

MR MARTIN LEE (in Cantonese): Mr President, today makes a historic moment because the future of Hong Kong will rest on several Members of the Legislative Council. It depends on how they will “push the button” to decide whether Hong Kong people will have the chance to enjoy “one country, two systems”; “a high degree of autonomy”; and “Hong Kong being ruled by Hong Kong people” after 1 July 1997. All I can say is “there is such a chance” because we all know that it is never easy to truly realize the great notions of “one country, two systems”; “Hong Kong being ruled by Hong Kong people”; and “a high degree of autonomy”. Suffice it to say that on 4 May this year I put forth a motion in this Council criticizing the Chinese and British Governments for not working in compliance with the Joint Declaration and calling on the two governments again to genuinely realize the rights which Hong Kong people have been promised in the Joint Declaration. How did we vote at that time? No one voted against the motion. In fact we all know that implementing the Joint Declaration is extremely difficult. Now what should we do?

I have listened to the Honourable Allen LEE’s speech and looked at his recent publicity leaflets. Now the Liberal Party also follows in the footsteps of the United Democrats by distributing many leaflets. What are their ideas? They actually want to abandon what the Joint Declaration has bestowed on us.

Mr President, faced with the Chinese Government’s approach directed at Hong Kong, how do we feel? According to Mr Allen LEE, China is growing wealthier and stronger with her economy getting better and better. We are, of course, happy about it. But what about Hong Kong? Does Hong Kong have to continue protecting human rights? Nothing seems to have been mentioned in this regard. Obviously, money is important. Without money we will have nothing to feed on. But I hope that Members will understand one point. The Bible says: “Man does not live on bread alone.” To us human beings, if all we have is food to feed on, is it worthwhile to lead such a life? Now we are facing the ultra-leftist approach adopted by the Chinese Government. We all know what the Chinese Government is waiting for. The state of mind of the leaders of the Chinese authorities resembles that of one at the end of a dynasty. Even the leaders themselves have no idea what position they will be in in future. So, pursuant to the usual practice of the Chinese Government, “left” rather than “right” will be the order of the day. Hence, striking hard blows on Hong Kong every time. So how can “a high degree of autonomy” and “Hong Kong being ruled by Hong Kong people” be deemed possible?

Today, irrespective of whatever resolution the Legislative Council has passed and however close the wish of the Chinese Government is being adhered to and even if we support the “capitulation proposal” of the Liberal Party, Mr LU Ping would say, “It has to be knocked down anyway on 1 July 1997.” Such being the case, what do we have to capitulate? In fact, is it so difficult for us to make our choice? If we do not look at the matter from a self-serving point of view but have in mind the overall interest of the public, and, even knowing that our purse might be affected and still not caring at all, then, today’s vote will be very easy to cast.

According to newspaper coverage, many Members have called themselves “independent legislators”. But judging from the inclination so far, one feels that they are not so “independent”. In reality, is it easy to be an independent legislator in Hong Kong? When some leading financial corporations are exerting their pressure and when the powerful Chinese Government is exerting its pressure, is it easy to handle them? There are many reasons which would make one succumb to the Chinese Government. Who does not want stability, prosperity and smooth transition? “Smooth transition” seems to be the monopoly of the Liberal Party. Whoever refuses to listen to its advocacy is acting against stability and prosperity. It seems that if Hong Kong citizens choose Members whom they favour instead of them (the Liberal Party) to sit in the Legislative Council, there would be serious consequences and social unrest would arise in Hong Kong. Based on what evidence are they saying this? Of course, they can write whatever they like in the leaflets to be distributed. But do they not have to be responsible? In fact, why do they not have confidence in themselves?

According to newspaper coverage, Members from the Liberal Party have been to Beijing entreating the Beijing Government to lend a helping hand by making those pro-China Members assist them or else the Liberal Party’s amendment proposal would not be passed. Should it be voted down, the Hong Kong society would not be able to achieve stability and the democrats would become as the dominant party.

I found this very funny. Why would a comparatively open and fair election system render the Liberal Party a disastrous failure? Even our friends from the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong (DAB) have not said so. Of course, friends from the DAB have greater confidence. But why do Members from the Liberal Party hold such view? Why do they think so poorly of themselves? Why would they suffer defeat because of an open and fair system? I was a bit disappointed by what the Honourable James TIEN had said in Beijing (according to newspaper coverage). I think he lacks confidence to a far too large extent in himself and other Members from the Liberal Party. But if they go on doing this, support for them from the Hong Kong people will be further undermined. In fact, under an open and fair system, no matter who gets elected, I will accept that. What the United Democrats support and hope for is a comparatively democratic political reform package. The United Democrats know that we are not doing this for our own selves. There is no guarantee that we will win all elections. It rests on the decision of the general public in choosing which candidate. Why do we not trust even the Hong Kong citizens? If you do not trust the Hong Kong citizens, how can you possibly make them choose you? The simple truth is: in order to have faith in the public, you will have to, at least, make the public believe in you. If you do not have confidence in the public, how can the public have confidence in you?

