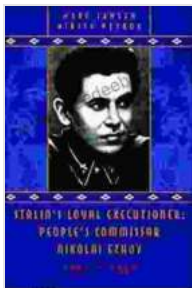


# Nikolai Ezhov: The Rise and Fall of Stalin's Head of the NKVD

Nikolai Ezhov was a Soviet secret police official who served as the head of the NKVD, the Soviet secret police, from 1936 to 1938. Ezhov was responsible for overseeing the Great Purge, a period of mass arrests, executions, and deportations in the Soviet Union. He was eventually arrested and executed himself in 1940.



## Stalin's Loyal Executioner: People's Commissar Nikolai Ezhov, 1895-1940 (Hoover Institution Press Publication)

by Marc Jansen

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2230 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 274 pages  
Lending : Enabled



## Early Life and Career

Nikolai Ezhov was born in 1895 in the village of Velikie Luki, in what is now Pskov Oblast, Russia. His father was a railway worker and his mother was a peasant. Ezhov attended school until the age of 14, when he dropped out to work in a factory.

Ezhov joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917 and took part in the Russian Civil War. After the war, he worked in various positions in the Soviet government, including as a secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

## **Head of the NKVD**

In 1936, Ezhov was appointed head of the NKVD. He quickly became one of the most powerful men in the Soviet Union, second only to Joseph Stalin. Ezhov was responsible for overseeing the Great Purge, which saw the arrest and execution of millions of people.

The Great Purge was a period of intense repression in the Soviet Union. Ezhov's NKVD conducted mass arrests and executions of anyone who was suspected of being an enemy of the state. The purge affected all levels of Soviet society, from ordinary citizens to high-ranking officials.

## **Arrest and Execution**

In 1938, Ezhov was arrested and charged with treason. He was tortured and executed in 1940.

Ezhov's arrest and execution marked the end of the Great Purge. Stalin had used Ezhov to carry out his own purges, but he eventually became concerned that Ezhov was becoming too powerful. Ezhov's arrest and execution sent a message to other Soviet officials that no one was above the law.

## **Legacy**

Nikolai Ezhov is remembered as one of the most brutal and ruthless figures in Soviet history. He was responsible for the deaths of millions of people.

Ezhov's legacy is one of terror and oppression.

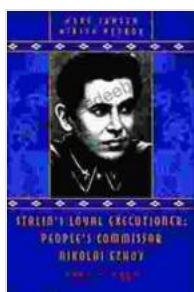
Nikolai Ezhov was a complex and controversial figure. He was a loyal servant of Stalin, but he was also responsible for some of the most horrific crimes in Soviet history. Ezhov's legacy is one of terror and oppression, but he also played a role in the development of the Soviet Union.

## Further Reading

\* Nikolai Ezhov by the Hoover Institution Press \* Nikolai Ivanovich Yezhov by Encyclopedia Britannica \* The Man Who Killed Nikolai Ezhov by Christopher Andrew, review by Simon Sebag Montefiore in The New York Times

## Image Credits

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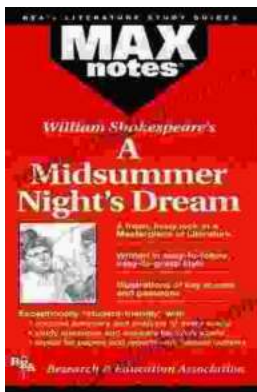
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