

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**Wednesday, 18 November 1987****The Council met at half-past Two o'clock****PRESENT**HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)

SIR DAVID CLIVE WILSON, K.C.M.G.

THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF SECRETARY

MR. DAVID ROBERT FORD, L.V.O., O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (*Acting*)

MR. DAVID ALAN CHALLONER NENDICK, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (*Acting*)

MR. JEREMY FELL MATHEWS, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LYDIA DUNN, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE PETER C. WONG, C.B.E., J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE HO KAM-FAI, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALLEN LEE PENG-FEI, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE HU FA-KUANG, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE WONG PO-YAN, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE DONALD LIAO POON-HUAI, C.B.E., J.P.

SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

THE HONOURABLE CHAN KAM-CHUEN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN JOSEPH SWAINE, C.B.E., Q.C., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE STEPHEN CHEONG KAM-CHUEN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. SELINA CHOW LIANG SHUK-YEE, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MARIA TAM WAI-CHU, O.B.E., J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE HENRIETTA IP MAN-HING, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN YING-LUN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. RITA FAN HSU LAI-TAI, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. PAULINE NG CHOW MAY-LIN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE PETER POON WING-CHEUNG, M.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE YEUNG PO-KWAN, C.P.M., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KIM CHAM YAU-SUM, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN WALTER CHAMBERS, O.B.E., J.P.

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE

THE HONOURABLE JACKIE CHAN CHAI-KEUNG

THE HONOURABLE CHENG HON-KWAN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, C.B.E., J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE CHIU HIN-KWONG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHUNG PUI-LAM
THE HONOURABLE THOMAS CLYDESDALE, J.P.
THE HONOURABLE HO SAI-CHU, M.B.E., J.P.
THE HONOURABLE HUI YIN-FAT
DR. THE HONOURABLE CONRAD LAM KUI-SHING
THE HONOURABLE MARTIN LEE CHU-MING, Q.C., J.P.
THE HONOURABLE DESMOND LEE YU-TAI
THE HONOURABLE DAVID LI KWOK-PO, J.P.
THE HONOURABLE LIU LIT-FOR, J.P.
THE HONOURABLE NGAI SHIU-KIT, O.B.E., J.P.
THE HONOURABLE PANG CHUN-HOI, M.B.E.
THE HONOURABLE POON CHI-FAI
PROF. THE HONOURABLE POON CHUNG-KWONG
THE HONOURABLE HELMUT SOHMEN
THE HONOURABLE SZETO WAH
THE HONOURABLE TAI CHIN-WAH
THE HONOURABLE MRS. ROSANNA TAM WONG YICK-MING
THE HONOURABLE TAM YIU-CHUNG
DR. THE HONOURABLE DANIEL TSE, O.B.E., J.P.
THE HONOURABLE LAU WONG-FAT, M.B.E., J.P.
THE HONOURABLE GRAHAM BARNES, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS
THE HONOURABLE RONALD GEORGE BLACKER BRIDGE, O.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER
THE HONOURABLE DAVID GREGORY JEAFFRESON, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR SECURITY
THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL LEUNG MAN-KIN, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT
THE HONOURABLE NATHANIEL WILLIAM HAMISH MACLEOD, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY
THE HONOURABLE EDWARD HO SING-TIN, J.P.

ABSENT

THE HONOURABLE RICHARD LAI SUNG-LUNG
THE HONOURABLE ANDREW WONG WANG-FAT

IN ATTENDANCE

THE CLERK TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MR. LAW KAM-SANG

Papers

The following papers were laid on the table pursuant to Standing Order 14(2):

<i>Subject</i>	<i>L.N. No.</i>
Subsidiary Legislation:	
Fugitive Offenders Act 1967 Fugitive Offenders (United Kingdom Dependencies) (Cancellation) Order 1987	370/87
Fugitive Offenders Act 1967 Fugitive Offenders (Designated Commonwealth Countries) Order 1987	371/87
Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance Public Health and Municipal Services (Public Markets) (Designation and Amendment of Tenth Schedule) (No. 3) Order 1987	372/87
Banking Ordinance Banking Ordinance (Amendment of Fifth Schedule) (No. 3) Notice 1987.....	373/87
Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance Declaration of Markets in the Regional Council Area (No. 2) 1987	374/87

Sessional Papers 1987-88:

- No. 18—Report on the Administration of the Fire Services Welfare Fund for the year ended 31 March 1986
- No. 19—Annual Report of the Director of Accounting Services and the Accounts of Hong Kong for the year ended 31 March 1987
- No. 20—Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Hong Kong Government for the year ended 31 March 1987 and the results of value for money audits
October 1987
Director of Audit's Report No. 10

Government Business**Motion**

MISS LYDIA DUNN moved the following motion: That this Council takes note of the Report of the Survey Office and Report of the Monitors: Public Response to Green Paper: The 1987 Review of Developments in Representative Government.

She said: Sir, I move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper: The motion reads 'That this Council takes note of the Report of the Survey Office and the Report of the Monitors: Public Response to the Green Paper: The 1987 Review of Developments in Representative Government.'

Sir, Members of this Council debated the options in the Green Paper itself on 15 and 16 July this year. We all looked forward then to obtaining a fuller knowledge of wider public opinion through the Survey Office. Now that the report of the Survey Office has been published this debate will give Members the opportunity to speak on the very impressive public response and to develop further their own views.

Sir, public consultation on the options in the Green Paper ended on 30 September; the decisions on what should go into the White Paper in the light of that consultation have yet to be made by you, Sir, with the advice of the Executive Council. Members of this Council who are also Members of the Executive Council have therefore decided that it would not be appropriate on this occasion for them to speak. They will be listening keenly and attentively and they will fully take into account the views expressed by colleagues in this debate when it comes time for them to tender their advice in Executive Council. A total of 31 Members have put down their names to speak on the motion. I am sure we can look forward to an interesting and constructive debate.

With these few words of introduction, Sir, I beg to move.

DR. HO: Sir, in compiling the report, the Survey Office adopted a set of rigorous working procedures. It adhered conscientiously to its terms of reference in gathering public opinions and views which were submitted to the office or expressed in the media, and in classifying, tabulating, summarising and presenting them factually in a systematic and comprehensible manner. It refrained from interpreting and inferring from the data collected. The Survey Office respected the independent and professional status of AGB McNair HK Ltd., a research firm with international standing in public opinion surveys, and left the firm to carry out its job without interference. The two independent monitors, who closely supervised the various aspects of the work of the Survey Office, were fully satisfied with the way the commissioner had conducted the public opinion collection exercise. For these reasons, I commend the report to the public.

In this report, public responses and views on the issues discussed in the Green Paper on the 1987 review were expressed in a variety of forms, namely: speeches in debates and minutes of formal meetings and other forums; written submissions by individuals, by groups of individuals and by associations; public opinion surveys; signature campaigns; and pre-printed identical letters and questionnaires. Different forms of expression carry different degrees of self-initiative, subjectivity and strength of conviction of respondents. In other words, the amount of passivity, collusion or manipulation tends to be minimum

in the individual speeches and individual written submissions, but more prevalent in the signature campaigns and pre-printed identical letters, with written submissions by small groups of individuals in between. Furthermore, the inferences drawn from a survey involving a probability sampling can be generalised with much more validity and authority than those from a survey involving a non-probability sampling. In the same vein, the conclusions derived from a survey sampled on a general population will be subject to much less limitations than those of a survey sampled on a specific population group. With these characteristics in mind, the Governor and Members of the Executive Council, in assessing public views and responses, must exercise discretion in assigning varying weights and significance to the findings of an issue in accordance with the different forms of expression sent to or collected by the Survey Office.

Political reforms are extremely delicate and complex matters. They have far-reaching, long-term social and economic implications as well. Therefore, in deliberating on the most appropriate developments in representative government for Hong Kong in 1988, it is imperative that the Governor in Council will not only make decisions with reference to the findings of the Survey Office report, but also take into account a host of interlocking considerations, such as:

- (i) the continuous stability and prosperity of the territory;
- (ii) convergence with the Basic Law, a constitutional frame for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region;
- (iii) a smooth and uneventful transition;
- (iv) building on the good features of our existing system;
- (v) retaining or further strengthening of business confidence, and public confidence in the Government as well;
- (vi) public's wish for a gradual, step by step change;
- (vii) incremental political reforms on a wider scope rather than just on direct elections;
- (viii) the need for an efficient, but responsive government, and
- (ix) a myriad of suggestions raised in today's debate.

Finally, I wish to add that my colleague, the hon. F. K. HU, also shares and endorses the views I have just expressed.

With these comments, Sir, I support the motion.

MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN: Sir, this debate is somewhat pre-empted by the clash of armour in the three-day debate on the 'Motion of Thanks for the Governor's Address' on 4, 5 and 11 November 1987. However, in that debate which touched upon this subject, two words 'referendum' and 'tiger' were outstanding and it is believed that it is significant enough for me to spend a few moments on them before taking note of the Survey Office report.

The term 'political arena' is quite appropriate, as there were not only gladiators fighting against gladiators but also gladiators killing or killed by fierce animals, such as lions and tigers.

The lion represents bravery and the British use it on the Royal Emblem. The mythical dragon represents the Chinese imperial dynasties which have faded into the dust of history.

However, the Chinese use the tiger to represent the generals and armed forces but it is definitely not suitable for the Civil Service. In my primary school days, I learned from the classic Chinese literature 'Confucius passes Mt. Tai' (孔子過泰山側). Confucius saw a widow crying bitterly over the deaths of her close relatives but despite her own danger she refused to leave the territory as there was no harsh administration. Whereupon Confucius told his disciples to note that 'harsh or cruel administration is more fierce than tigers' (小子識之, 苛政猛於虎也). Those Chinese officials who had advised the Government to use the tiger as a symbol should be instructed to copy this 91-Chinese-character essay (including the subject and the author) 1 000 times, not for practising their Chinese calligraphy but to grasp the gist of benevolent administration and not to devour the people.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: Mr. CHAN, can I interrupt you one moment and ask if you are getting on to the subject of the motion because you know Standing Orders say that somebody discussing a motion should stick to the subject under discussion in the motion.

MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN: Yes, certainly, Sir.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN: Another word which I picked up was 'referendum' mentioned by one of my colleagues in the previous debate.

Referendum may be generally classified into two categories, that is, obligatory or optional. The former is mostly used for constitutional issues and the latter is mostly used for issues of a legislative nature.

Both Great Britain and China have had experience in using referendum. The results are bitter-sweet.

On 20 October 1945 a plebiscite was held in Outer Mongolia and 487 409 (that is 98.4 per cent) of those entitled to vote went to the polls and not a single vote was cast against independence. On 5 January 1946, China officially recognised the independence of the Mongolian People's Republic. Thereafter, the northern chunk of the mulberry leave shaped map of China was gone.

In 1967, Great Britain held a referendum in Gibraltar and the result was 44 voted for union with Spain and 121 138 voted for union with Great Britain.

A more recent referendum held in Great Britain was for the entry into the European Economic Community.

In the above cases, *the question asked was simple, just approval or rejection*. They are easily understood, taking the disparity of education standards of the people in these countries.

Although referendum is not a dirty word, it is resisted in the strongest terms by both Great Britain and China. This brings about another tiger. Asking for a referendum at this time is '與虎謀皮', that is, negotiating with a tiger for its skin, and one can easily forecast the realistic results.

We are asked to note this Survey Office report and I note the following:

- (1) It is noted that by commissioning this survey, the Hong Kong Government has fulfilled a promise made in 1985.
- (2) It is noted that in computer jargon, 'GIGO', means 'garbage in garbage out'. Our survey contained too many difficult-to-understand and loaded questions which 40-45 per cent of participants did not understand. No matter how diligently, conscientiously and meticulously the Survey Office staff and the monitors compiled their reports, the result would be the same.
- (3) It is noted that some 230 000 signatures with identity card numbers voluntarily signed in a signature campaign have been excluded.
- (4) It is also noted that some 70 000 stereotyped letters were included which came from organisations which held the signatories jobs thus distorting the set percentage in the statistics of supporters for 1988 direct election or otherwise.
- (5) It is also noted that such distortion would render this survey report NOT WORTH the PAPER it is written on, as the public would consider their opinion raped.

