

# Lopez Program Target of Council Criticism

By JOHN DASH

That highly-publicized Lopez goal-setting program is in for stormy days, judging from last week's Priests Council meeting.

The program, developed by Dr. Felix Lopez, an organizational psychologist, and being promoted by the diocesan Office of Planning, drew more than an hour of protest and negative comment from the senators at the opening session of the season's council meetings.

The floodgate was opened by Father Peter Bayer, director of the planning office, when he asked the senators to give him a list of five names, from which two would be selected, to serve on a

committee which would review the diocesan goals.

Committeemen would be expected to attend five full days of special Lopez training and put more than 110 additional hours into their work.

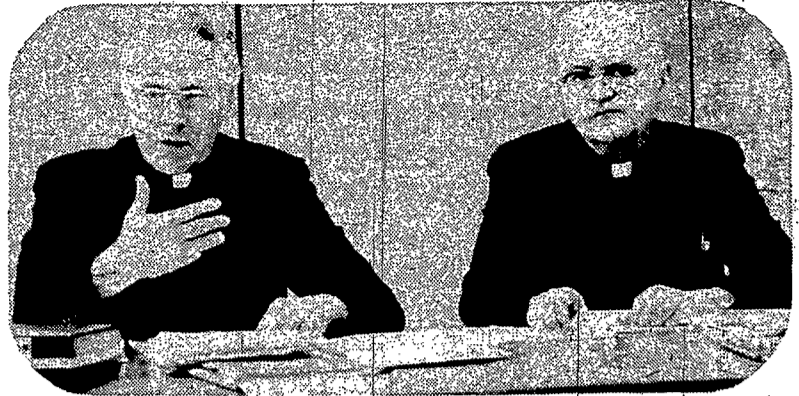
On Sept. 2, Father James Lawlor wrote Father Bayer a letter which stated:

"... this proliferation of committees, review boards and other sundry groups is rapidly becoming counter productive. I am in agreement with the need to establish goals and have them reviewed, but this expenditure of time seems to be much too extravagant. I cannot in conscience go along with your

proposal. Is there not another vehicle which could be used to achieve satisfactory results without this continual drain upon the workload of the people of our Diocese?"

Father James Marvin, council president, opened last week's council deliberations on the proposed committee by noting his bloc's dissatisfaction with the time expenditure, and its questions on the function of the committee. He said his bloc further questioned whether the entire Lopez plan was ever submitted to the diocesan consultative bodies for approval.

Father Bayer responded to the last question that the Priests Council had at least approved the



Father Marvin and Bishop Hickey.

"concept" of the program, an event Father Marvin said he could not remember.

Father Louis Hohman interjected that the Lopez system "seems to get complicated and complicated" to which Father Paul Cuddy gave a resounding "Amen. Amen."

Father Lawlor reiterated his objection to the formation of the committee because of the time factor; and in a lively round-table so did Fathers Daniel Holland, who also questioned the authority the committee would carry; James Hewes, who wanted to know of alternatives to the Lopez system; Kevin Murphy, who reiterated Father Holland's question, adding that the nomination and selection process could render the committee powerless; William Gordinier and Paul Cuddy, who asked the council to "table" the whole question.

Msgr. Leslie Whalen described himself as having a "mean mind" and charged that the Lopez system was an avenue for Father Bayer's office to gain power in the diocese and that the system was "manipulative."

Father Bayer countered that such was not the case.

Msgr. Albert Schnacky made the plea that clergy and laymen were already overworked and that the creation of the committee would overtax diocesan resources.

Father John Hempel and Father Ronald Stacey carried the consideration of the authority of the committee further.

None of the priests who spoke were willing to submit names for the program. Father Murphy, however, facetiously injected the names of the council's defunct budget review committee — implying that the proposed committee's work would be considered valueless.

Further discussion revealed that the senators were displeased with the presentation of the program, the Lopez system itself and the method of establishing the committee.

None of the senators, however, voiced objection to planning itself or to setting and reviewing goals.

Father Bayer was instructed by the council to re-present his proposals in writing to the various blocs prior to the next council meeting. A motion on the proposals is expected to be made on Oct. 14.

However, that date falls after the first session for the committee of a special Lopez training program, which is fixed, and it is now a question of whether the priests will be represented on the committee, whether the council committee members will be given a catch-up training program; or whether the priests will move to seek alternatives to the Lopez system.