Mr President, I wonder if there is any other proposal which is worse than the present one put forward by the Liberal Party. It seems that there is none. I think even if Lord WILSON is the incumbent Governor, it is believed that he

will not ask the three *ex officio* Members to vote for it because it is indeed far too bad. From what has been covered in news reports, even the Chinese officials have not put forward any proposal which is worse than this one. The only possibility is that some fiddling may have to be done to those 20 directly elected seats. The Liberal Party has done nothing of the sort. At least, they have not played any gimmicks here. But what is Hong Kong people currently in need of? Hong Kong people need a Legislative Council which can genuinely counteract the Government, with its legislators never cowering before brute or arbitrary power. To be honest, it is very difficult for Hong Kong citizens, in particular friends from the industrial and commercial sector or professionals, to stand out and speak into the loudhailer about the rule of law and about democracy. Why? Because everyone wants to make money. Everyone is thinking of securing business from China. But would colleagues elected from respective functional constituencies in the Legislative Council think clearly what your constituents actually want? Do your constituents want you to press the button to vote in line with Beijing's wishes on all matters in the Legislative Council? Is it the wish of your constituents that you listen to whatever Beijing says? And now is it being feared that it is already late in inviting Beijing to exercise control over Hong Kong? Is it what your constituents think? Do your constituents object to democracy?

Several Members from the functional constituencies have enquired about their constituents' choice by means of questionnaires. Having received the feedback, many Members, who are basically very conservative, were very surprised to find that their constituents are in favour of democracy. In fact, this is not surprising at all. To Hong Kong people, businessmen, professionals or the general public, who would ever want to live under the tyranny of the communist system? If they do, why do they stay in Hong Kong but not go to China? As Mr Allen LEE has spoken so highly of the mainland, why do we not head for the mainland? As a matter of fact, we all understand that the wish of Hong Kong citizens is to see Hong Kong truly having "a high degree of autonomy", with all of its internal affairs being free from the control of the Beijing Government.

Therefore, I would like to say one thing to Members who are elected by functional constituencies. Why did your constituents elect you? It is because you can speak their mind (which they themselves dare not). If what you do is the same as what they do, that is, casting vote with an eye on how it will affect your purse, then you should not be their representatives. What they want you to do is what they are unable to do.

As to the appointed Members, I also have one thing to tell them. Most of the appointed Members in the Legislative Council now were not appointed by Governor Chris PATTEN. They are not accountable to the public. Is it enough just being accountable to their conscience? I do not know how stringently their conscience exercises supervision over their behaviour, but apart from being accountable to their own conscience, they are obligated to be accountable to the conscience of the general Hong Kong public as well. As for the three Members

appointed by Governor Chris PATTEN, they know what is contained in Governor Chris PATTEN's proposal when they accepted their appointment. If they did not agree with the proposal, they should not have accepted their appointment. Since they have accepted their appointment, they should, at least, have the courage to support it.

Mr President, later on when we vote, would all of us please bear in mind that we shall not vote for our personal interests. We should vote for the general benefits of the public and for the goals of "Hong Kong being ruled by Hong Kong people" and "high degree of autonomy".

MRS ELSIE TU: Mr President, when the Governor made his fateful speech in October 1992, he committed two fundamental errors.

1. He broke the Sino-British agreement for the two countries to work out the details on the run-up to 1997, following on discussions in writing between the two foreign ministers in early 1990.
2. He said he was only putting forward proposals when in fact he knew that he was announcing decisions that he would not change. This has been proved by the fact that in spite of receiving thousands of submissions, and in spite of holding numerous discussions, he has not moved one inch from his so-called proposals. They are in this Bill before us today.

When China enacted the Basic Law she first consulted the Hong Kong people. Consultations continued for five years. When eventually the Basic Law was formulated, naturally it did not meet everyone's aspirations, but no law ever does because human beings have different expectations. However, the Basic Law was an acceptable beginning and gave promise of steps towards full democracy after 10 years of Chinese sovereignty. The British, in contrast, had never consulted the Hong Kong people on its constitution for Hong Kong during 150 years of sovereignty until the 1997 changeover came within view. The Basic Law, therefore, was a vast improvement on anything that went before it. Given co-operation by Britain, I believe that a smooth transition could have been reached. And since China has tolerated unequal treaties with Britain for 150 years, even during the Cultural Revolution, there is no reason to believe that China would have reneged on either the Joint Declaration or the Basic Law. Nor is there reason to believe China will renege even now.

Fragile agreements between China and Britain still required some final touches when in October 1992 hope for 1997 was brutally crushed under the clumsy feet of a Governor who trod on it in the belief that he knew how to deal with China, in the same way that western politicians have for centuries dealt with Asians and other nations they once colonized.