

Convention News

THE first meeting of Working Group 10 (Government of Diocese) took place on Friday, March 6th. After Bro. Gonzaga O'Connor, M.M., had been chosen as English Secretary, the Convener, Father Francis Wong, explained the ground-rules. A long discussion ensued as to whether to recommend to the Steering Committee an amendment to the rule regarding a quorum at the meetings. Some speakers were of the opinion that the quorum should be determined by the number of delegates of the Working Group present rather than (as the ground-rules state) by the number of Convention delegates attending. However, when the proposal was eventually put to a vote it was defeated. The Convener then gave an outline of what the first part of the draft document will contain. After treating of authority as a form of service, the draft discusses the relationship between the bishop and the people of God in a diocese, stressing the primarily pastoral nature of the bishop's office, necessitating the closest possible ties between bishop and people. To achieve this in our diocese, the draft deems it advisable to lighten the Bishop's administrative burden. Among the ways this could be done would be the appointment of one or more auxiliary bishops, the services of a personal secretary (preferably a bilingual priest), the appointment of a public relations official to co-ordinate the pastoral apostolate by means of several bureaux, e.g. news service, religious matters, mass media, ecumenical affairs, etc. This Working Group will meet again on March 20th.

Group 11 (Evangelization) met on Saturday, March 7th. After some questions of procedure had been disposed of, comments on the draft document were invited. The present draft comprises three distinct papers: it was hoped that these could be made into one unified whole. The contents of the document were praised for their excellent material, but many considered that the language

used needs to be made much simpler; it should be readily understandable by the average man who wants to know plainly what the Church in Hong Kong is all about. The style should be improved and the document rewritten in language "as stirring as the Communist Manifesto." Among the points that seemed to some to require further clarification were: the relation of the Church to the Kingdom of God; the Church's mission as the service of men: where do conversions come in? the Church as the sign of Christ's presence and its necessity as the means of salvation for all. One speaker felt that in dealing with the present situation, the draft should investigate the phenomenon of secularization, its impact on the faith and the possible dangers inherent in this trend.

After some debate it was decided to accept the document in its present form as the basis for discussion. At the next meeting (March 21st) the first part of the document will be considered in detail.