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Catholic leaders 'pleased' by Reagan-Gorbachev talks

By NC News Service

Several American Catholic bishops said they were pleased that the first U.S.-Soviet summit in six years got top-level dialogue started, but they had mixed views about a lack of substantive action on major concerns.

The mid-November meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev brought general commitments to arms control negotiations, but no specific arms reduction agreements.

It also brought discussions of human rights concerns, which was a leading item on the U.S. agenda, and Reagan's "Star Wars" Strategic Defense Initiative, a top Soviet concern, but no public change in position by either side on those issues.

The summit did, however, produce "an improved climate of understanding," said Bishop James Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The leaders' plans to meet again in 1986 and 1987 "hold out the promise of significant progress" toward future arms cuts, Bishop Malone said in a statement issued in Washington.

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago, in Rome for a meeting of the world's cardinals, also expressed satisfaction and said more should not have been expected from a two-day meeting.

Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit, president of Pax Christi USA, a Catholic peace group, was more critical, however, while giving the summit some good marks, he said that for the most part Reagan and Gorbachev "were almost talking past each other."

A week before the summit, Bishop Gumbleton led a successful campaign to get the U.S. bishops to set up a committee to monitor U.S. defense activity and assess its morality in light of the strict conditions for nuclear deterrence set out in their 1983 pastoral letter on war and peace.

Archbishop Philip M. Hannan of New Orleans, one of a small minority of U.S. bishops who opposed the bishops' 1983 peace pastoral on grounds that it paid insufficient attention to communist

suppression of human rights and freedom, said the summit was only a "beginning."

The disarmament problem "would be relatively easy to resolve," he said, if the United States could get the Soviet Union to agree on "the heart of the matter ... the nature and dignity of human rights."

The success of future talks, Archbishop Hannan said, will depend on American "courage and perseverance in demanding from the Soviets some tangible proof" of recognition of human rights.

In his statement, Bishop Malone said the 1983 peace pastoral, "in addition to calling for negotiated deep cuts in the nuclear arsenals of both superpowers, stressed the need for dialogue in the conduct of their relations and asked for frequent meetings of the heads of the two states."

He said the summit got the dialogue going. Cardinal Bernardin, who chaired the committee that wrote the bishops' peace pastoral, expressed a similar view when asked about the summit.

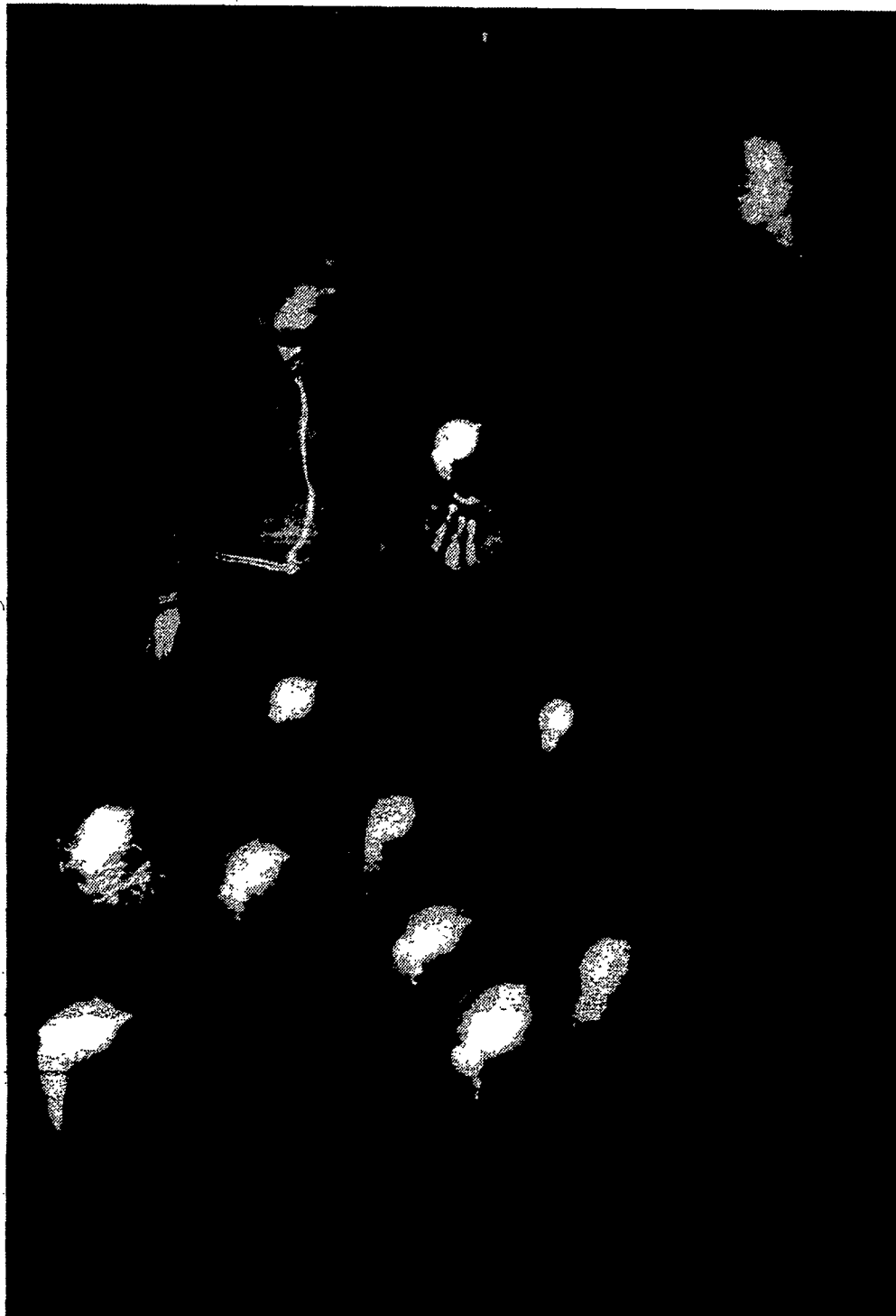
"I said before the summit I would be satisfied if these two men would agree to continue their dialogue," the cardinal said. "In terms of arms control, we understood that a great deal could not be accomplished in two days. But we felt that if there was an agreement to continue talking about this, that would be a sign of hope, and in fact, that has happened."

