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‘One of the Biggest Statesmen’: Russia Reacts to Ex-Soviet Parliament Speaker Lukyanov's Death

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Anatoly Lukyanov / Wikicommons

Anatoly Lukyanov, the final speaker of the Soviet parliament, died from a serious illness at age 88 on Wednesday.

Lukyanov was a senior Communist Party official until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and a close associate of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Lukyanov was one of several hardline Communists charged with conspiring to seize power during the attempted coup in August 1991. He then served in Russia’s State Duma from 1993 until 2003.

The State Duma honored his memory with a minute of silence on Thursday. Lukyanov will be buried in Moscow on Friday.

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This is how Russian officials reacted to his death:

– Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov:

“Anatoly Ivanovich was one of the biggest statesmen in our country, a talented scientist, an honest, decent worker who has lived the life of a true patriot.”

– Ex-chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, Senator Nikolai Ryzhkov:

“I knew him very well in Soviet times [...] He was a very measured, very decent person who was easy to work with.”

“Of course, he went through a lot during the transition period when the Soviet Union was falling apart, when political passions were raging.”

– Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky:

“He was an honest man and has actively defended the Soviet Union, which is what he was arrested for, while we freed him with the State Duma’s first amnesty adopted in 1994.”

– Senator Frants Klintsevich:

“History is never in a hurry, and his role in the relatively peaceful transformation of eras — the transition from the Soviet Union to Russia — has not yet been fully appreciated.”

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