

## Voznesensky, Nikolai A. \*

Nikolai Alekseevich Voznesensky (December 1, 1903–September 30, 1950). Born into a foreman's family near Tula, in January 1938 he was appointed chief of Gosplan, the USSR State Planning Commission,. Until his arrest in March 1949 he remained at the center of Soviet politics and economics. He became first deputy prime minister, a member of Stalin's war cabinet, and a Politburo member.

Four things brought Voznesensky to this position: an aptitude for economic administration, undeviating loyalty to the party line, the patronage of the Leningrad party chief Andrei Zhdanov, and good luck. He sponsored several measures designed to improve the economic results of the command system including new monitoring systems to identify and manage the most acute shortages, the realignment of industrial prices with production costs, and detailed long-term plans. As a party loyalist he expertly rationalized each new turn in official thinking about the economic principles of socialism and capitalism. While many competent and loyal officials were repressed Voznesensky was fortunate in Zhdanov's protection, and lucky to gain high office just when Stalin's purges began to diminish.

Voznesensky's first task was to revive the Soviet economy which had stagnated since 1937. He was still trying when war broke out in 1941. The war exposed the inadequacy of prewar plans for a war economy and for a while the planners lost control. While war production soared the civilian sector neared collapse. The victory at Stalingrad in 1942 and Allied aid made it possible to restore economic balance in 1943 and 1944. Voznesensky was involved in every aspect of this story of failure and success.

By the end of the war Voznesensky had become one of Stalin's favourites. Stalin relied on his competence, frankness, and personal loyalty. The same attributes led Voznesensky to fall out with others, in particular Georgy Malenkov and Lavrenty Beria. The rivalry was personal; the archives have not confirmed accounts of any serious differences of political or economic philosophy. Zhdanov died in September 1948 and Voznesensky's good luck ran out. Malenkov and Beria were soon able to destroy Stalin's trust in Voznesensky, who became ensnared in accusations relating to false economic reports and secret papers; these ended in his dismissal, arrest, trial, and execution. Voznesensky was not the only prominent figure with connections to Zhdanov to disappear at this time in what was later known as the "Leningrad affair".

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Politburo  
Stalin  
war economy  
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