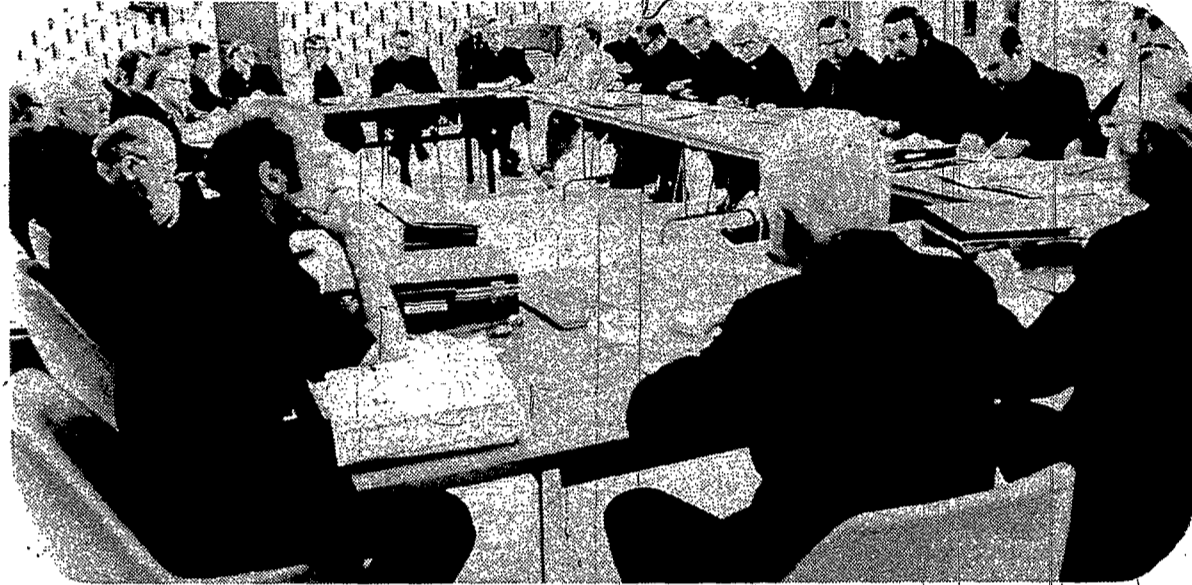


Photo by Bruce Gerhut

The summer recess ended for the Priests Council last week when the body assembled to consider issues and problems of the diocese at Becket Hall.

## ... An A to Z Meeting?

Last week's Priests Council meeting concerned itself with a number of problems and programs. The senators discussed a formal performance review of diocesan clergy, clerical sabbaticals, the establishment of a permanent diaconate program in the diocese, the progress of the team ministry experiment, a new process for the selection of bishops, and the implementation of recommendations by the Long Range Ministerial Committee, among a variety of topics.

Technical procedural difficulties kept discussion of tubal ligation reportedly done at St. James Mercy Hospital in Hornell off the council's agenda.

Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, speaking for Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, who was preparing to leave for Rome, addressed the council on financial matters saying that the new director of finance for the diocese, Thomas A. Weber, would be available for pastoral consultation as was his predecessor, Jack Ritzenthaler.

The bishop also noted that, over-all, parish revenues are up 9.8 per cent over last year, and said that there had been a substantial paying of parish assessment debts.

He observed that a financial advisory board had been created to consult on the diocesan securities portfolio; and that the recent increase in rates for Blue Cross/Blue Shield will require investigation. He warned that the increase may force new arrangements in insurance coverage.

On the advisory board, Msgr. Whalen objected that he saw a conflict of interest possible for several of its members.

Among the "household matters" Father Marvin brought to the attention of the council was a question on providing funds for and the storage of tape recordings of council proceedings. It was Father Cuddy's opinion that the tapes should be stored for a year and Father Holland agreed.

On a negative note, Father Marvin registered a complaint against the Pastoral Office for

allocating \$4,000 to the Priests Council without giving the opportunity for the council to present and explain its submitted budget.

The light note of the morning was struck over a proposal from the Pastoral Office to appoint a liaison between the council and the office staff.

Father Marvin explained a schedule from that office of "A" meetings, "B" meetings, "C" meetings, and "D" meetings.

He then asked for volunteers and the laughter stopped and the council remained silent. Finally Father Marvin singled out Father William Gordinier, co-pastor of St. Joseph's in Penfield. Father Marvin quipped that Father Gordinier's title meant he was "only a half-pastor" and that he was appointed to the post.

"See me after school and we'll go over this," Father Marvin said.

Bishop Hickey spoke to the council on the work of the diocesan personnel board, explaining both the "failures" and successes in implementing guidelines given the board by the council.

On a proposal to encourage continuing education for the clergy, the bishop reported that just such a program drew no positive response from local priests and that the Diocese of Rochester would be the only one of the eight in the State not to participate.

The bishop said that the co-pastorate experiment is due for evaluation; and noted that an instrument for such evaluation is being developed. He also said that the diocese has progressed further with the concept than any other diocese in the state.

He further observed that the team ministry at Mt. Carmel Church (where Father Laurence Tracey is pastor of record and Sisters Carol Fox and Régis Straughn administrative co-pastors) is being closely watched.

Bishop Hickey spoke of the problems his board has with the

question of sabbaticals for clergymen — the principal problems being financial and administrative.

He outlined several courses of action open to the board, and assured the council further work would be done.

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