

## Convention News

**R**ATHER sensationalized reports of the last meeting of Working Group 7 have led to a number of letters to the press. It is difficult to imagine that all of those could have been written by people who had had any personal experience of the meetings of the Working Groups. It is perhaps sufficient here to say that no attempt has been made at the meetings to keep secret the identity of the members of the Drafting Commissions. In fact their names were published in the *Sunday Examiner* and *Kung Kao Po* shortly after their election by the Pastoral Council. There was nothing sinister behind the decision not to add their names to the draft documents. It was felt that if attention was called to the authorship of the drafts, they might stand less chance of being judged solely on the merits of the ideas they contain. An exception was made in the case of the Education document, on account of the very large number of collaborators involved and of the form in which this document is presented.

The remaining two Conven-

tion documents, on the Laity and on Government of the Diocese, have now been completed. The first copies of an English version of the Laity document have been delivered and sent to members of Working Group 4. The remainder will be delivered within the next few days and sent to the other delegates as soon as possible. As it will be some time before the printing of the Chinese draft is ready, a photocopied version has also been sent to Working Group members. The meetings of this Working Group, which had been suspended to await the appearance of the document, have been resumed. The members met last Wednesday, May 13th. The document on the Government of the Diocese is at present being prepared for the printer and the English version should be ready in the coming week. The preparation and printing of the Chinese version will take another week or two.

Also in the course of preparation is a full list of the delegates to the Convention. Now that the movement of delegates from one Working Group to another has almost ceased and that most Groups have chosen their drafting committees, the printing of this list need be delayed no longer. Name tags are also being prepared and will be ready in the near future; delegates will be asked to wear these at all meetings of the Convention.

### EDUCATION

A recommendation to the effect that "teaching in primary schools should be child-centred rather than subject-centred", was a topic of a good deal of discussion at the April 30th meeting of Working Group 3. In reply to a query from the floor as to the meaning of a child-centred education, a delegate explained that this was a technical term, meaning more than it might seem at first sight. It is a theory of education, he said, based on the philosophy of men like Rousseau and John Dewey. In effect it implies that the child is basically good and should be allowed to develop its full potentialities by following its own bent. A member of the drafting commission present thought that the intention of the authors of this section of the document was something less technical; by a child-centred education they meant one by which the full range of the child's abilities—not just the three R's—would be developed, as described in §17 of the document. It is important, the speaker added, that this should start in primary school, else it would never be done in secondary school.

A non-delegate felt that some of the recommendations in §22 are so obvious that they should not be set down as recommendations but rather looked on as fundamental principles of education. Someone countered this by saying that those who have passed through a College of Education may know these principles, but unfortunately many of our supervisors and headmasters/mistresses do not!

Another speaker maintained that recommending a child-

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centred education logically involved recommending to Government the abolition of the secondary entrance exam; preparing pupils for this exam, he felt, was not compatible with a child-centred education. In the lively discussion that followed this statement it was pointed out that the secondary entrance exam is the machinery for carrying out a certain policy of the E.D. with regard to subsidized places in secondary schools. Hence what should be done was to propose a new policy to Government. Another delegate considered that the secondary entrance exam was used as an excuse for shortcomings on the part of primary schools; much could be done to improve the quality of primary education, he said, within the framework of the present system.

Discussion on the problem of the secondary entrance exam will be continued at the next meeting.

Before the meeting ended, a proposal to split up the Working Group into a number of subgroups to discuss different sections of the draft document was debated. Most of those who spoke opposed the suggestion and when a vote was taken, the proposal was defeated by a large majority. Finally Father Ernest Stassen was unanimously elected Vice-Convenor in place of Miss Nelly Seu whom pressure of work prevented from continuing with this responsibility.

### PRIESTLY LIFE

At its last meeting (May 1st) Group 5 chose a three-member redrafting committee by secret ballot. Those elected were: Mr. Francis Cheung, Father A. Lambertoni and Father Anthony Lee. The meeting then continued its discussions on par. 9 of the draft document: The Priest—Minister of the Word and the Sacraments. Among

the points raised during the debate were: the section should be split into two separate parts so that proper stress could be placed on these two ministries; the whole paragraph should be rewritten in the light of the documents of Vatican II, bringing out at this point the unity of these two aspects of the priestly ministry.

In accordance with a decision taken at a previous meeting, the next paragraph for discussion was n.8: The Ministry of Leadership. Here it was stated that the section does not indicate what kind of leadership is expected of the priest. One delegate suggested that the priest should be one who "starts things going rather than one who dictates." Apropos of the subtitle of this section: Service to the Unity of the Church, a speaker said that the unity referred to was "unity within the Church, so that all work done by the Church will be unified and not scattered".

During the discussion reference was made to the poor attendance at the meeting of members of the Working Group (14 out of 29). It was proposed that the attention of the Steering Committee be brought to this situation. The suggestion was made that delegates be required to attend a fixed proportion of meetings in order to qualify as full participants of the Convention; failing which they would be deprived of the right to vote and to constitute a quorum at the meetings.

### Programme of Meetings of Working Groups during the Coming Week

Religious	Monday, May 18th
Social Mission of the Church	Tuesday, May 19th
Communications Media	Wednesday, May 20th
Ecumenism	Thursday, May 21st
Government of Diocese	Friday, May 22nd
Evangelization	Saturday, May 23rd
Place: Catholic Centre	Time: 8 p.m. — 10 p.m.