

October 11, 1989

Excerpt from the Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev

Citation:

"Excerpt from the Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev", October 11, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev, Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, f. 2, op. 2. Translated by Vladislav Zubok (The National Security Archive).
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/117207>

Summary:

Chernyaev records Gorbachev's frustrations with Honecker following meeting with him in Berlin.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Wednesday, 11 October 1989

I have read the record of conversation of M.S. [Gorbachev] with Honecker in Berlin. I spoke with him [Gorbachev] about this. [Georgy] Shakhnazarov was present. M.S. [Gorbachev] called Honecker an "asshole" [mudak]. He, Gorbachev added, could have said to his [East German] lieutenants: I have undergone four operations, I am 78 years old, the stormy time requires too much strength, let me go, I have done my job. Then he might have kept his place in history.

Shakh[nazarov] and I voiced our doubts that even if he had done so he would have kept his place in history. 2-3 years ago it might have been possible. Today he has already been cursed by his people...The Politburo [of the SED] is in session for the second day in Berlin. [Honecker's future successor Egon] Krenz has promised "to raise a question" about changes to our Ambassador [Vyacheslav Kochemassov] for transmittal to Gorbachev. Honecker warned him: [If you do it] you will become my enemy.

However, Krenz seems to have taken the step. What is about to happen?