

Beelitz, the soviets and Honecker

Text by Christian Hartmann

While Adolf Hitler got to know Beelitz as a young man and there drew the wrong conclusions from correct observations, the second prominent politicians came after the end of his "career" to Beelitz: Erich Honecker.

Honecker was already communist educated as a child by his parents. He brought it from Roofers Apprentice to General Secretary of the Central Committee of the German Democratic Republic and Chairman of the State Council. He was thus the highest representative in the GDR.

His predecessor, Walter Ulbricht he crashed in 1971. Honecker was significant architect of the Berlin Wall and the firing order be related to refugees. On October 17, 1989 Honecker fell as a result of the unrest in his own country.

It would have been a shame for him and his wife as an atheist, just having to rely on the mercy of a pastor and church to be granted asylum in 1990 on 30 January. Professing Christians in the GDR suffered significant disadvantages, for example in studies and education. Despite massive protests in the population the sanctuary lasted for eight months. Even the traditional grace of the Pastor Holmer family took part of Honeckers regularly.

The attempt to bring the Honecker in March in a government guest house in the GDR at village "Lindow" failed. It nearly came to lynching by angry citizens. It was clear: The Honecker had to be housed securely. In April 1990, on the initiative of Hans Modrow, the penultimate government of the GDR and the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, Honecker finally was brought to Beelitz.

This was at this time a military hospital of the Soviet armed forces. There they lived in the basement of the former chief physician Villa.

In Beelitz – so said the Honeckers, whether it have been possible for the first time since years, like normal people to move. Her daily life consisted of breakfast, a subsequent walk, lunch, followed by a walk, dinner and – would have thought – a subsequent walk. That you were here accompanied continuously by Igor, a KGB employee, was obviously not a problem.

There was not much visit for Honecker at Beelitz. Only a confidant of the family, two journalists, an ambassador of PLO Chairman Arafat and finally the former GDR Interior Minister Peter Michael Diestel. Arafat supported Honecker with money and with a huge consignment orange juice. Absurd, but true.

As the end of November 1990 arrest warrant against Erich Honecker was adopted, this could not be enforced because it was on extraterritorial area – the Beelitz asylums.

Lawyers of Honecker was informed during a routine visit in Beelitz at the gate, her client wasn't longer in Germany. He was brought after Moscow on 13 March 1991 .

Whether the Federal Government was informed in advance of the Russians, was long unclear. That the Chancellor Helmut Kohl addressed opposition leader Hans-Jochen Vogel on March 13 with "Mr. Honecker" – at precisely the moment in which Honecker probably boarded the plane to Moscow – is occupied.

There are doomsday predictions that a deal had been here. Immediately after the departure of 2 +

4 Treaty is signed, allowing the reunification of the two German States.

The Russians gave to humanitarian, health reasons for departure. Erich Honecker himself spoke, however, of asylum. After the change from Gorbachev to Yeltsin in the Soviet Union, it finally comes, that the delivery of Honecker was decided on 10 December 1991.

The next day, the Honeckers found in the Chilean embassy in Moscow and seek asylum. The relationships Honeckers to Chile are good: The daughter is married to a Chilean and at times of the Pinochet regime many Chileans found asylum in East Germany – among them the Chilean ambassador in Moscow. The political intrigues took place until the 29th of July. Then Honecker was extradited to Germany. His wife leaves Moscow to Chile.

The subsequent court proceedings in Germany were a constant swing forth and back. Finally, a constitutional complaint Honecker is upheld and he was released on 13 January 1993. He fled directly to Chile to his wife. He died there in May 1994.