

Document No. 15: Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev regarding the
Collapse of the Berlin Wall

November 10, 1989

The Berlin Wall has collapsed. This entire era in the history of the socialist system is over. After the PUWP and the HSWP went Honecker. Today we received messages about the "retirement" of Deng Xiaoping and Todor Zhivkov. Only our "best friends" Castro, Ceaușescu, and 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 ... 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.

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