

## **The Church in Society Committee Report**

**Seconded by The Very Rev Gordon Wynne, Diocese of Cashel & Ossory**

### **Embargoed until Delivery**

Your Grace

The terrain over which church and society meet is vast and varied, or it should be. It was so in the vision of such as Archbishop King, Dean Swift and the philanthropists of the Georgian era. It was so in the Victorian cities of Ireland. But there is a perception that social engagement is not the Church of Ireland's strongest suit. The particular hand of cards that history has dealt the Church of Ireland has meant that engagement with society as a whole has been largely left to the Catholic conscience on the one hand and the Wesleyan and Quaker inheritance on the other. The Church in Society Committee is trying to change all that. The world of politics is asking for our contributions. People value the Church of Ireland and want it to articulate its point of view. We must respond, if only because we try to be faithful Christians. We must be proactive also.

Your proposer has identified several important areas of engagement. Others appear in the report. We cannot work the whole terrain at once. What we try to do is to identify the priorities that the situation of the day demands. We offer theological reflection and pastoral guidance in each area of priority. We move on from one worked area to another, and where necessary we in the working groups change the personnel so that the right qualifications and experience are to hand. We hope to influence the political structures, certainly, but still more do we hope to be useful to Mary and John in the pew. Work of this kind needs both humility and confidence. In that spirit I second the report.