If this buffer between the border of China and Hong Kong is not established by direct election so that Hong Kong people shall administer Hong Kong (港人治港) it would not help the confidence of the people of Hong Kong and those who are yet indecisive will have to make up their mind and vote with their feet. Then Hong Kong will gradually degenerate into another Shanghai.

With these observations, Sir, and even though I am an Appointed Member, I still support direct election in 1988 and will not change my stand in my previous speech on 15 July 1987 on this subject.

MR. CHEONG: Sir, since the publication of the Survey Office report, attempts have been made to wage a campaign with intent to discredit the integrity of the Government. It has been repeatedly alleged in organised fora as well as through

the articles published in the media that the Government, through the Survey Office and in collusion with the market research firm, had purposely misled the community on the issue of support for direct elections to this Chamber in 1988.

In my view these actions are prejudicial to the public interest. While our citizens do enjoy all the freedoms of Western democracies and are open-minded enough to welcome different views on issues, there is no evidence to suggest that there is widespread dissatisfaction of what the Hong Kong Government has achieved for the community throughout the years. For anyone or any pressure group in Hong Kong to act like the western-style opposition party in discrediting the integrity of the Government through unsubstantiated allegations—such as accusing Your Excellency of inviting intervention from Beijing—tend to indicate that not enough consideration has been given to the realities of Hong Kong. In Western democracies, opposition parties aim to bring down the party in power by discrediting the Government and their policies with a view to getting themselves into power instead. As we are never going to be an independent country, can this scenario ever come true in Hong Kong? If the integrity of our Government were so seriously called into question by tactics which tend to sow the seeds of mistrust in the minds of the Hong Kong people, what would happen? The Government would not fall, but it would cease to function effectively because it would no longer be trusted. Is this what pressure groups want to achieve in Hong Kong—unstable and ineffective Government? Would this really serve the interests of the people of Hong Kong?

If the reality of Hong Kong is such that there can be no ready alternative to the Government as it is presently constituted, it would seem reasonable for all of us to consider accepting a role in performing public duties somewhat different from that of our counterparts in the Western democracies. When all is said and done Hong Kong is different. In order to survive as an autonomous polity we have to achieve and maintain the twin goals of stability and prosperity. Many problems lie ahead of us. We have to address them and resolve them by working together with a sense of dedication and pragmatism, and above all in a spirit of compromise rather than of confrontation and mistrust. Western style adversarial politics are not conducive to the Hong Kong tradition of solving problems. They tend merely to create the impression of lasting instability.

Sir, what I have just said might be regarded by some as not having any direct bearing on the Survey Office report. Nevertheless, I feel that the underlying attitudes of our aspiring future politicians are of crucial importance. It should be brought up, considered, and debated for this is the real crux of Hong Kong's likely future, success or failure, in developing a more representative government. In so far as the findings of the survey report are concerned, I would just like to make three observations.

First, despite strong vocal objections by a few over the design of the questionnaires on the issue of introduction of direct elections in 1988 to this Council, there were very few criticisms over the design of the questionnaires on

other related and equally important issues raised in the Green Paper. The findings of the survey report indicate a general trend that the people of Hong Kong do not want drastic changes to be introduced immediately. This trend is apparent in their answers to questions which solicited their views on possible changes to be introduced in 1988 to our district boards, our municipal councils, the Presidency of this Council and on the lowering of the voting age. We must take account of their views in its total context and should not look in isolation at one particular element in question.

Secondly, I would like to draw attention to the fact that the work of the Survey Office had been monitored by two independent monitors. The reports of the independent monitors must be objectively taken into consideration before anyone condemns the Survey Office report outright. On my part, Sir, I have every confidence in their integrity. Many of us have had the pleasure of working with both of them. I have found Mr. Andrew So to be a man of principle and rectitude, a man who has never withheld constructive criticism of the Government if he perceived this to be in the interest of the underprivileged. His work both inside and outside this Council is well respected. In the case of Mr. F.K. LI, I am sure critics would tend to discount somewhat his contribution simply because of the fact that he is a retired member of the Civil Service. Nevertheless those who can look at issues objectively and those who have worked with Mr. LI would know what kind of a man he is. Like Mr. SO, he is equally a man of principle and unquestionable integrity. When these two gentlemen were appointed as independent monitors, practically no one questioned their suitability for the job. It is therefore only right that we give due weight to the quality of their work in overseeing the whole public opinion gathering exercise.

Thirdly, it is crystal clear from the findings of the survey report that, in principle, there is strong support for an element of direct elections to be introduced to this Council. The only difference splitting the community is over the question of timing. May I take this opportunity to urge all of us to take note of this fact, cool our heads, and examine seriously the question of whether or not it is in the best interest of Hong Kong to continue squabbling openly for just a few years' difference in its introduction. I submit that it is no longer constructive to continue to foster disruption to the generally harmonious atmosphere prevailing in our community. Indeed, now is the time for all of us to start working closer together with a view to securing from Government an assurance that there will be a directly-elected element introduced to this Council in the year of either 1991 or 1992. Towards this end, Sir, I hereby pledge my full support.

Finally, Sir, I would like to offer to all those who worked in the Survey Office, in particular the commissioner, my appreciation for a thankless task conscientiously done. Their workload had been extremely heavy and demanding. Established only last May, the bulk of their work had to be dealt with in a

period of a little over seven weeks, from the second week in September to the end of October. It is indeed no mean task to plan, to organise, to cope with so much and to produce such a detailed report within such a short time frame.

Sir, I support the motion.

MR. CHEUNG (in Cantonese): Sir, the much awaited Survey Office report is finally published but it faces severe criticism almost immediately from some sectors who challenge the report's neutrality. Some even take it to be the Government's strategy of manipulating public opinion. If we allow this distrust for the Government to develop we would surely affect Hong Kong's stability and prosperity adversely. I urge the Government to handle this matter cautiously and equitably. I also appeal to those who criticise the report to keep cool and do not get personal. To fight for people's participation and political review is certainly a worthy thing to do but to generate distrust for the Government at the same time is not something to Hong Kong's benefit.

An unsurpassed Survey Office report should first and foremost be objective in attitude, scientific in procedures, exhaustive in public opinion collection. It should also rule out any attempt to filter out unwanted elements and to hide. In this respect the Survey Office is independent, its work specialised. And in collecting public opinion, the Survey Office commissioned a professional survey company to conduct two scientific opinion surveys with professional methodology. I think this is a proper way of doing this and the neutrality of the Survey Office should be affirmed. If we study carefully the survey methodology in the AGB McNair report which includes sampling survey, field work, monitoring and verification of interviews and so on, we can see that it tries its best to be careful and cautious. The use of show cards to explain the structure of our political system to respondents serves to increase respondents' knowledge before they give their opinions. This shows the cautious attitude all the more.

The Survey Office report separated public opinion into three categories. Part I is a collection of records of debates of all boards and councils as well as submissions from groups, associations, individuals, and groups of individuals. Part II embodies the findings of AGB McNair's two opinion surveys, surveys conducted by community organisations and charts. Part III is to give signature campaigns and similar documents special treatment. Some people have criticised that it is not proper to put the signature campaign with over 200 000 signatures in support for direct election in 1988 in Part III and say it is one of Government's ways to blur public opinion. I do not subscribe to this view. I think that though this may not be the best way, overall speaking, it is acceptable. The reason is the preprinted submissions included in Part I by the Survey Office embody the three options of 'support for', 'in objection to', and 'no views'. So they constitute questionnaires with options. They serve to reflect public opinion expressed through options. On the contrary, looking at signature campaign submissions, people put down their signatures just because they

support direct election in 1988. They do not have a choice for other options like 'in objection to', or 'no views'. Therefore, it is impossible to estimate how many people might have put down their names to object to direct election to be implemented in 1988, and there is no possibility to get the number of the silent majority who have no views. This kind of simplistic submissions is different from a questionnaire with options in format. Therefore it is not unreasonable to deal with them separately. However, among the preprinted submissions there are some which just indicate support or otherwise for direct election in 1988. I think these are just the same as signature campaigns and should be put back to Part III, together with the signature campaigns in support for direct election in 1988. To gauge public opinion by analysing the quality of the submissions is more meaningful than to compare the quantity.

As to the content of the report, according to Part I there is generally a high degree of awareness for different councils and boards. All matriculants of 18 to 24 years old know there are district boards. From the point of view of civic education and people's awareness of district administration, this is something to congratulate ourselves on. What I find particularly comforting is that people's awareness of the Regional Council which was formed only in April 1986 is as high as 81 per cent. With such a background of high awareness, most people thought that it was not necessary to change the composition and operational arrangement of the Regional Council when they expressed their opinions about the Urban Council and Regional Council. In Part I, opinions in support of gradual changes come mainly from district boards. This is understandable as district boards are lobbying for a larger degree of devolution of power. In Part II, results of the AGB McNair survey also confirm the preservation of two municipal councils. This agrees with other people's opinion that there is no need for improvement. In short, the report tells us that the present three-tier system has the support of the majority of Hong Kong people; that there is no need for change. I welcome these views wholeheartedly.

Lastly, I must reiterate that all along I am in support of some element of direct election to the Legislative Council in 1988. The result of the opinion surveys is really disappointing but I still think that the Survey Office's way of segregating submissions into three parts is acceptable. But no matter how neutral the Survey Office tries to be in handling public opinion and how fair it is in handling the information collected, there is a major defect in the management, guidance, and approval of the design of the questionnaire.

The failure of the AGB McNair questionnaire may be because it has attempted to test more than one variant in one question so that no one variant has been dealt with properly. This does not only arouse general dissatisfaction among the public, it also makes one feel that one cannot get much out of the report because there is no basis for a meaningful analysis of public opinion. What I cannot understand is why the questions in the questionnaire, especially the one about direct election in 1988, cannot have been phrased in simple and

straightforward language to find out how many people support direct election and how many do not. Apparently if Legislative Councillors had been given the opportunity to participate and give advice when the questionnaire was drafted, a lot of contentions about the survey findings could have been avoided.

In any case, I do not think this defect in the questionnaire would affect the reliability of the survey. Although I advocate direct election in 1988, I would go by the majority view. I do not think the Government is not brave enough to face statistical figures, nor do I think the percentage figures is the only crucial factor in the process of Government making its decisions. The Survey Office report is a first attempt to gauge public opinion on a large scale. It will be the first of its kind in forming the basis for policy decisions and its effectiveness will indirectly affect Government's credibility.

Sir, in the policy address, you said in reaching these decisions, the Government are committed to taking full account of all the views recorded in the Survey Office report. Although the findings of the Survey Office report show that advocates for direct election in 1988 only constitute a minority, this does not mean that we should not introduce some element of direct election to the Legislative Council after 1988. I would like to quote from your policy address the words 'full' and 'all' to urge the Government to abide by its tradition of respecting public opinion and with courage and wisdom, make decisions that we would not regret.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

MRS. CHOW: Sir, when we read the Survey Office report, it is important to recognise the following:

- (1) It fulfils its function of presenting in as much detail as possible the response of the Hong Kong public to the Green Paper.
- (2) It sets out clearly and factually different groups of views submitted by the public according to their various sources and orientations.
- (3) It attempts no assessment and draws no conclusions from the views it presents, leaving the readers maximum freedom to do both.

As expected, the controversy on direct elections which has haunted our community since the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration persists. It would be quite fruitless to split hairs over a few figures, or to judge the entire report on the basis of a table or two.

The temptation to be bogged down by a few extracted figures is great indeed but must be resisted. Much has been made of the 100 000 preprinted submissions and the 230 000 signatures. With the greatest respect to their signatories, and whatever their persuasion, they are after all organised views, which should not be assigned the weighting of representative samples of the entire population. To argue for or against either sympathy on the assumption that they are

representative is at best off the mark, and at worst misleading. There are quite enough data in the entire report for certain observations to be drawn which would no doubt help us to assess what the community really wants.

