

Document 4: Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev regarding Gorbachev's Visit to the GDR
October 5, 1989

[...] Meanwhile, tomorrow M.S. is flying to the GDR for its 40th anniversary. He really does not want to. He called me twice, said that he polished his speech to the letter, knowing that they will be examining it under a microscope... there is not a word in support of Honecker... but he will support the Republic and revolution.

Today in Dresden 20,000 people came out to demonstrate. Yesterday in Leipzig there were even more. We are receiving information that during Gorbachev's visit they will storm the Wall. There were terrible scenes surrounding a special GDR refugee train passing through Dresden on the way from Prague. The West-German TV recorded this and is showing it in the GDR. The Western press is brimming with articles on the "reunification" of Germany.

Tomorrow a Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party [HSWP] in Budapest will declare the self-liquidation of the "Socialist Hungarian People's Republic." Needless to mention Poland: the Polish United Workers Party [PUWP] not only lost power, but it is doubtful whether it will survive till its next Congress in February.

In a word, a complete dismantling of socialism as a factor of world development is in process. Maybe this is inevitable and good. For this is a matter of humanity uniting on the basis of common sense. And this process was started by a regular guy from Stavropol.

Perhaps Thatcher is right when she admires him precisely because she thinks that "in his heart" he envisioned the self-liquidation of a society that is alien to human nature and the natural order of things.

It is another matter... whether Russia needed the year 1917... and once again (!) our great sacrifices so that humanity would come to this conclusion.

[Source: Anatoly Chernyaev's Diary, Manuscript. On file at the National Security Archive. Translated by Anna Melyakova.]