Bishop Walter Sullivan of Richmond, Va., another activist in the peace movement, also lauded the resumption of "direct dialogue," but said he was "disappointed that no specific disarmament or arms control agreements were reached."

Bishops Sullivan and Gumbleton both saw signs of a change on President Reagan's part from the summit, but Michael Novak, a leading Catholic lay voice of neo-conservatism, disagreed.

Bishop Sullivan said it was clear that "fundamental differences" between Reagan and Gorbachev remain, but "the 'new realism' cited by President Reagan is a first step which offers hope."

Novak, specialist in religion and public policy at the American Enterprise Institute, said Reagan "stuck to the straight and true course he set for himself five years ago."



Light of peace

Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Charles McElhinney of Immaculate Conception and Transfiguration parishes, Rochester, offers a candle to his daughter Megan, 4, at the Candlelight Vigil in Cobbs Hill Park, Tuesday, November 19. Vigils were held in several U.S. cities that night, the eve of the U.S.-Soviet summit.

COURIER-JOURNAL/
CATHOLIC CHARITIES
CHRISTMAS FUND
1150 BUFFALO ROAD
ROCHESTER, NY 14624



The annual Courier-Journal Christmas Fund was established in 1969. The 1985 Christmas Fund drive to aid the neediest persons in the diocese opens today.

Operated in conjunction with Catholic Charities, fund donations are used to help the poorest of the poor in the Diocese of Rochester — from urban areas to rural settlements.

As part of the drive, the Courier-Journal annually publishes a listing of the "100 Neediest Cases" in the diocese. The list is provided by agencies of Catholic Charities. All of the cases are true and documented, but they are only representative of many others.

Although some contributors may be moved to contribute to a particular individual or family in the list, Catholic Charities reserves the right to distribute the funds collected in order to aid those most in need.

Parishes wishing to participate in the fund may contact Catholic Charities.

Contributions should be sent directly to:

Courier-Journal/Catholic Charities Christmas Fund
1150 Buffalo Road
Rochester, N. Y. 14624.

1 Grandmother had hip replacement, needs clothing and bedding. Also grandson needs clothing for school, size 20.

2 Young mother with two daughters, six and two, and son, nine, need clothing and extra things they can't get on welfare budget.

3 Isolated 85-year-old woman in inner city needs special diabetic foods. She is lame and can't shop for herself. She would welcome your visit and the makings for a full meal. She is on a limited pension and has no "extras." She has no family to help her. Neighbors try to help, but have serious needs of their own.

4 Partially paralyzed from stroke, grandmother helps daughter care for grandsons, six and seven. They can use extra food and clothing. They find it difficult to make ends meet since grandmother's medicines cost so much.

5 Mother alone needs clothing for self (20½) and two daughters, five and nine. Life is difficult since they were abandoned by children's father.

6 Mrs. H. has had mental health problems for more than 40 years. She lives in one room and receives Supplementary Service Income. She denies she even has a family and refuses to make any contact with them, although they try to contact her. Thoughtful small gifts are something she appreciates.

7 Mr. and Mrs. A. are an elderly couple who live in their own home. It needs many repairs. She is crippled and finds it very hard to walk. He is very depressed, so they do not enjoy much quality of life. They especially need monetary donations.

8 Mrs. K., a 60-year-old widow, became a recluse after her husband's death many years ago. She has lived frugally, but now her small inheritance is almost exhausted. She is applying for the benefits to which she is entitled. Members of the small community in which she lives have great concern for her and are helping as much as they can. The holiday season is likely to be dreary for Mrs. K. without some financial help.

9 Mrs. B. is a single parent of three children. Recently her mother died leaving Mrs. B. feeling depressed and overwhelmed by the responsibility of caring for her own family. Toys and new clothes for her children will give hope to an otherwise sad Christmas. Her children are a boy, three, and two girls, 13 and nine.

10 Mrs. C. is 45 years old and has a young daughter who lives with her. Mrs. C. is permanently disabled and recently had major surgery. Her sole income is Social Security disability. Her daughter has emotional problems and is unable to work. They would benefit from any amount of financial assistance given to them.

11 Mrs. F. is 60 years old and has a multitude of medical problems. For many years, she cared for her mother, a double amputee. She was unable to work

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Inside
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edition:

Dorothy Day

As the fifth anniversary of Day's death approaches, local Catholic Workers doubt she would enjoy talk of her beatification — Page 4.

Changing Families

To celebrate National Family Week, take a look at a symposium at the Jewish Community Center exploring the needs of "families in transition" — Pages 6, 7.

Euthanasia

A forum at St. Mary's Hospital explored the moral dilemmas created by new medical technologies that extend life — Page 10.

Flamenco Dancers

Students from several Catholic high schools enjoyed the flamboyant exuberance of Jose Greco and a troupe of young flamenco dancers — Page 15.