

Erich Honecker and Mikhail Gorbachev at the GDR's 40th Anniversary Celebration (October 7, 1989)

Abstract

Undeterred by the emigration wave and by regular demonstrations for reform and freedom of speech, the SED leadership celebrated the 40th anniversary of the founding of the GDR on October 6 and 7, 1989. During the official celebrations, Soviet head of state and party leader Mikhail Gorbachev warned that danger awaited those “who do not react to life.” Honecker ignored these warnings, however, just as he ignored Ministry for State Security reports on the growing number of resignations among party members and dwindling loyalty to the GDR. Yet the events of the following days would make clear that the decline of the German Democratic Republic could no longer be denied. This photo shows Erich Honecker (right) and Mikhail Gorbachev (who is glancing at his watch) on the VIP-grandstand during the military parade. Raisa Gorbacheva can be seen in the background at the right.

Source



Source: (c) picture-alliance / Sven Simon

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