



NEWS

FILE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CARDINAL CASAROLI IN 'CORDIAL' MEETING
WITH U.S. CATHOLIC AND JEWISH LEADERS**

WASHINGTON--Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican Secretary of State, met informally with officials of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and prominent U.S. Jewish leaders this week for a "serious, cordial" exchange which was "reflective of mutual trust and concern."

In a statement after the July 9 meeting in New York, Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis, NCCB President, expressed the hope that the session "will mark the beginning of an intensification of efforts by both Catholics and Jews to explore our common faith heritage, to eliminate discrimination, and to increase mutual understanding and respect."

Archbishop May said that because the meeting was "informal in nature, it would not be appropriate to report on its content in any detail." The meeting took place at the Manhattan residence of Archbishop Renato Martino, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

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NATIONAL CATHOLIC OFFICE FOR INFORMATION

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Jewish representatives at the meeting were Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, Chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation, and three and other IJCIC members, Rabbi Gilbert Klaperman, National President of the Synagogue Council of America; Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, Executive Vice President of the Rabbinical Assembly; and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, Director of the Department of International Affairs of the American Jewish Committee.

Representatives of the NCCB present were Bishop William H. Keeler of Harrisburg, Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and Msgr. Daniel F. Hoye, General Secretary.

In his statement, Archbishop May said he was present at a July 8 meeting with Cardinal Casaroli during which the Vatican official was presented with an assessment of Catholic-Jewish relations in the U.S., "especially as they have been impacted by recent controversies and allegations that the Catholic Church is insensitive to the memory of the Holocaust."

Also present at the July 8 meeting with Cardinal Casaroli were John Cardinal O'Connor of New York, Bishop Francis J. Mugavero of Brooklyn, Moderator of the NCCB Office for Catholic-Jewish Relations, Bishop Keeler, and Monsignor Hoye.

Cardinal Casaroli was in New York for several days in an unofficial capacity. In addition to meeting with NCCB

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officials and Jewish representatives, he made a courtesy call on United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, inaugurated a new wing of the Cabrini Medical Center, where he had undergone emergency surgery during an October, 1985 visit to the U.S., and conferred papal honors in a ceremony at the Mission of the Holy See to the U.N.

The text of Archbishop May's statement follows:

On July 8, 1987 I had the opportunity to meet with the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, who was in New York City on unofficial business. I am grateful to the Cardinal for his graciousness in receiving me and a delegation from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops which included Cardinal John O'Connor, Bishops Francis Mugavero and William Keeler and Monsignor Daniel Hoye.

Among other things, we shared with His Eminence our assessment of Catholic-Jewish relations in the United States, especially as they have been impacted by recent controversies and allegations that the Catholic Church is insensitive to the memory of the Holocaust. We urged him, if his schedule permitted, to meet informally with some leaders of the Jewish community.

Although the Secretary of State was leaving for Rome the next day, both his schedule and the schedules of several Jewish leaders were able to be adjusted so that a meeting took place at the residence of the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

The Chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, and three other members of IJCIC attended the meeting: Rabbis Gilbert Klaperman, Wolfe Kelman and Marc Tanenbaum.

Bishop Keeler, the Chairman of the Conference's Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and Monsignor Hoye participated in the exchange of information.

Since the meeting was informal in nature, it would not be appropriate to report on its content in any detail. I have been
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informed, however, that the exchange was serious, cordial and reflective of mutual trust and concern.

My prayer is that this meeting will mark the beginning of an intensification of efforts by both Catholics and Jews to explore our common faith heritage, to eliminate discrimination and to increase mutual understanding and respect.

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