Speaking for myself, the voluminous information given in the report points to a few significant messages:

- (1) A large proportion of our community have neither the interest nor the knowledge in our present and future state of government. From the various surveys, it is safe to assume that this segment of our community accounts for about one third to 40 per cent of our population. I was particularly intrigued to see that in the series of surveys conducted by SRH over 30 per cent of the respondents thought we already had direct election in the Legislative Council.
- (2) There is a sense of uncertainty as to what effect changes will have on our immediate and long-term future, although it seems to be generally recognised that Hong Kong can withstand changes without sacrificing our stability to an unacceptable degree, and that some changes are considered both necessary and welcome.
- (3) There is no doubt that an overwhelming majority endorses the concept of direct elections. The bone of contention is the timing of its introduction. Here the overwhelming majority disappears, and the community seems fairly split over the ideal point. I would once again like to turn to the SRH surveys, not because I dispute the AGB findings, but because I would like to steer clear of the controversy that surrounds the AGB surveys so that my arguments will not be challenged on the grounds that the AGB surveys are flawed, which has been alleged by staunch supporters of direct elections both inside and outside this Council. Of the surveys other than AGB that involved a probability sample and were therefore more scientifically reliable as representative of the whole community, the SRH surveys impressed me as the most balanced, easy to comprehend and the most telling without running the risk of over simplification. This series of four surveys commenced in early July and were concluded in early September. Findings reflect a downward trend in the support for direct elections from about 54 per cent to 42 per cent in the two months. At the same time the percentage calling for no change increased from 27 per cent to 34 per cent, while those who opted for a little change dropped from 30 per cent to 23 per cent. Those who had no opinion or were unsure remained around at 40 per cent.

During the debate on the Green Paper, I made it quite clear that in spite of all my misgivings about direct elections, I would be quite prepared to go along with the majority view if there is clear support for it. Today our people have spoken. While endorsing direct elections as a desirable change sometime in the future, the majority is either not willing or not ready to insist on direct elections in 1988. They prefer to wait. I would go along.

However since the community has committed itself to direct elections in the long term, I must reiterate my belief that the sooner we start off, the more gradual will be the process. We must avoid any trauma in bringing about change. We cannot afford to waste valuable time in procrastination. We must use the limited time to Hong Kong's advantage by learning the ropes of how we can build a more representative government skilfully and responsively.

DR. IP: Sir, having been involved in medical research for the last 13 years, the results of some of which have culminated in established medical practice like immunising all newborns with Hepatitis B Vaccine, I feel I am in a position to make some comments on the acceptability of the Survey Office report.

Firstly I would like to declare that I respect the Survey Office report, how it was done, and how the results were obtained; I respect it not because the conclusions reached coincide with mine. On the contrary, I do not agree with many of the views collected; for example, I am convinced that the term of office of the Legislative Council should be four years.

I accept the Survey Office report because, looking at it from a wider perspective, it took the longest time, it is the largest, best publicised, most extensive, relatively less biased, and relatively more scientific among all surveys done to obtain views on political reform. No research methods are without flaws.

On the other hand, it is well recognised by those in the field of research that results based on small numbers vary widely even if such researches are well planned and executed. It is also accepted that uncontrolled trials, such as signature campaigns offering only one option, have the least to offer in research. I would say also, that I have little regard for those preprinted submissions giving only one choice.

If it is true, and I do not believe it is, that Government has in some ways manipulated the results, it could have done it simply by just inventing the figures. If one follows closely the many tables, one begins to see a trend that more often than not, the most popular choices or closely similar ones remain the same irrespective of which category of submissions they belong. The only deviation from this trend is where conflict of interest comes into play, for example the municipal councils and district boards expressing views on issues related to them. We must take note that such a trend does bring out a highly valued consistency in a research project!

I know of some medical research workers whose concept of perfection lies only with their own methods. In others, criticism of any methods abounds but ability to produce their own is often lacking. Worse still are those research workers who decide on the results and even edit papers based on such even before starting a research project. If the results happen not to coincide with their own expectations, the research would be repeated again and again until it does. In the short term, their results do hit medical headlines, and those who follow their advice in treating patients do so to the latter's detriment.

If we do not accept the result of the Survey Office report, we are not giving due respect to those who had faithfully submitted their views and those whom we purport to represent.

My last comment, Sir, is that although we have had more than 130 000 submissions, we must not ignore the silent majority. I am inclined to believe that the silent majority is silent because it continues to have faith in the present Government, in its administration and in its proposal of changes whether political or otherwise in ensuring the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. Under such a context, I therefore urge Government to take note of the Survey Office report and introduce changes according to the wishes of the people of Hong Kong at the appropriate time.

With these words, I support the motion before Council.

MR. CHAN YING-LUN (in Cantonese): Sir, I fully agree with the assessment made by the two monitors of the Survey Office that throughout the course of collecting public opinions the Survey Office has observed the rules of the game, and completed its report on time within the terms of reference prescribed by the Executive Council. The two public opinion surveys undertaken by the independent research firm commissioned by the Survey Office were the largest of their kind. Their scope and methodology, which involve clarifying specific points before questions are put to the respondents, have made the surveys representative. What has distracted from their credibility, however, is the design of the questionnaire used. This has proved a great disappointment.

On the composition of the Legislative Council for instance, as many as 40 per cent and 45 per cent respectively of respondents gave no opinion or did not understand the options or were not clear about the concept. Such a high proportion inevitably causes doubt. Were these respondents really in the dark, or were the questions too complicated and involved for them? Many of the respondents, especially elderly and the lesseducated housewives, could well have been completely baffled by what seems like either mist or flower (to paraphrase a popular poem), and make perfunctory responses without having given much thought to the matter.

Sir, the problems in the design of questionnaires I believe has been caused by the over-reliance of the Survey Office on AGB McNair Ltd. and the rigid and inflexible adherents to the rules of the game on the part of the company. The company might have feared of getting into trouble when challenged—what could have been a protective talisman has effectively become a tasteless piece of chicken rib too insipid for the palate but too much of a pity to chuck away.

Sir, on the matter of direct elections in 1988, some have accused the Government of playing around with figures; so I wish to play around with a few figures of my own to show that such criticisms are not firmly based.

As far as I can see, it is indicated in the Survey Office report that among groups and associations, among the various councils, including the Legislative Council, the ratio of members for and against introducing direct elections in 1988 is six to four. Groups and associations, four to six, individuals and groups of individuals, minus the 70 000 preprinted submissions, six to four. These are fairly much in line with the results of the three other market research firms.

But, taking the preprinted and identical letters or submissions, the ratio is 0.2 : 9.8, whereas the signature campaigns showed the exact opposite—9.9 : 0.1. Sir, if anyone wants to play around with public opinion, it would be exceedingly foolish to do so, especially in the case of the Governor in Council—this would be foolishness, if that were done.

Sir, I hope that when the Executive Council advises you, Sir, due weight will be attached to the views expressed by the councils, groups and associations and the individuals and groups of individuals especially the Legislative Council and other councils, because they have given detailed analysis of the options. It is hoped that due consideration will be given to their views. I also urge that the Government would publish submissions for which no request for confidentiality has been made.

Sir, the game of public opinion survey has come to an end finally, and as far as I see, apart from the matter of direct elections, most people are in favour of very little change, if any, in the next year. After all, most people still hold the attitude that so long as the present lifestyle goes on unchanged it does not matter who is emperor. I am sure, Sir, that when the Executive Council advises you, the Survey Office report will be duly considered, but I must point out that the majority must be respected and if the majority is not in favour of changes next year, I have no reason to object to Government respecting the majority view. On the matter of direct elections, the bone of contention is only on the term of implementation, in fact, if the Government rules out direct elections in 1988 it should still consider seriously introducing direct elections in 1989 and 1990. And by introducing staggered terms of reference, those that are elected indirectly to the Legislative Council in 1988 may stand for re-election directly in 1989 and 1990.

There are some people who feel that we ought to wait until the promulgation of the Basic Law, but on the matter of direct elections we cannot drag our feet any longer—the Government must have a firm plan. In the debate on the 'Lobo motion' in 1984, I pointed out that Hong Kong needed a government by election and it has been clearly stated in the Sino-British Joint Declaration that the legislature must be constituted by elections and elections cannot exclude direct elections. I feel very strongly about this point—unless we introduce one-man-one-vote direct elections as soon as possible, the voting rights of the people will not be safeguarded and we might even revert to colonial self-government.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

Appendix: Analysis made according to the information contained in paragraphs 13.26-13.43 of the Survey Office report

	<i>Support for direct election in 1988</i>	<i>Objection to direct election in 1988</i>	<i>Rates (approximate No. after decimal point)</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	
Legislative Council	18	18	5:5	Total ratio 5.8:4.2	
Urban Council	13	5	7.2:2.8		
Regional Council	6	4	6:4		
District boards	121	123	4.9:5.1		
No. of submissions from groups and associations	229	352	3.9:6.1		
Total no. of submissions from individuals and groups of individuals	35 129	84 202	2.9:7.1	Categorisation being challenged thus further classify as follows	
No. of submissions (excluding the preprinted and identical) from individuals and groups of individuals	33 816 (35 129-1 313)	17 933 (84 202-66 269)	6.5:3.5	The no. of preprinted identical submissions is deducted from the total	
No. of submissions (preprinted and identical) from individuals and groups of individuals	1 313	66 269	0.2:9.8	The ratio only reflects the views of the preprinted and identical submissions	
Signatures collected from signature campaign	223 866	295	9.9:01		
8 random sampling surveys conducted by commercial research companies	41%-62%	16%-27%			
Survey conducted by concerned staff of Tertiary Educational Institutions for Constitutional Development	19%	33%		Organising body disagree with the classification of the Survey Office	
25 surveys covering specific population groups	16%-81%	6%-45%			
124 non-random sampling surveys covering individuals	26 529	15 401	6.3:3.7		
4 non-random sampling surveys covering groups, associations and other bodies	431	479	4.7:5.3		
AGB	1st Survey	15%	19%	4.4:5.6	
McNair HK Ltd.	2nd Survey	12%	21%	3.6:6.4	

MRS. FAN: Sir, the Survey Office has basically achieved what it set out to do. Notwithstanding various criticisms on the format and presentation of the Survey Office report, it provides a comprehensive and accurate account of all the views collected. On the timing for introducing direct elections, the conflicting results of different surveys have added a significant amount of confusion into this issue. It even prompted some people to cast doubt on the impartiality of the report, to put forward conspiracy theories, and to accuse the Survey Office of intentionally fabricating public opinion. With respect, I find these reactions too emotional. There is sufficient evidence documented in the report to speak for its impartiality. It is not the job of the Survey Office to draw conclusions, nor did it attempt to do so. Therefore the accusations of conspiracy and fabrication are uncalled for and misplaced.

The report contains a considerable amount of useful and meaningful information, and these should be taken as a whole. Concern for conflicting views on one issue should not be allowed to overshadow the clear indication of public opinion on a number of other equally significant and important issues. The data collected in the report shows that a clear majority among those who expressed views would like a directly-elected element in this Council, the Governor to preside over this Council, the voting age to remain at 21, and the composition of the present legislature to change in a gradual manner.

Before the consultation exercise on the Green Paper began, I for one was not sure of the public's preference on these issues. Now, the preferences are clearly confirmed by the report. If direct elections are to be introduced to this Council, it should be done earlier rather than later. Out of eight surveys conducted by market research firms and commissioned by the Survey Office, district boards and newspapers, five recorded a significantly higher return for 'direct elections in 1988' and three recorded a marginally higher return for 'direct elections after 1988'. The support for direct elections in 1988 is contained in the report for all to see. I suppose I should have been pleased when I discovered this in the bundle of materials from the Survey Office. But when I turned over the pages, two things also came to my attention. Firstly, there is a significant proportion of views which favoured 'no change', be it the role and composition of district board, the structure of the Urban Council and Regional Council, the composition of the legislature, the sequence of elections, or Councillors' terms of office. This seems to illustrate that many people are reasonably happy with the existing structure and are not looking for change. Secondly, various survey results reveal that a substantial number of people have declined to express their views because they either 'have no opinion', 'don't know', or 'don't understand the concept or the option'. This occurs not only on the issue of direct elections in 1988, but on other issues as well. Taking these three things together, it could mean that while many would like to see direct elections introduced in 1988, respondents to the surveys are not strongly motivated to the extent that they must have direct elections in 1988. I believe what people wanted from the Hong Kong Government is a firm commitment in the White Paper that direct elections will be

introduced in 1991, with a clear-cut plan on the implementational details such as the number of seats, the constituencies and the nomination process. Personally, I still go for direct elections in 1988, but I do not think a few years' delay will be unacceptable to the community. However, if the Government fails to make this firm commitment, then there is every likelihood that the credibility of this Administration may be subjected to question and this time for good reason.

