

Excerpt from Anatoly Chernyaev's Diary

2 May 1989

Inside me, depression and alarm are growing, the sense of crisis of the Gorbachevian idea. He is prepared to go far. But what does it mean? His favorite catchword is “unpredictability.” And most likely we will come to a collapse of the state and something like chaos. He feels that he is losing the levers of power irreversibly, and this realization prevents him from “going far.” For this reason he holds to conventional methods but acts with “velvet gloves.” He has no concept of where we are going. His declaration about socialist values, the ideals of October, as he begins to tick them off, sound like irony to the cognoscenti. Behind them—emptiness.

*[Source: Published in Anatoly Chernyaev, 1991: *The Diary of an Assistant to the President of the USSR* (Moscow: TERRA, 1997). Translated by Vladislav Zubok (National Security Archive).]*