

November 10, 1989

Excerpt from the Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev

Citation:

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Summary:

Excerpt from Anatoly Chernyaev's diary following the fall of the Berlin Wall, praising Gorbachev's vision

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

The Berlin Wall has collapsed. This entire era in the history of the Socialist system is over. Following the [Polish United Socialist Party] PUWP and the [Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party] HSWP Honecker has left. Today we received messages about the "retirement" of [Chinese Communist Party leader] Deng Xiaopeng and [Bulgarian leader Todor] Zhivkov. Only our "best friends" [Cuban leader Fidel] Castro, [Romanian leader Nicolae] Ceausescu, [and North Korean leader] Kim Il Sung are still around-people who hate our guts.

But the main thing is the GDR, the Berlin Wall. For it has to do not only with "socialism" but with the shift in the world balance of forces. This is the end of Yalta...of the Stalinist legacy and the "defeat of Hitlerite Germany."

That is what Gorbachev has done. And he has indeed turned out to be a great leader. He has sensed the pace of history and helped history to find a natural channel.

A meeting with Bush is approaching. Will we witness a historic conversation? There are two main ideas in the instructions M.S. gave me to prepare materials: the role of two superpowers in leading the world to a civilized state and the balance of interests. But Bush might disregard our arguments... We do not really have anything to show except for the fear that we could return to totalitarianism.