If the introduction of direct elections is postponed until 1991, then full preparation should be made in the next few years. The survey results illustrate the confusion in many people's mind about our political system. They also reveal the extent of apathy towards constitutional development. If we are to have a meaningful election, it is 'inertia' and 'ignorance' that we must battle against and prevail over. The role of civic education cannot be overstated. All government departments should join hands in stimulating people's interest towards public affairs and the political system with more vigour and purpose. The Committee on Promotion of Civic Education should further strengthen its links with district boards and voluntary organisations to develop through active participation a stronger sense of belonging among our citizens. On the other hand, more support in terms of information, expert advice and financial resources should be offered to organisers of civic education activities through the committee.

The virtue of fair-mindedness, objective analysis and independent thinking should be promoted, so that we can be better equipped to distinguish propaganda tactics from valid reasons, empty promises from actual performance, and insinuations from facts. But most important of all, we have to learn to respect other people's views although it might be totally opposite to our own. It is meaningless to shout at the top of our voice for preservation of freedom of speech if we use that freedom indiscriminately to insult other people without giving them the benefit of doubt. I want to see direct elections conducted with dignity where reasons prevail rather than to have an emotional shouting match. I am confident that this can be achieved if people develop appropriate attitudes and discerning power through effective civic education, which should be actively promoted and persistently implemented in the years ahead.

MR. YEUNG (in Cantonese): Sir, in any healthy democratic society, debate is a normal part of life. However, arguments are dragged on indefinitely will not do Hong Kong any good. The question of direct election has become the focal point of dispute in Hong Kong's political reforms. However, we must consider the interests of Hong Kong as a whole and work to maintain Hong Kong's stability and prosperity—we must be cool and objective and conduct a full analysis of the Survey Office report.

The report has listed fully views from different sources. It indicates clearly that the majority thinks that Hong Kong's legislature should have members returned through direct elections. And the majority also thinks that direct

elections should not be introduced in 1988—it gives equal prominence to views in support of and against direct elections and also records 13 reasons. About 70 per cent of the people of Hong Kong are for direct elections, and this is a big step forward in civic awareness and is gratifying.

The contents and conclusions of the report is basically credible, because the collecting of public opinion was through:

1. surveys conducted by social organisations and research companies.
2. signatures collected by social organisations in the streets.
3. submission of views by individuals and groups to designated organisations.

Besides, the Survey Office also commissioned an independent private research company to conduct two public opinion surveys. The independent monitors responsible for overseeing the production of the Survey Office report also stated in their report that the Survey Office had collected and collated public opinions properly and impartially. Because of this, no matter what channels were chosen in the expression of views, such views should be taken into consideration by the Government. As to whether questionnaires designed are technically subjective and to the point, opinions differ. We should not jump to conclusions or speculate on ulterior motives.

Sir, we must understand one point—the Survey Office was only responsible for the collecting of opinions and was not responsible for their assessment. It collected opinions from all sources and incorporated all into the report so that the Administration and Executive Council can assess public views and have them for reference in considering political changes. The Administration and Executive Council will have to take into consideration views expressed by different sectors Hong Kong's existing situation, its history and its future developments before they can work out a political system suitable for Hong Kong and in the public interest. In other words, the Administration and the Executive Council in assessing this report will have to consider the conclusions drawn by AGB McNair, which was commissioned to conduct public opinion surveys. However, it will also have to pay due attention to public response and reports produced by other research companies which have conducted independent public opinion surveys. The study would therefore be serious and in depth and the decisions impartial and objective.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

MR. CHAM: Sir, the findings of the Survey Office must be looked at in the context of the evolution of our government structure. In this respect, I would like to comment on our three-tier system.

Few will discount the role of district boards. Views expressed by the district boards are overwhelmingly in favour of expansion. In my opinion, the practical solution is that boards should take decisions, and the district management

committee should implement them. The chairman of the district board should initially be a member of the district management committee, where later on, he should take over as chairman of the district management committee. This would ensure better monitoring and implementation of the decisions taken by the district boards.

On the composition of the district boards, it is worth noting that while expressed views were in favour of change, the two surveys commissioned by the Survey Office indicate that well over 30 per cent of the respondents are not in favour of changing the present proportion of appointed and elected members, and well over 44 per cent of the respondents choose the option that Urban Councillors should not withdraw from the district boards. While expressed views may indicate a wish for change, there is strong evidence from the public opinion surveys that no change is preferred.

For the Urban Council, the two public opinion surveys reveal that well over 35 per cent of the respondents are not in favour of any increase in the size of the Urban Council. On the committee structure of the Urban Council, there appears to be general consensus that there should be no change. Coupled with views expressed about the Regional Council and the Urban Council, it is apparent that there is no demand for the amalgamation of the two councils. In short, the indication must be that we should not change for the sake of change.

On the composition of the Legislative Council, there are clear indications that the seats of the functional constituencies should be increased. I remain convinced that an additional seat for accountancy and one for financial markets should be introduced. Furthermore, sectors which contribute to the Hong Kong society should also be included as functional constituencies.

For the Legislative Council, a staggered three-year term seems to be favoured by the public in the two surveys. To me, findings of the opinion surveys commissioned by the Survey Office on direct elections have provided a compass bearing. While 20 per cent of the respondents conclude that in principle, some element of direct elections is desirable, although not in 1988, only 2 per cent of the respondents conclude that direct elections to the Legislative Council are not desirable. Based on these findings, even though change is not opted for in 1988 the way to move ahead is to lay down specific plans for future implementation.

On the entitlement to vote, most respondents are in favour of maintaining the voting age of 21. Together with the voting age, considerations should be given to compulsory voting so that we will not be constrained by public apathy but rather ensure total community involvement in our future election process.

Sir, I support the motion.

MR. JACKIE CHAN (in Cantonese): Sir, allow me, here, to present my compliments to all those who have signed in support of introduction of direct elections in 1988, and who have not been given a fair deal by the Survey

Office—to them I wish to utter heartfelt words of consolation. Even though the 230 000 signatures have not been classified by the Survey Office as individual submissions, they can still be found in some obscure corners of the report. This shows that though the Survey Office had the courage to exclude you from the appropriate categories, it did not have the courage to drown your aspirations for direct elections in 1988. Ignore those figures which are queried by many and you will be able to see that the number of people against direct elections are far smaller than the lot of you and other groups that are for direct elections. Indeed, that you are dissatisfied with the arrangement of the Survey Office report is understandable. The unfair way in which you have been treated has led to resentment among members of the public and has attracted the attention of professionals and academics. They are honest, objective and unreserved in their attitude and they have severely criticised the way the Survey Office has processed the submissions and the complicated questionnaire designed by AGB McNair. I deeply admire these people for their fair comments: they are Deputy Chairman of the Hong Kong Statistical Society, Miss SHUM Shu-ming; lecturer in statistics studies in Hong Kong University, Dr. NG Kai-wang; lecturer in applied mathematics in the Hong Kong Polytechnic, Dr. FUNG Wing-kam; Head of Information Centre, Baptist College, Dr. Eddy HO; and lecturer at Lingnan College, Mr. KWOK Hong-kin. With their rich professional knowledge and thorough understanding they are the people best suited to comment on the inadequacies of the report. So why should you be low-spirited and take things so much to heart?—Besides, I am fully convinced that our Executive Councillors will not close their eyes when examining the report. Recently the Executive Council is among those who publicly said that no conclusions had been drawn in the Survey Office report and the Executive Council would be open-minded and would consider professional views in their consideration of the report. It is a pity that we now have an emergency and the remedy has yet to come. We have not got our Commissioner for Administrative Complaints yet, otherwise I would have taken your case to him. If what I have said so far has failed to alleviate your resentment towards the report, all that I can do is to take the opportunity of today's debate at the Legislative Council to ask the Administration to look at the unusual findings of the survey report, and I would like to make the following two suggestions:

1. A committee should be set up as soon as possible to assess the contents of the report. The chairman should be a judge appointed by the Governor—other members should include a representative from the Hong Kong Statistical Society, and lecturers from either universities or tertiary institutes and some senior executives of market research companies.
2. Should the first suggestion prove not feasible, then when the Governor in Council examine the report they should include the 230 000 signatures into the categories and at the same time the questionnaire by AGB McNair should be disregarded.

Very often we cannot satisfy both parties—pleasing one, we are bound to offend the other. You need to understand that perhaps the Survey Office has its own difficulties which are awkward to explain. In fact the number of signatures is so huge that, including the signature into any of the categories will be very conspicuous. In order to meet requirement in classification, the Survey Office has no choice but to put you aside. In this public opinion game, you have given due importance to sportsmanship, and have not resorted to foul play in order to win—this is commendable. The public can see for their themselves, and you have won the match, and have won for yourselves the honour of best sportsmanship.

Sir, I have said a lot to the 230 000 people and here I would like to seek one clarification from the Government. Are signature campaigns a correct channel to express public opinions? All along, the people of Hong Kong have been used to this method to show their likes and dislikes—their reasonable aspirations are usually respected and taken into consideration. This way of expressing public opinions have all along been recognised and accepted. In the past, even government officials in private also ask people to sign in support of certain policies. Take the example of the 1967 incident. Government officials unofficially asked members of the public and organisations to sign in support of the Government's strong policy against rioters. This is a fact. At that time on the front page of many newspapers were notices with signatures of members of the public and organisations. It is with such support from the people that the Government was able to suppress the riot and survive the crisis. To take a more recent example, in 1984 we had the Sino-British Joint Declaration. The Government set up the Assessment Office to collect public opinions on the agreement. During that period local organisations and districts held hundreds of seminars—the objective was to listen to public views and at the same time to see how far the agreement would be supported. I remember that when someone arrived at the venue, the first thing that he had to do was to sign his name in the register. What was the purpose of that?—It was because the number of participants had to be counted. When the chairman raised the question as to whether participants were satisfied with the agreement or were willing to accept it he asked for a show of hands, so that the number could be counted and checked. Again, what was the purpose of that?—It was to find out the number of people who supported the agreement and the extent the agreement was accepted. The above two examples show that the Government does welcome joint action from the people. Another point that is worth mentioning is that the Assessment Office was extremely conscientious and reflected public views impartially. Their outstanding performance is still talked about by the people. However, the way the Survey Office processed public opinion showed a great difference. I wonder if it is because the Government is not sincere enough or that there are preconceived ideas?

I am totally convinced that when a person signs his name to express a wish he is fully aware of the purpose of his signature and he will not rationally sign his

name in support of or against a certain issue. At the beginning of this year there was a period when a long queue appeared outside of Government House. People queued up, braving the sun and the rain in order to go into Government House and they leave their job and they want to sign their names. They knew that they had lost a Governor who was loved, respected, able and courageous—there was a reason for going to Government House and signing their names in the book of condolence. They wished to express their respect for Sir Edward YOUDE.

Sir, I have dwelled on the significance of signatures and its genuine nature and I have also given many examples of signature campaigns which have always been recognised as useful to our society. This time the Survey Office in processing submissions with joint signatures has been unfair and it is a very serious mistake. It has left a very big black mark in our development in representative government.

Sir, I think that admitting mistakes in no way undermines the credibility of the Government. If in dealing with public opinions the Government insists on burying its head in the sand, trying to justify itself by fallacious arguments, it is extremely stupid. I hope that the Government will deal with the problems confronting us with sincerity and good will.

Sir, I beg to move.

MR. CHENG: Sir, I shall be brief and will concentrate on the main issue—by which I mean the opinions of the people who responded to this survey on representative government. The majority are in favour of direct elections, but feel that 1988 is too soon. This considered opinion—and others expressed in the survey—must be respected. It is not our business to question the results of this exercise, though some of the queries raised by a sector of the public about the methods used to obtain the views of the people need to be further clarified.

Nevertheless, I would like to congratulate the Survey Office on its task of collecting and collating the hundreds of thousands of opinions, which could not have been easy. And I specially want to express my appreciation of the role played by the two independent monitors—both former Members of this Council—who diligently carried out the job of overseeing the work of the Survey Office.

All the findings are now here before us and, in my opinion, it is our bounden duty to concentrate on assessing the people's response and to respect their views—particularly the views of the majority. In your policy speech last month, Sir, you spoke of important decisions which we would need to take over the next three or four months in terms of what changes it would be right to make in representative government in 1988. You also said that the Government was committed to taking full account of all the views recorded in the Survey Office report, while at the same time giving regard to other relevant factors.

