Second Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl. June 13, 1989, Bonn (one-on-one).

[...]

Kohl. I am in favor of progress in all negotiations, in all spheres of arms control. I took 1992 as a benchmark. And the "Lances" are not the only ones that matter, the point is that in 1992 there will be a year left until the elections in the U.S. We should take that into account in all respects. We have to work in all directions.

Gorbachev. We have a common destiny. Why should we be anybody's hostages?

Kohl. We have not only a common destiny, but also a common history. Now, as we are talking, our wives are visiting the memorial in Stückenbrück-- the place where the Soviet citizens who were killed in the war were buried. There is not a single family in both the USSR and in the FRG that the war did not touch. My two sons are officers of the Bundeswehr, and my brother was killed in the war.

Gorbachev. Policy without morality cannot be considered serious policy, immoral politicians cannot be trusted.

Kohl. At a recent NATO meeting at the highest level I told my colleagues directly that I was the only one among them whose both sons served in the army integrated into NATO. I also stressed, that I was not a coward, of course, but that I was a German, and knew history and geography very well.

Gorbachev. I very much appreciate your honest and sincere judgments. And I value the trust that is growing between us with every meeting.

Kohl. Let us communicate more often, let's call each other on the phone. I think that we could accomplish many things ourselves, without delegating them to the bureaucracies that can drag their consideration on and on.

Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, Notes of A.S. Chernyaev

Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya for The National Security Archive