrushchev 's proposal as unacceptable on ideological grounds . In an election speech to the Supreme Soviet in March 1958 , Suslov refused to recognise the ideological significance of Khrushchev 's reform , preferring instead to focus on the reform 's practical benefits in improving productivity . Unlike other Party leaders , Suslov avoided mentioning Khrushchev as the MTS reform 's initiator .

The 21st Party Congress convened in January 1959 . Khrushchev wanted to consider the draft of a new Seven @-@ Year plan . Suslov cautiously demonstrated against Khrushchev 's statement that the country had developed from the socialist state of development to the higher state of communist development . He saw Khrushchev 's view as flawed , and countered that his view had not been approved by the Party . To discredit Khrushchev 's assertion further , Suslov deferred to Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin :

" Marx and Lenin teach us that communism doesn 't appear suddenly , but comes into existence , matures , develops , passes in its development through definite stages or phases The new period in the development of Soviet society will be marked by the gradual drawing together of two forms of socialist property ? state and kolkhoz ... The process of these social changes will be long , and understandably , cannot end in the course of a seven year period . "

Suslov was becoming progressively more critical of Khrushchev 's policies , his political intransigence , and his campaign to eliminate what was left of the old Stalinist guard . There were also deep @-@ seated divergences in foreign and domestic policy between Suslov and Khrushchev . Suslov opposed the idea of improving Soviet ? United States relations , and was against Khrushchev 's attempts at rapprochement with Yugoslavia . Domestically , Suslov opposed Khrushchev 's policy of de @-@ Stalinisation and his economic decentralisation scheme .

Suslov visited the United Kingdom in 1959 as a parliamentarian for the Supreme Soviet . The visit was a success , and Hugh Gaitskell , the Leader of the Labour Party , travelled to the Soviet Union later that year as a guest .

Sino ? Soviet relations had long been strained , and as Suslov told the Central Committee in one of his reports , " The crux of the matter is that the Leadership of the CCP has recently developed tendencies to exaggerate the degree of maturity of socialist relations in China ... There are elements of conceit and haughtiness . [These shortcomings] are largely explained by the atmosphere of the cult of personality of comrade Mao Zedong ... who , by all accounts , himself has come to believe in his own infallibility . " Suslov compared Mao 's growing personality cult with that seen under Joseph Stalin .

In the years following the failure of the Anti @-@ Party Group , Suslov became the leader of the opposition faction in the Central Committee , known as the " Moscow faction " , to Khrushchev 's leadership . Khrushchev was able to hold on to power by conceding to various opposition demands

in times of crisis , such as during the 1960 U @-@ 2 incident and the Cuban Missile Crisis . In the aftermath of the U @-@ 2 Crisis Suslov was able to remove , and replace , several of Khrushchev 's appointees in the Politburo with new anti @-@ Khrushchevist members . Khrushchev 's position was greatly weakened after the failure of the Cuban Missile Crisis , and Suslov 's power greatly increased . A campaign to oust Khrushchev from office was initiated in 1964 . Although leader of the opposition , Suslov had fallen seriously ill during his trip to the People 's Republic of China the previous year ; instead , Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin led the opposition .

= = Brezhnev era = =

= = = Collective leadership = = =

In October 1964 Khrushchev was ousted . Suslov played a crucial role in the event . Suslov was , alongside Premier Alexei Kosygin and First Secretary Leonid Brezhnev , one of the most influential Soviet politicians of the 1960s following the ouster of Khrushchev . Having led the opposition against Khrushchev for years , Suslov had acquired and wielded great power within the Central Committee when Brezhnev rose to power . However , Suslov was never interested in becoming the leader of the Soviet Union , and was content to remain the man behind the scenes . During most of his term , Suslov was one of four people who had both a seat in the Secretariat and the Politburo ; the three others were Brezhnev , Andrei Kirilenko and Fyodor Kulakov .

A collective leadership was founded immediately after Khrushchev 's ouster , consisting of Brezhnev as First Secretary , Kosygin as head of government , and Anastas Mikoyan (and later Nikolai Podgorny) as head of state . From the beginning , Suslov was a vocal critic of one @-@ man rule such as that seen under Joseph Stalin and Khrushchev . While he condemned Stalin 's one @-@ man rule , he equally criticised the individualistic assertiveness of Khrushchev 's de @-@ Stalinisation policy . A strong supporter of democratic centralism , Suslov prevented Brezhnev from taking over Kosygin 's post as head of government in 1970 . Kirilenko , Brezhnev , and Suslov were members of an unofficial Troika within the Communist Party leadership .