This is no more—and no less—than what the people expect. It also seems clear to me, Sir, that they are in agreement with your own view that the development of representative government should continue to be evolutionary and not revolutionary. And the response to the survey demonstrates the people's faith in the Government and in the process of public consultation—otherwise they would not have bothered to take part in the survey.

As regards the pace of development in representative government, my own view happens to coincide with that of the majority. In the Green Paper debate last July, I maintained that more time would normally be given to the testing of representative government structures which had been set up through major innovations as recently as 1985. The same still applies. I also expressed the view that any major change in 1988 would run counter to the spirit of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and would be pre-emptive of the on-going process of drafting the Basic Law. We do not diminish ourselves by honouring the spirit as well as the letter of our agreements. Instead we demonstrate our integrity—and it is this integrity which makes viable our system of public consultation.

In my constituency of engineering and allied professions, the four professional bodies sought their members' views on the Green Paper and made separate submissions to the Survey Office. The general consensus was in favour of direct elections, but opinion was very closely divided on whether these should be in 1988 or later.

It was also considered that another seat in this Council was needed to represent the constituency. This view assumed new proportions when I saw in the Survey Office report that nearly a dozen more professional bodies or organisations relating to the construction industry were seeking either inclusion in an existing constituency—presumably mine—or recognition as new functional constituencies.

It seems logical to me that these bodies or organisations should be represented in this Council. And they will know best whether it would be appropriate for them to join with my constituents or to seek their own constituencies. I have to say, though, that if my own constituency were enlarged, expanded representation in this Chamber would be needed—particularly since existing constituents already feel that representation should be increased.

However, this is but one of numerous issues which have been raised in this survey. The Government's task now is to assess all the points of view and to work out what changes—if any—should be made in 1988. The outcome has to conform with the majority wishes of the people; it has to accord with the spirit as well as the letter of other obligations; and it has to be in the overall interests of the people of Hong Kong. Like the survey itself, it is a difficult task, and it will need all the goodwill, co-operation and wisdom which we can muster.

Sir, I support the motion.

MR. CHEONG-LEEN: Sir together with South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, Hong Kong is often referred to as one of the 'four economic tigers' in the Pacific Region. And because of our hard work and achievements, we Hongkongers accept with a measure of pride Hong Kong being labelled as an economic 'tiger'.

But in a political sense, Hong Kong can in no way be dubbed a 'political tiger', for in Chinese folklore the tiger can be a ravenous animal, easily associated with dictatorial and bad government. Obviously, this the Hong Kong Government is emphatically not! But for some of those who have been in the local political arena for a while, the question of vaster significance is the future relationship between the Hong Kong Lion and the Chinese Dragon, as may perhaps be graphically depicted in the official emblem of Hong Kong.

In Chinese mythology, both the dragon and lion are auguries of prosperity and well being for the people. Although I am no mysticist, no fortune-teller, no clairvoyant, I am optimist enough to believe that the lion and dragon emblem should augur well for the future economic prosperity and political and social stability of Hong Kong and her people—provided we have confidence in ourselves and work hard at it.

If I were to be asked, Sir, what would be the most significant different between the western-style democratic form of Government and the evolving political scene in Hong Kong, I would say that because of our historical and cultural background, our political inclinations and approaches would be more consensus-oriented rather than confrontation-oriented. Naturally, there will be exceptions to the rule time and again. I believe that the framework of the future Hong Kong SAR Government as will be enacted in the Basic Law in 1990 should be underpinned by the democratic and consensus-oriented approach among the various political personalities and political parties which would be actively participating in the Government and politics of Hong Kong.

I find it heartening that the report of the 13th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party envisages socialism with Chinese characteristics being able to co-exist and to absorb the best features of western-style capitalism for another 100 years to come. In this respect, under the terms of the Joint Declaration, and the 'one country—two systems' concept, Hong Kong with its capitalistic system will be a vital gateway and bridge between China and the outside world.

It is against this background, Sir, that I would like to express my views on several aspects of the Survey Office report which I consider to be in the best interests of the Hong Kong people as a whole.

Firstly, in regard to Chapter 9 of Part I of the report—'The Relationship of the Urban Council with Urban District Boards'—my views were put forward at the Urban Council meeting held on 10 November 1987, and I therefore lay on the table a copy of what I said to be incorporated in the proceedings of today's debate.

Secondly, in Chapter 13—the Legislative Council—on the question of direct elections, there is an array of statistics listing tens of thousands of individuals, groups and associations opting for or against direct elections being introduced in 1988.

The statistics given in the Survey Officer report are as accurate as one can reasonably expect in the carrying out of such a major exercise.

There are large numbers of individuals and groups who support direct elections to the Legislative Council in 1988.

Equally too, there are large numbers of individuals and groups who support direct elections to the Legislative Council but who say it should not be in 1988, but later.

My reading of the two McNair surveys commissioned by the Survey Office is as follows:

- (1) Because the questionnaire offered a range of six options on the question of desirable changes to the Legislative Council in 1988, it is understandable that the two McNair surveys showed only 15 and 12 per cent respectively favouring direct elections in 1988. Whether or not this part of the McNair questionnaire was clumsily worded is a subjective matter, bearing in mind the detailed questionnaire was not designed by the Survey Office or the Hong Kong Government.
- (2) In the two surveys carried out by McNair, most of these individuals I understand were housewives or elderly people. It would thus seem that there is an urgent need to promote over the next few years civic education within these two groups in the community.

Turning to three other surveys covering the entire adult population—those prepared by Survey Research Hong Kong Ltd., Marketing Decision Research Co. Ltd., and Frank Small & Associates—because of the fewer options offered and because reference to direct elections in 1988 was more specific, the support for ‘no objection to direct elections in 1988’ was much higher:

Survey Research Hong Kong Ltd.

46 per cent to 54 per cent in four surveys.

Marketing Decision Research Co. Ltd.

41 per cent to 62 per cent in three surveys.

Frank Small & Associates

43 per cent in one survey.

My reading of the McNair surveys and the surveys carried out by these three other companies is that the Hong Kong adult population is quite clearly divided as to whether direct elections to the Legislative Council should be introduced in 1988.

In regard to the 21 signature campaigns covering the question of direct elections, a large number, about 225 000 signatures, were in support of direct elections to the Legislative Council being held in 1988.

On the other hand, of the total of 125 833 submissions, sent direct to the Survey Office (120 923 were from individuals and 4 305 were from groups of individuals comprising 16 294 individuals), the larger majority—that is 94 270— were not in favour of direct elections being introduced in 1988.

My assessment therefore—and I have to recognise it somewhat reluctantly— is that there is no overwhelming majority among the population in general for direct elections to be introduced in 1988.

That being the case, we can only hope that direct elections to the Legislative Council can come about if not in 1988, then either in 1990 or 1991.

Sir, I support the motion.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: Mr. CHEONG-LEEN, I did not wish to interrupt you, but could I just point out that you cannot in fact attach a speech made elsewhere and circulate it as part of the record of today's proceedings. You can of course circulate it separately to colleagues if you wish to. If it is placed before Council as an official paper you require the authority of the President of the Council first.

MR. CHEONG-LEEN: I have noted that point, Sir.

MR. CHUNG (in Cantonese): Sir, in connection with the Survey Office report: Firstly it reflects the fact that the people of Hong Kong are nowadays much more concerned about the politics in Hong Kong than they were before. Secondly, it shows that as far as consultation on political development or reform is concerned the Government has done its utmost. Thirdly, it is hoped that actual responses to the Green Paper provide a firmer public opinion date for the future White Paper. I think that the overall significance of the report should be recognised and indeed the report is of considerable significance.

The report points out that of the more than 131 500 submissions, about 98 per cent mentioned whether there should be direct elections to the Legislative Council. Undoubtedly, at this stage of our political review or reform, the people of Hong Kong are most concerned about whether there should be direct elections to our Council in 1988.

As we all know, the report shows that on the issue of direct election in 1988, there are slightly more people against it than for it.

Sir, I am in favour of introducing a small number of directly-elected seats in the Legislative Council in 1988. The reasons are as follows: Firstly, direct consultation of Sham Shui Po residents and an exchange of views with people

from different sectors of society led me to the same conclusion. Secondly, since most Legislative Councillors agree that there should be directly-elected seats in the Council in the future, making a start in 1988 is precisely in accordance with the principle of having gradual political development, reducing the risk of future reforms carrying sudden impact. Thirdly, when the economic conditions are good, as they are now, it is the most appropriate time to bring in mild political reforms. This is especially so as this kind of reform bounded by the time schedule in the Joint Declaration, has to be introduced sooner or later.

Of course, if the Government decides to take the Survey Office report as the basis for consideration and as the guideline for coming to a final decision on direct elections I would have to accept the views of the public. Nevertheless, even if it is decided that direct election is not to be introduced in 1988, I still hope that it will be brought in as soon as possible.

The independent Survey Office commissioned a market research firm to collect public opinion. This is a supplementary survey method accepted by the Government in the hope of further improving direct consultation work. After the Survey Office report was published, however, this approach was criticised. It is indeed inevitable that different people have different views. The market research firm conducted a survey by questionnaires only after a protest.

I believe that the firm had no intentions of misleading the 6 000 odd respondents. Moreover, in connection with whether there should be direct election to the Legislative Council in 1988—an issue on which people hold strong views—the knowledge of the people of Hong Kong in this regard was such that there was little possibility of their being misled.

The officer in charge of the Survey Office said, and I quote:

‘Putting the signature campaigns and individual submissions together is unfair. Therefore, in collating public opinion the former should be dealt with under a separate category. This does not mean, however, that no importance or little importance will be attached to the outcome of signature campaigns.’

At present this approach and explanation are the subject of special concern to some people.

To me, the gap between opinions to which importance is attached and opinions classified as valid is so great that they are almost entirely different. Why is it that putting them together is not fair, but treating them separately is? The Government should explain in detail and illustrate with examples so that a readily understandable account can be given. Only then will doubts about the so-called favouritism and feelings of dissatisfaction be truly dispelled.

As to the assessing of public opinion contained in the Survey Office report I think that in principle both quality and quantity should be emphasised. Attention should be paid to the representativeness of all the submissions, their impact on our future stability and prosperity, and whether they go contrary to the Joint Declaration.

Sir, we all have in mind the best interests of Hong Kong as a whole; on this basis, the fact that some Legislative Councillors and government officials have diverse views or conflicts over major issues proves that we are all doing our utmost to find the best way to achieve the common objectives. Moreover, heated debates in the Chamber reflects the high degree of realisation of the spirit of our representative government. I hope that the more discussion there is the more clearly truth stands out and that we pull our ideas and work together in formulating a constructive White Paper on political reform.

Sir, I support the motion.

MR. HO SAI-CHU(in Cantonese): Sir, the Survey Office report has been published. Together with the appendices it is quite thick. Opinions expressed by different organisations and people of different strata have been incorporated. In just one month's time, the staff of the Survey Office compiled this masterpiece of over 130 000 submissions and opinion surveys—their zeal for work is commendable.

After its publication, its assessment immediately became the focus of public opinion. I think in judging the value of the Survey Office report we must remember one criteria, and that is, to see if it has executed its function.

The Chinese proverb says 'one is in reality what the name shows'. The report is called the report of The Survey Office on the 1987 Review of Developments in Representative Government. This lengthy appellation clearly indicates the nature and content of the report, that is, first, the opinion survey does not single out any issue—it is done in accordance with Chapter 1, Introduction and Appendix A on the terms of reference for the Survey Office. Second, the Survey Office encouraged the public to express their views through extensive publicity via many channels. I then employed professional, statistical categorisation to reflect the actual situation objectively. It did not add its own subjective judgment.

Evaluating the report on the basis of the above two points, I agree with the concluded remarks of the monitors and I quote from their report:

'the Survey Office has properly, accurately and impartially carried out its duties and followed the procedures prescribed in its terms of reference.'

Some people have criticised that it is unfair to deal with signature campaigns and individual opinions separately. I think the two are different in their degree of initiative and active participation. There are 230 000 people supporting direct election in 1988 in the signature campaign. This is an impressive figure on its own. However, when compared with Hong Kong's population of over 5 million, or with the 1.7 million MTR passenger trips daily, it is still very small. Lacking a signature campaign for those who oppose direct election in 1988, no contrast can be drawn. Therefore, separate treatment is reasonable and fair.

