

October 11, 1989

Excerpt from the Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev

Citation:

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<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/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?