

## Convention News

THE following is the full text of the statement made by Bishop Hsu at the opening of the meeting of Working Group 7 (Social Dimension of the Church) on Tuesday, May 5th.

"The draft document on the Social Dimension of the Church has, during the past weeks, been the source of much comment both within and outside Catholic circles. It is understandable that some should have very strong feelings for or against certain of the recommendations contained in the draft.

Many, perhaps, have misunderstood the nature of the document. It cannot be emphasised sufficiently that the document in its present form does not necessarily represent the views of any but its authors. The document has been prepared as a starting point for discussion. The views and recommendations it contains are proposed to the delegates attending the meetings for their acceptance or rejection after full discussion.

It has been made abundantly clear to me, both at the meetings, all of which I have attended, and especially during the last few days, that feelings run high especially in regard to the recommendation to set up "a special commission to study the possibility of dialogic with the Communists." After having given the matter serious thought and taken into consideration the views of the Convener and Vice-Convener of the Working Group, as well as those of the members of the drafting commission responsible for writing the document, I consider that the ideal solution would be as follows:

At the last meeting of the Working Group (April 21), a resolution was passed "that the document be sent back to the drafting commission, in conjunction with the Convener, Vice-Convener and two secretaries, for correction, particularly of the Chinese translation, and for a clear statement of the sources of information on which the facts in each chapter are based."

In the light of this resolution therefore there shall be at present no further discussion on pages 1-16 of the draft document; these pages will be sent to the reconstituted drafting commission for careful re-writing in a more positive, optimistic spirit, reminiscent of the style of the Vatican Council Constitution on the Church in the Modern World; the rewritten draft will omit the reference to communism on p. 9 (n. 10), and the recommendation concerning dialogue (p. 11, n. 2).

After the Bishop had read his statement, a motion was put forward from the floor welcoming the Bishop's decision and recommending that the reconstituted draft committee rewrite the first part of the draft document in accordance with the Bishop's statement. This was passed nem. con. The meeting then went on to discuss the

question of a title for the document, since some had felt that the present one was unsatisfactory. After a lively exchange of opinion it was agreed to adopt a second name for the Working Group and for the document (to be used on all official occasions), namely the **Social Mission of the Church**. The meeting was held in the Catholic Centre restaurant to accommodate an overflow audience of 217 persons, attracted by the publicity given the draft document in certain sections of the press during the previous week.

### LITURGY

Working Group 1 at its last meeting (April 27) elected a three-member redrafting committee by a secret ballot from among the five names that had been put forward at the end of the previous meeting. Those elected were Fr. Joseph Zen, Bro. Gilbert Perrier and Fr. Innocent Keith. The Group then went on to discuss chapter 1 of the document: Liturgical Celebrations and Daily Life. Various opinions were expressed about the tone of the language to be used in the draft: one delegate suggested that negative statements should be recast and put in positive form and that problems should be expressed in the form of hopes for the future. Another speaker felt the tone of some of the paragraphs was inclined to be somewhat censorious and wondered to whom the document was addressed, to the man in the pew or to those in the diocese who were responsible for organizing the liturgy. Others felt that there is value in putting a thing in a negative way: it catches people's attention better. As a result of this discussion a resolution was passed recommending to the redrafting committee in the revision of the first three paragraphs of chapter 1, to try and put the matter contained in these sections in a more positive way. It was explained that this did not exclude a description of the less satisfactory aspects of the present situation in Hong Kong regarding the liturgy or expressing things in a dramatic way.

Resolutions were also passed to accept the general ideas found in the first two paragraphs of chapter 1 leaving a good deal of discretion to the redrafting committee regarding the order and exact rewording of these sections.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Working Group 2 held its last meeting on April 28, when section 5 of the first chapter, entitled "Other Means of Religious Formation (in the Parish)", together with its corresponding recommendation, was discussed. One speaker regretted that there was no mention in the recommendation of the need for Catholics to be instructed in their duty to strive for the betterment of the society in which they live. He felt that some practical suggestions should be made by the Group, e.g. recommending courses in social awareness and civic res-

ponsibility in addition to renewal programmes in scripture, liturgy and theology. When put to a vote this proposal was accepted by a very large majority.

The next issue discussed was a proposal presented by a delegate to add a new recommendation to the draft to the effect that Catholic schools must always be ready to admit the children of Catholic parents, especially to Primary 1. After much discussion the proposer agreed to recast his motion to read: Catholic schools as far as possible should be ready to admit the children of Catholic parents, especially to Primary 1. Stated thus the motion was passed by 39 votes to 11, with 3 abstentions.

At its next meeting the Group will continue its discussions on section 6 which deals with the relationship between school and parish.

### Programme of Meetings of Working Groups for Coming Week

Liturgy  
Religious Instruction  
Education  
Lay  
Priestly Life  
Place: Catholic Centre

Monday, May 11th  
Tuesday, May 12th  
Wednesday, May 13th  
Thursday, May 14th  
Friday, May 15th  
Time: 8 p.m.—10 p.m.