In a word, the task of the report is only to provide detailed and factual material. The objective has thus been achieved. The Government should take into account different opinions in the report comprehensively when making decisions. Our evaluation of the report should be objective and rational. We cannot negate the entire report just because it does not meet our request. Though we can have different comments because of different points of view, opinions with an element of slander and not based on fact is unacceptable.

Sir, I think opinion surveys should come to an end. Arguments cannot go on forever because they are not the earnest concern of our people. I believe an absolute majority have not read this report nor do they care whether there will be direct election in 1988. Too much zeal spoils the cultivation of civic awareness. The absolute majority of Hong Kong people worked for many years in the hope of salary increases and a secure life—they are not keen on hasty changes to the present political system, nor do they want a lame duck government which causes social instability because they plan to stay on in Hong Kong. Especially now, with global financial market storms, economic development may slow down. We should work to protect Hong Kong's stability and prosperity with one heart and one mind; that would truly benefit our people.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

MR. HUI (in Cantonese): Sir, after the publication of this masterpiece, the Survey Office report, which costs just a little less than \$10 million and took over four months to compile, apart from its being criticised by advocates of direct election in 1988, those who oppose the introduction of direct elections in 1988 also find the report unsatisfactory. In preparation for this debate today, I have invited fellow social workers and statisticians to a seminar where one of the speakers was a statistician who was against the introduction of direct elections in 1988. With professional knowledge and professional ethics, he criticised the findings of the opinion surveys conducted by AGB McNair. It is his opinion that the findings were too inauthentic to be reliable. Moreover, the way in which the Survey Office handled public opinion is not indisputable.

Undoubtedly, the crux of contention is the question relating to the composition of the Legislative Council in 1988 within the questionnaire designed by the AGB McNair Hong Kong Ltd., that is the question in section F, question 3. By offering four options in one question, this question has committed four gravest mistakes in questionnaire design, which I shall talk about later, and has given rise to serious deviation in the public's opinion on having direct election in 1988. It also makes one question the professional expertise and ethics of AGB McNair: First, to put too many concepts into one option at the same time is to put respondents at crossroads. For example in the fourth option, it says that change in the composition of the Legislative Council is desirable, but there are again four options to show how this can be achieved. Because to advocate direct election in 1988 does not necessarily imply advocating increasing slightly the number of official members. Second, the options present different degrees of

complexity so that respondents may well be inclined to choose simpler and more straightforward options. The first three options and the fourth represent these polarities. Not to mention simplistic answers like 'don't know', 'no opinion' or 'don't understand the options'. In fact, the Hong Kong Statistical Society also found the content of the questionnaire overwhelmingly complex and that because of the different degree of complexity among different options, respondents are prone to develop certain inclinations. Third, the four options are not mutually exclusive. In other words, respondents can choose a few non-contradictory options. For example, opponents of direct election in 1988 can choose the first three options without conflicting with their own stand, but of course, the first three options get a higher profile in this way. Fourth, the option should be simple and straightforward in order to gauge respondents' views. They should involve the same concept. However, in these four options, only the second succeeds in finding out whether direct election is desirable or not—the other three do not meet this requirement.

Since the AGB McNair questionnaire committed major errors, it automatically loses the authenticity of probability sampling. The most important thing is authenticity—this also explains why the other eight surveys using probability sampling for the whole territory showed that the people supporting and those opposing to direct election in 1988 is at a ratio of 2:1. But the AGB McNair survey showed that the majority object—this is all because in designing the relevant question AGB McNair was apparently biased against direct election in 1988.

Moreover, in the two surveys, there are 40 and 45 per cent of respondents who cited, 'don't know', 'no option', 'don't understand the options' or 'not clear about the concepts' in answer to the composition of the Legislative Council for next year. This indicates that to base the design of the questionnaire on the Green Paper which is complex and difficult to understand means sacrificing answers which should have been meaningful. After finding out how many people do not understand the Green Paper, or how many people do not answer because they are unclear about the concepts, did the designers hope to gauge public opinion directly on the most controversial and crucial issue?

Undoubtedly, the Survey Office and AGB McNair have to share the accountability of these findings. They should have discovered that the design and wording of the questionnaire needed improvement, as early as in the group discussions but they insisted on being so-called 'faithful' to the principle of Chapter 7 of the Green Paper and refrained from any technical amendments. The only thing they did was to delete two particularly difficult questions and added show cards, but obviously these measures do not help much with the authenticity of the survey findings.

Although the Survey Office and AGB McNair have explained the rationale and procedure for their decision to follow Chapter 7 in the Green Paper in the design of the questionnaire, I think they want to deceive the public by passing

the buck to and from each other—they have avoided the crux of the problem, that is, who has the authority to decide that the questionnaire should follow chapter 7 of the Green Paper and after discovering problems in the questionnaire, why did not anyone try to adopt simpler and more straightforward questions, bearing in mind the principle of complying with all the options in the Green Paper so as to minimise the non-response rate.

Sir, the loopholes, caused by human errors, in the questionnaire have led to the authenticity of the findings being questioned. However similar problems also appear when the Survey Office handled public opinions and interpreted the findings.

Though the Survey Office has all along stressed that the object of the survey would be based on Chapter 7 of the Green Paper, it is not what has been done. The most obvious example is that neither in the Green Paper nor in the AGB McNair questionnaire is there one question just on the introduction of direct election in 1988. Question F (3) indirectly touched on direct election in 1988, but the object of this question was to ask respondents' opinions on the composition of the Legislative Council in 1988. However, the report included response to this question into the chapter on direct election and compared it to questionnaire findings which dealt directly with direct election. This does not only defeat the Survey Office's purpose of basing everything on Chapter 7 of the Green Paper, it can also be said to confuse the public, so much so as to paint a picture showing the majority opposing to direct election in 1988.

Moreover, without disclosing rules of the game, the Survey Office separated the handling of the 220 000 signatures in support of direct election in 1988 and about 70 000 preprinted identical submissions—this is unfair. These submissions are indeed different in format, but they only include two to three statements to declare their stand; after they have been mass reproduced they are not really different to signature campaigns in nature. I must also point out that over 98 per cent of these submissions opposed direct election in 1988.

Sir, the report does not only prove to be disappointing, but because the AGB McNair questionnaire committed errors unimaginable to the professional mind and because the Survey Office was biased in its handling of public opinion, including questionnaire surveys, the people of Hong Kong again doubted Government's sincerity in gauging public opinion to help decide the direction and pace of political development in Hong Kong. If the Government is not forgetful, it should remember that after the setting up of the Survey Office, public opinion had it that the Government again played the public opinion card, or even the Government would make use of the findings of this survey as a pretext to refrain gracefully from introducing direct election in 1988; or else, the Chief Secretary, Mr. FORD, would not have thought it necessary to say that the Government used its credibility as gambling bets this time to alleviate the worries of the people. Looking at it now, the Government lost credibility and has to face many serious consequences after this incident.

Let us turn back a few pages in history. When the British Government realised in the Sino-British talks on Hong Kong's future in 1984 that Hong Kong would have to be reverted to Chinese sovereignty in order that Members of Parliament should accept the Joint Declaration and to maintain its reputation overseas, the British Government hastened to release the 1984 White Paper on the Further Development of Representative Government in Hong Kong before the signing of the Joint Declaration. The White Paper stated clearly the objective of different reforms; 'to develop progressively a system of Government the authority of which is firmly rooted in Hong Kong, which is able to represent authoritatively the views of the people of Hong Kong and which is more directly accountable to the people of Hong Kong.' This ties in perfectly with the British Government's statement in the Joint Declaration that after 1997, the legislature of the Hong Kong SAR shall be constituted by elections. It was the belief in these promises that led the people of Hong Kong and British Parliamentarians to accept the Joint Declaration and so the British Government had successfully secured the pretext of a glorious retreat.

The 1984 White Paper introduced the first elected Members into this Council and promised a further review of representative government this year. Its main items would include the 'appointed member' system mentioned by the late Governor Sir Edward YOUDE, and the relationship between the Executive and Legislative Councils as raised by the former Chief Secretary, Sir Philip HADDON-CAVE.

These were promises made voluntarily by the British and Hong Kong Governments to the people of Hong Kong. There were times when a lot of people in Hong Kong cherished high hopes about post-1997 Hong Kong because of these promises. They thought that Hong Kong could build up progressively a free, open and democratic society with the co-operation of the British and Chinese Governments.

Unfortunately, after the incident of the allegation somebody deviated from the Joint Declaration because of various difficulties; the British and Hong Kong Governments decided to soften their stance and bowed to immense Chinese pressure in order to stay on in Hong Kong through compromises. A more obvious example is the signature campaign with over a million signatures rallying for the shelving of the Daya Bay nuclear plant in 1986. In 1987, regarding the non-compliance incident of the Daya Bay plant, all Legislative Councillors requested that independent consultants be appointed to study the remedial measures. Has the Government, with the support of strong public opinion, fought with Beijing?

On political development, after the allegation that somebody has deviated from the Joint Declaration, we have seldom heard the Government mention its promises made in 1984 with a steady voice; they are replaced by convergencism and the Hong Kong-China relationship. This year, with actual and implied intervention from China, the Government reluctantly released the 1987 Green

Paper on the Review of Representative Government to fulfil its promises made in the 1984 White Paper. However, in the circumstances, this Green Paper only stood to fulfil the 1984 promise in terms of time—other issues like aims and objectives of representative government, the review of the relationship between the Executive and Legislative Councils can no longer be found. It also applied to the following quotation from the 1984 White Paper;

‘With few exceptions the bulk of public response from all sources suggested a cautious approach with a gradual start by introducing a very small number of directly elected members in 1988 and building up to a significant number...’

If the Government abided by its promises made in 1984 and respected convergence with policies laid down during Sir Edward YOUDE’S Government, do we still need to contend upon this issue of direct election in 1988? Why would the Government spend so much of the taxpayers’ money to manipulate public opinion so as to find a satisfactory pretext for Government not to fulfil its promises made in 1984?

I fully appreciate the importance of convergence in Hong Kong-China relationship. However, how can a government win the respect of the people and ask the people to believe in convergence when it takes the lead to break away from policies of the former Administration? As to Hong Kong-China relations, like the Joint Declaration, it has to be constructed on the basis of equality, but today we only see the Hong Kong Government compromising in the face of pressure from China. We only see those who seek to please China pat one another’s back. When we build up Hong Kong-China relations, have we forgotten to remind China that its actual and implied intervention in Hong Kong affairs during the transitional period does not only damage the credibility of the Hong Kong Government, it also makes one doubt the reliability of the provisions for a high degree of autonomy and the concept of ‘Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong’ in the Joint Declaration.

The Survey Office work is over, but we still hope that the Government will respect public opinion in future political reviews to restore its credibility and authority. We do not have to doubt the Executive Council’s wisdom and its courage in facing reality, but when the credibility and authority of the Hong Kong Government have received severe blows, I feel obliged to give the following advice:

1. Before making any decisions, the Government must assess how much more credibility the British and Hong Kong Governments have before putting them down as gambling bets against public opinion and the overseas reputation of Hong Kong.
2. The Government must consider the eight surveys conducted by independent market research companies and concerned staff of tertiary educational institution for constitutional development and their findings taken from samples of public opinion seriously.

3. The Government must consider the 220 000 signatures seriously to see if they represent more valuable reference material than 60 000 preprinted identical individual submissions in number, motive and authenticity.
4. Whatever the results, the Government should disclose to the public criteria for assessing public opinion—it must also state the extent to which the AGB McNair findings were accepted. Or else it will not be able to restore people's confidence in future opinion polls, and the Government would inevitably lose a channel for gauging public opinion.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

4.29 pm

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: Members may like to take a break at this point.

5.00 pm

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: Council will resume.

