

## Commission on Strategic Development

### Questionnaire on Hong Kong's positioning in our country's economic social and political development

All 11 issues raised in the questionnaire can be summed up in one issue: how to integrate Hong Kong with the rest of China.

It is not realistic to attempt integration by segregating issues like national identity, economy or political development. In fact, all these issues are interrelated. For example, it is quite useless to harp on education to enhance national identity without recognizing the gap in values and outlook between HK and the Mainland. This is often loosely described as 文化差異. One obvious difference in values is that Hong Kong people have a high regard for freedom and the rule of law yet the recent incidents relating to Ching Cheong and the censorship of the publication 冰點 highlight the gap in expectation between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

Hong Kong people have no difficulty loving or identifying with the motherland but it is ironical to keep asking Hong Kong people to understand the progress and development in China when a lot of people who are clearly patriotic in the eyes of the Hong Kong people are barred from entry. Before there is trust, there has to be understanding, and before there is understanding, there has to be dialogue, and before there is dialogue, there has to be engagement, and before there is engagement, the present policy of marginalization and cold shouldering of representatives of large sections of the public must cease. Last year, the CE took a step in the right direction when he led members of the Legislature to Guangzhou. It is thus a great pity that he now says he was too naive to believe this would work. This is contrary to the direction expressed in the Commission paper. The CE of Hong Kong has a unique and historical role in this respect.

There are many areas which desperately and urgently need greater co-ordination between Hong Kong and the Mainland: the one way permit system, pollution, food, water, health and hygiene, economical, financial and professional services, conflict of laws, recognition or reciprocal enforcement of judgments. Eight years after the handover, there is still a lot of room for improvement in the co-ordination between the officials on both sides of the border. This is the other area on which more governmental effort is needed.

Hong Kong people recognize that there have been big changes in the Mainland since the Open Door Policy. Integration will come naturally and the problems will melt away gradually as the differences are narrowed. Thus government work should concentrate on the two aspects referred to above.

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