Throughout the Brezhnev Era , Suslov became increasingly hardline . He blocked any radical reforms , such as the 1965 Soviet economic reform initiated by Kosygin , and was opposed to détente because it undermined socialist world revolution . Suslov was opposed to any sort of radical reforms attempted by the Eastern Bloc leaders , but voted against Soviet military intervention in both the People 's Republic of Hungary in 1956 (initially) , and in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in 1968 during the Prague Spring . Suslov was regarded , according to Christian Schmidt @-@ Häuer , as the " pope " for " Orthodox communists " in the Eastern Bloc . Throughout his political career , Suslov became increasingly concerned that the Soviet Union 's leading role in the communist movement would be compromised . Häuer , in his book Gorbachev : The Path to Power , argues that Suslov " was a Russian nationalist " who believed " Russia was the centre of the universe " .

It was during the Brezhnev Era that Suslov was given the unofficial title " Chief Ideologue of the Communist Party " . Suslov spent much time in memorializing the legacies of Vladimir Lenin , Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels . However , Suslov followed the party line and supported the retreat from some of the beliefs of Marxism @-@ Leninism . Examples of ideological retreat include the end of single , Party @-@ approved natural science versions of biology , chemistry and physics . There still existed a tight ideological control over literature . This included not only literature critical of Soviet rule : much of Lenin 's work was also routinely censored .

= = = Later life and death = = =

At the beginning of the 1980s , the political and economic turmoil in the People 's Republic of Poland had seriously eroded the authority of the Polish United Workers ' Party . Suslov 's position on this matter carried particular weight as he chaired a Politburo Commission , established on 25 August 1980 , on how to deal with the Polish crisis . Members of the commission included such high

@-@ ranking Soviets as Andropov , Minister of Defence Dmitriy Ustinov , Andrei Gromyko , the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Brezhnev 's long @-@ time associate Konstantin Chernenko . On 28 August , the Commission considered Soviet military intervention to stabilise the region . Wojciech Jaruzelski , First Secretary of the Polish United Workers ' Party , was able to persuade the Commission that a Soviet military intervention would only aggravate the situation . Suslov agreed with Jaruzelski 's argument , stating that " if troops are introduced , that will mean a catastrophe . I think that we all share the unanimous opinion here that there can be no discussion of any introduction of troops " . Suslov was able to persuade Jaruzelski and the Polish leadership to establish martial law in Poland .

In January 1982 , Yuri Andropov revealed to Suslov that Semyon Tsvigun , the First Deputy Chairman of the KGB , had shielded Galina and Yuri , Brezhnev 's children , from corruption investigations . When these facts were revealed to him , Suslov challenged Tsvigun to make a statement on the matter . Suslov even threatened Tsvigun with an expulsion from the Communist Party , but Tsvigun died on 19 January 1982 before he could challenge Suslov 's statement . Two days later , Suslov had a coronary , and died on 25 January of arteriosclerosis and diabetes . His death is viewed as starting the battle to succeed Brezhnev , in which Andropov , who assumed Suslov 's post as the Party 's Second Secretary , sidelined Kirilenko and Chernenko during the last days of Brezhnev 's rule . Suslov was buried on 29 January at the Kremlin Wall Necropolis . Brezhnev expressed great sadness at Suslov 's passing .

= = Recognition = =

Suslov was awarded several decorations and medals during his life ; among them were two Hero of Socialist Labour awards , five Orders of Lenin , one Order of the October Revolution , and one first degree Order of the Patriotic War . The USSR Academy of Sciences awarded Suslov with the Gold Medal of Karl Marx . Suslov was awarded the highest state awards of the German Democratic Republic , the Mongolian People 's Republic , and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic .

= = Personal life = =

Suslov married Yelizaveta Alexandrovna (1903 ? 1972) , who worked as the Director of the Moscow Institute for Stomatology . In her life , she badly suffered from internal diseases , especially diabetes in a severe form , but ignored her physician 's recommendations . Bernard Lown , a Lithuanian @-@ born American M.D. , was once requested to see her in the Kremlin Hospital ; it was one of the few cases where a renowned foreign doctor was invited to visit the Kremlin Hospital . Suslov expressed his gratitude for Lown 's work , but avoided meeting Lown in person because he was a representative of an " imperialistic " country . Yelizaveta and Suslov had two children , Revolii (born 1929) , named after the Russian Revolution , and his second child , Maya (born 1939) , named after May Day .