DR. LAM (in Cantonese): Sir, since the publication of the Survey Office report there has been much dissent. Some have said that the Survey Office report has been born in very unfortunate circumstances. Today in Ming Pao, there was published a public letter on the part of a group of academics who call into question the survey conducted by AGB McNair HK Ltd. and point out that serious mistakes have been committed especially in respect of whether or not there should be direct elections in 1988 and that its accuracy is very low and cannot be based on for a clear picture of public opinion. Although there are unsatisfactory aspects of the report, before the Governor and the Executive Council make a final decision on this matter, I do not feel that we should be over-anxious about this because this time the Government's credibility and the future of Hong Kong would be assessed by whether or not a fair decision can be made. We are very pleased to learn that the Government is determined to do away with the image of a lame duck. The Government must prove this determination by its actions. Those who care for Hong Kong and love Hong Kong should read this report because the report would make them understand the Government further. Some have pointed out that a government that is close to the people and is supported by the people should, among other things, understand the attitudes and wishes of the people and need not rely on private survey companies. However, if the Government itself finds it difficult to gauge public opinion or has not enough confidence or is faced with issues that are very sensitive to the extent that it is not convenient for Government to directly express Government's position, then it is by no means a mistake to commission surveys on the part of private firms but the Government must be very careful lest there be the impression that to achieve the ends all sorts of means are used. The Survey Office report is a very good example.

First of all, in the matter of influencing public opinion, magazines and newspapers have reported Mr. LI Hou's statement that 1988 elections will go against the Sino-British Joint Declaration although he denied that he had made this remark. Mr. DENG Xiaoping also said that universal suffrage may not be a good thing and Mr. JI Pengfei said that the chief executive of Hong Kong will be decided on by consultation. These three gentlemen are very high-ranking officials and their words will certainly have a very severe influence on many people. Although the Hong Kong and British Government officials have not given any official stand on the matter of direct elections in 1988, the Senior Unofficial Member of the Executive Council, Sir S. Y. CHUNG, has pointed out that it is the quality and not quantity of the public opinion which will be important, and among the seven Executive Councillors who are also Legislative Councillors, only two have spoken up in favour of having direct elections in 1988.

My next point is that the Green Paper on review of developments in representative government in 1987 is a very complex document and although there is clear explanation of the procedures, it is very difficult for people to fully understand the constitution of the Legislative Council. In 5.2(5) of the report, some two thirds of the respondents claimed to know very little about the content of the Green Paper and less than 1 per cent claimed to know a great deal about it. Given that the Green Paper is such a complex document, and the Survey Office has got AGB McNair to use confusing wording in its questionnaire, what exactly is the intention? It is clearly stated in paragraph 5.2(3) that the company was required to design a questionnaire based on all the issues and options raised in summary at Chapter 7 of the Green Paper. Recently a group of academics in the Hong Kong University and City Polytechnic, the head of the Information Centre of the Baptist College, the Deputy Chairman of the Hong Kong Statistical Society, Hong Kong Survey Research Company, and the Marketing Decision Research, as well as the social science lecturers of the Lingnan College indicated that although they had reservations in the matter of direct elections in 1988, they pointed out unanimously that especially in respect of direct elections in 1988, AGB McNair's questionnaire had made serious mistakes. For instance, it has too many dimensions in the same questions, unclear wording, not mutually exclusive choices, and leading questions. Sir, it was pointed out by an academic that there are at least 21 technical flaws in AGB McNair's report. Sir, when the ad hoc group met representatives from AGB McNair and the Commissioner for the Survey Office, Mr. HSU, some Members asked why the questionnaire was not done professionally. The company says that it followed the Green Paper but Mr. HSU said that he respected the professional knowledge of the company. If they are both right then perhaps it was the Green Paper that went wrong and yet the Green Paper is the result of a lot of time and energy on the part of Government and it is hardly possible that there should be such mistakes. It is no wonder that people of the public have called into question that the report is actually of the Government's doing.

I would like to make three points. First of all, when the letters were sent out calling for tenders to conduct the survey, Mr. Adolf HSU signed his name as the Government representative and the final decision on the tender was not made by Mr. HSU but by the Government Tender Board. Second, when the ad hoc group met the Survey Office representatives, the Deputy Chief Secretary was personally present every time. Third, since the publication of the report, the Chief Secretary has openly criticised those who have called into question the results of the report that they have done so because the results of the report differ from their own views. So it is obvious that the Government is very much involved in the report and this causes doubt as to whether the Government can objectively assess the report.

At the Constitutional Affairs Panel meetings, AGB McNair said that they were not willing for the sake of allaying fears about the questionnaire to have a public discussion with other professionals. Why are they so afraid? The monitors, Mr. LI Fook-kow and Mr. SO Kwok-wing, said in paragraph 18 of the report that 'what puzzles us most is that some surveys adopting apparently similar methodology and sampling frame also produced different results'. They also said in paragraph 20 that 86 per cent of the submissions from individuals in groups of individuals were preprinted and a full set of samples is provided in Part III of the report.

Sir, if you believe that everyone should have equal political rights, then every signature received by the Survey Office should be treated equally. The Government should disclose the criteria used by the Executive Council in assessing the report so that the public can be confident that the Executive Council will handle the matter in a fair way. I wish to point out to the public, however, that even according to the results in the Survey Office report, there is an overwhelming support for introducing direct election in 1988 if the Government attaches equal importance to every signature. That is the right result. Sir, everybody knows whether or not things are fair and our choice is in our own hands whether we leave a good name for a hundred generations or leave a stink for 10 000 years.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. DESMOND LEE (in Cantonese): Sir, my impression of the Survey Office report is one of general scepticism. Members of the public with whom I have been in touch have generally expressed astonishment and scepticism towards the account of the public opinion in the report concerning direct elections next year. The people who have expressed doubt include opponents of direct elections, even old people and students. The scepticism is certainly widespread. Of course I do not believe that the Hong Kong Government would ever fabricate public opinion for indeed it would be a heinous and unforgivable crime for any government to fabricate public opinion. To fabricate public opinion would be to put the government's credibility at stake and once brought to light public confidence would be lost completely. This year's Review of Representative Government is one in name but not in reality. Much of what has

been incorporated into the Green Paper such as election expenses, election deposit, whether identity cards should be included and so on is immaterial. Since too many trivial items have been included, some wonder whether the 1987 review is but an empty review. The 1987 review is far inferior to the 1984 review. Sir, your predecessor, the late Sir Edward YOUDE, released the Green Paper on Further Development of Representative Government at a special sitting of this Council on 18 July 1984, and announced there and then that the number of the elected seats at district boards would be doubled in 1985 and that elected members would constitute more than half of the seats of the Regional Council in two years' time. What determination and leadership was shown by the Administration then. Secondary issues were not part of the review. By firmly increasing the number of elected members in local boards, your predecessor fully demonstrated the sagacity and decisiveness of a chief executive. The 1984 Green Paper on Representative Government covered not only elections to the Legislative Council, but also the structure of the Executive Council and the concept of ministerial system, taking the developments in three stages in 1985, 1988, and 1991. Sir, the review in 1984 was actually very comprehensively conceived and there was even preparations for a phased development. This is, of course, a very responsible and very meaningful review. This time the review is narrower in scope, taking only the step in 1988 and among the various options, the only one of real importance is whether there should be direct elections to the Legislative Council. Other matters such as the ratio of appointed and elected members in district boards and the two municipal councils and so on are questions which you, Sir, can decide in your judgment and leadership as the chief executive and need not be the subject of consultation. As to election expenses, deposit, and other such trivia, these have also been included in the Green Paper, which has thus been treated as a laughing stock. In fact some have even called into question the administrative abilities of Government and doubt that this is perhaps only an empty review.

Given the imperfections of the Survey Office report, we can still learn something from the report especially in respect of direct elections and I would like now to refer to Chart 1 (Appendix I) of paragraph 13.28 of the report and also add in the two elements in Chart 2 (Appendix II) concerning preprinted submissions and signature campaigns.

There are seven different options listed in Chart 1 and the four statutory bodies: Legislative Council, two municipal councils, and district boards; groups and individuals, and the number of people in these categories supporting various options. Under 'support for' and 'no objections to' having direct elections in 1988, the greatest number of support comes from the councils and groups. As to individual personal submissions, 23 000 are against direct elections in 1988. There are 60 000 who are not against direct elections, but they are against having it in 1988. Many of these personal submissions are in the form of preprinted submission; in the first case, 16 000 comprising 68.5 per cent; in the first case, 16 000, comprising 68.5 per cent; in the latter case,

50 000 copies or 82.6 per cent. On the other hand, there are 35 000 personal submissions that are in favour of and not objecting to direct elections in 1988. Only 1 300 are preprinted or 3 per cent. Although the monitors feel that the means of collecting opinion are not without flaws, these views are incorporated into the full report and computed on the same footing as views collected in the four statutory bodies and groups. I think the signature campaigns are the exercise of free will and are objective and they have not been criticised by the monitors, so I think that the results of the signature campaigns should be given due weight and that flaws in preprinted submissions duly recognised. In fact, if we put personal submissions and signatures together we will find an overwhelming support for direct elections next year. The two charts show that a total of 289 787 individuals support direct elections in 1988 and that accounts for 80 per cent of the total number of submissions which is 361 378. I hope that the Government in assessing the developments in representative government will take note of the mainstream public opinion and introduce some direct elected seats to this Council in 1988 and fulfil the words in the song 'To build Hong Kong to a more fragrant place'.

Sir, I hope that Hong Kong Government is not a lame duck and I hope, too, that China would not interfere in Hong Kong's affairs but the Government must prove its case by facts and if we implement direct elections in 1988 this would indeed be very good evidence. Donning tiger skin does not make one a real tiger. It only gives one a semblance of tiger-like authority. Sir, in your first policy address on 7 October you stressed the importance of economic prosperity and achievements. But within a month three major events have occurred: the engineering flaws at Daya Bay, the crisis in the stock and futures Markets, as well as the publication of the Survey Office report. Confidence is all important. As the Gospel says: 'those who believeth will be saved'. If we have no confidence, who will save us?

Appendix I

		<i>LegCo</i>	<i>UC</i>	<i>RC</i>	<i>DBs</i>	<i>Groups and associations</i>	<i>Individuals and groups of individuals</i>	
	<i>Green Paper Option</i>		<i>No. of speakers in debates meetings</i>			<i>No. of submissions</i>	<i>No. of submissions</i>	<i>No. of individuals represented</i>
Direct elections are not desirable	Para 163 (ii)	1	1	0	2	7	2410	2 468
Direct elections should not be introduced in 1988 (without indicating whether or not they are desirable in principle)	—	4	2	0	45	181	23 496	25 881
<i>Support in principle for/no objection to direct elections but not in 1988</i>	Para 163(iii)	14	3	4	78	171	60 706	65 921

	<i>Green Paper Option</i>	<i>LegCo</i>	<i>UC</i>	<i>RC</i>	<i>DBs</i>	<i>Groups and associations</i>	<i>Individuals and groups of individuals</i>	
	<i>Para 163 (iv)</i>	<i>No. of speakers in debates meetings</i>				<i>No. of submissions</i>	<i>No. of submissions</i>	<i>No. of individuals represented</i>
<i>Support for/no objection to direct elections in 1988</i>		18	13	6	121	229	35 129	39 345
<i>Support in principle for/no objection to direct elections but no indication of timing</i>	—	1	1	1	11	4	779	842
<i>Support in principle for/no objection to direct elections but timing unclear or inconsistent</i>	—	2	1	0	4	6	976	1 005
<i>Other views</i>	—	2	1	0	6	7	1 732	1 755
<i>Total</i>		42	22	11	267	605	125 228	137 217

Appendix II

	<i>Individuals and groups of individuals</i>	<i>Preprinted identical letters</i>	<i>Signature companies</i>	<i>a-b</i>
	<i>No. of represented submissions</i>	<i>No. of individuals (a)</i>	<i>No. of submissions (% based on total of this item)</i>	<i>No. of individuals and groups (b) represented</i>
<i>Direct elections are not desirable</i>	2 410	2 468	1 101 (45.7%)	1 101
<i>Direct elections should not be introduced in 1988 (without indicating whether or not they are desirable in principle)</i>	23 496	25 881	16 094 (68.5%)	16 489
<i>Support in principle for/no objection to direct elections but not in 1988</i>	60 706	65 921	50 175 (82.6%)	53 976
<i>Support for/no objection to direct elections in 1988</i>	35 129	39 345	1 313 (3.7%)	1 327
<i>Support in principle for/no objection to direct elections but no indication of timing</i>	779	842	—	—
<i>Support in principle for/no objection to direct elections but timing unclear or inconsistent</i>	976	1 005	—	—
<i>Other views</i>	1 732	1 755	874 (50.5%)	874
<i>Total</i>	125 228	137 217	69 557	73 767
				224 161
				361 378

MR. MARTIN LEE: Sir, during the policy debate in this Council on November 1987, I devoted the last part of my speech on the report of the Survey Office (hereinafter called 'the report'). Since then, I have had more time to study the report, in particular, the results of the two public opinion surveys conducted by AGB McNair HK Ltd. for the Survey Office. I do not detract from my comments on these two surveys in my last speech, but I shall not repeat them today.

Sir, during the last two weeks since the report was presented to this Council, the OMELCO Constitutional Affairs Panel has had a few meetings with the Administration, Mr. Adolf HSU of the Survey Office, and representatives from AGB McNair. There have also been a lot of adverse criticism not only from the supporters of the introduction of direct elections in 1988, but also from experts in the market research field as well as experts in statistics. I think I would be right in saying that I have not come across a single expert who would support the design of the most relevant questions on direct elections, namely, sections F3 and F5 in Annex A to Appendix X of Part II of the report, or who would accept the findings of these two surveys by AGB McNair in relation to the issue of whether direct elections should be introduced in 1988.

Sir, today I will confine my comments principally to that part of the report relating to the desirability or otherwise of introducing direct elections in 1988. I should add that the views I will now express are not meant to be exhaustive in any way, and that on most of them I have taken the advice of experienced experts in the market research field.

First, on the subject matter of the two surveys. It is pertinent to note that in the invitation to submit a tender contained in a standard form letter from the Survey Office dated 15 May 1987, the first sentence reads: 'An independent Survey Office has been appointed by the Governor, to collect, collate and report on public views on the issues discussed in the Green Paper: "The 1987 Review of Developments in Representative Government" which will be published in May 1987'. The material word is '*issues*'.

According to an extract of the proposal from AGB McNair: 'The primary research objective of the study is to collect public opinion on the issues (and options) discussed in the Green Paper...'. The material words are '*issues (and options)*'.

But when the questionnaire was later drawn up by AGB McNair, it became clear beyond doubt that instead of conducting two surveys on public views on the *issues* discussed in the Green Paper, AGB McNair had conducted two surveys on public views on the *options* discussed in the Green Paper.

The material issue in question was, of course, whether direct elections should be introduced in 1988. But section F3 of the questionnaire, in adopting the four options contained in the said paragraph 163 of the summary to the Green Paper, completely failed to deal with the issue, with the unfortunate result that it was simply not put to the respondents.

Section F3 of the questionnaire in relation to direct elections was copied almost word for word from the options contained in the said paragraph 163, including the precise order in which those options appear in the Green Paper.

According to the experts, therefore, this subtle but unwarranted change of emphasis from 'issues' to 'options' has resulted in there being no direct answer given to the most important issue of whether direct elections should or should not be introduced in 1988. This is the most fundamental flaw and would have been sufficient in itself to vitiate the reliability of the two surveys in relation to this particular issue.

Secondly, as to the phraseology of the questions in section F3, all the experts that I have consulted as well as those who have expressed a view in public through the mass media, are agreed that the questions copied from the Green Paper summary were much too complicated and technical to be understood by the ordinary citizens of Hong Kong and that no professional survey company should have framed the questions in that particular way.

AGB McNair's answer to the OMELCO Panel was that it had decided to adhere strictly to the wording of the options contained in the summary of the Green Paper as well as to the order in which the options were set out. But this was not true in relation to some other issues raised in the Green Paper. For example: in section A3 which dealt with the role of the district board, the relevant question contained some additional words which were a clear improvement. Likewise, in section II which dealt with the sequence and timing of elections for the district boards, useful words had also been added to the question to make it easier to understand. It is pertinent to note, however, that in relation to these areas where AGB McNair had decided to depart from the actual wording of the options contained in the summary of the Green Paper, these questions were nothing as complicated or technical as option (4) in section F3 which dealt with direct elections. The obvious question is: Why did AGB McNair think fit to make alterations to these less complicated questions without at the same time making any improvement to the most important but most unsatisfactory question in the entire questionnaire?

Further, the first option in section F3 was 'to make *no change*'. The second was 'to conclude that direct elections to the Legislative Council are *not desirable*'. The third was 'to conclude that, in principle, some element of direct elections is desirable, but that it should *not* be introduced *in 1988*'. The respondents were therefore given three clear opportunities to say 'No' to the introduction of direct elections in 1988. Each of these three questions was leading in that it clearly suggested a particular answer. Each was not balanced by an alternative which went the other way.

When the respondents finally came to the fourth and last option, which was a mouthful, and expressed in the most convoluted manner, the respondents really had to search the very end before they could find the alternative: 'or have directly-elected members'.

In fact during one of the two meetings the OMELCO Panel had with AGB McNair's representatives, the latter accepted that in framing questions for survey purposes, every survey company should, among other things, adopt the following basic principles:

- (1) The question must be easily understood by the sort of people that are going to be asked to answer it.
- (2) It must be simple enough to be retained in the mind of the person asked while reflecting upon the answer to be given.
- (3) If the question contains a number of alternative answers, then all the answers should be clear and should cover all reasonable possibilities.
- (4) The style of the question must not be such as to lead or influence the respondent towards one possible answer rather than another.
- (5) The question must deal with the underlying idea adequately.

In the light of AGB McNair's acceptance of the above basic principles, I am completely at a loss to understand why AGB McNair had nevertheless seen fit to frame the relevant questions in the way it did. Indeed, none of the experts in the field has defended them.

Thirdly, the question in section F3 has been described by experts to be *multi-dimensional*, in that it covers a number of different dimensions:

- (a) as to the numbers and relative proportions of the three types of Members in the Legislative Council;
- (b) as to the distinction between indirectly-elected members and directly-elected members, and the desirability of having directly-elected members; and
- (c) as to the timing for the introduction of direct elections.

The experts have all agreed that when a question contains different dimensions as in this case, it would simply be impossible to expect the respondents to be able to understand it properly or be able to give a coherent answer thereto. Indeed the very large percentage of respondents who falls within the category of 'don't know/don't understand' indicates all too clearly that this question is simply beyond their comprehension.

Fourthly, as to the order in which these options appear in the section F3, experts have advised me that it is unfair to present these options always in the same order so that every respondent would have heard the option: 'no change' before the others. I am told that it is normal survey practice to rotate the order in which the options are presented to avoid what is called 'order bias'. Otherwise the respondents would be more inclined to accept the first option instead of the others. This is particularly so when the entire interview took a long time as in this case. As a result, the prejudice to direct elections for 1988 is very great because the only option which allowed for a 'Yes' answer to the introduction of direct elections in 1988 came last in the question.

Fifthly, experts have also told me of another flaw in the way the interviewers were instructed to deal with another part of the questionnaire, namely, section F5. The experts have called it 'the wrong skip'. According to section F, only those respondents who had chosen option (4) in section F3 would be asked further questions in section F5 which contained six options as to what changes should be made to the Legislative Council in 1988, including the introduction of direct elections. This was wrong, because even those respondents who had chosen option (1) in section F3, that is, 'to make no change in the numbers and relative proportions of Official, Appointed and Elected Members', might wish to see direct elections introduced in 1988 by taking option (5) in section F5, in which event all or some of the 'Elected Members' mentioned in option (1) in section F3 would be replaced by the directly-elected members in option (5) in section F5. But if these respondents had not been alert enough also to take option (4) as a 'second mention', which was not at all unlikely, they would not have been given the further chance of selecting the options in section F5. The consequence of AGB McNair having used 'the wrong skip' was that the percentage of those supporting the introduction of direct elections in 1988 was unfairly reduced thereby. So if you find my speech difficult to understand it is not my fault. It is taken from the report.

When such complicated questions were put to Mr. Average in such an unintelligible manner, what results did our Government expect to find?

Sir, there can be no excuse for AGB McNair in designing such a questionnaire and in deciding to use it not only for the first survey but also for the second, because it had no less than four opportunities to amend the questionnaire after discovering the very high rate of the respondents who did not know how to answer it, particularly sections F3 and F5, or had no opinion on them, or did not understand the options, or were not clear about the respective concepts. AGB McNair could and should have improved the questionnaire after each of the following:

- (a) the six group discussions—when AGB McNair observed that 'quite a proportion of them did not know the meaning of the following terms:
 - Territory—wide election
 - Constituency—based election
 - The system of indirect elections from the electoral college geographical constituencies'.which terms were only used in options (5) and (6) of section F5, being the only options which allowed for the introduction of direct elections in 1988;
- (b) the pilot test of 100 interviewees—when AGB McNair should have discovered that there was a high percentage of 'Don't knows';
- (c) the first survey—which showed that 40 per cent of the respondents fell into the category of 'Don't know/no opinion; Don't understand; Not clear' in answering F3;

- (d) the group discussions before conducting the second survey when AGB McNair again discovered the same serious problems.

Two questions therefore cry out to be answered by AGB McNair. First, why did it draft and use such a questionnaire when all the experts in the same field are agreed that no professional surveyor would ever think of using it? Secondly, why did AGB McNair do nothing to improve it?

Another matter which has attracted general criticism from the experts is that in spite of earlier demands that the contents of the questionnaire be made public, both the Survey Office and AGB McNair insisted not to disclose them. When asked by our panel at one of our meetings, the answer given was that it was thought undesirable to disclose the questions in advance, for fear that the respondents would be given a rehearsal. Now, experts have said that this was wrong, because AGB McNair was not dealing here with a product like a detergent when it would be desirable to have the spontaneous reaction of the respondents. But from the nature and complexity of the issues raised in the Green Paper, it would have been much more desirable to tell the potential respondents beforehand what questions they would be asked, so that their answers would be based on informed opinion. Indeed, there seemed to be no point in keeping secret the contents of the questionnaire when at all material times both AGB McNair and the Survey Office knew perfectly well that the options in the questionnaire were exactly the same as those contained in the Green Paper, which was a public document. Further, if the contents of the questionnaire had been disclosed to the public as requested, the questionnaire would certainly have been improved. And the public could have sent in their submissions by dealing with the specific issues raised in the questionnaire.

Sir, in light of the many faults and failures in the two public opinion surveys, the people of Hong Kong are entitled to ask: 'What has gone wrong?' But so far there is no clear answer because the Survey Office, the Administration and AGB McNair all appear to be trying to pass the buck to one another. Certainly, no satisfactory explanation has been offered to the OMELCO panel by these parties despite the fact that several meetings had been convened. It seems that the many problems of the surveys conducted by AGB McNair were generated by the Green Paper which was drafted by the Administration and that the options contained in the Green Paper were never intended to be used as a model for a questionnaire. And the Survey Office, which was set up by the Governor, for some inexplicable reasons had allowed the surveys to go ahead well knowing that AGB McNair had, also for some inexplicable reasons, decided to adhere strictly to the wordings of the options in the summary of the Green Paper. A very charitable way of describing the whole situation is to say that the blind had been leading the blind.

Sir, in these circumstances, can our people be blamed for suspecting that these two surveys had been conducted for and on behalf of the Government of Hong Kong with the sole object of ensuring that the results would not justify

the introduction of direct elections in 1988? Can our people be blamed in tying these two surveys to the Green Paper and taking into account the very strong objections from China to the introduction of direct elections in 1988. and conclude that this political review is nothing but a fraud.

Sir, this Administration owes much to our people to assure them that it has not been party to any dishonest scheme in deceiving them and that it can and will come to a just decision which takes fully into account the wishes of our people.

For these reasons, I share the view of the experts who have spoken out on the two surveys in urging this Administration to reject totally, AGB McNair's findings to section F3 and F5 of the questionnaire in relation to the issue of whether direct elections should or should not be introduced in 1988.

Sir, what then shall we do with the report? I do not think that the entire report should be ignored; for it contains useful data consisting of the other survey results as well as written submissions. Indeed, when the report as a whole is properly understood, it in fact shows that a clear majority of the views expressed therein is in favour of the introduction of direct elections in 1988.

First, I turn to the other surveys. I propose to adopt a chart entitled 'An Analysis of 9 Territory-wide Probability Sampling Surveys (with 11 Results) on the Question of Direct Elections in 1988' which was so helpfully prepared by my hon. Colleague Mr. Andrew WONG and circulated to all the Members of this Council in his absence. The analysis of these surveys after leaving out the 'don't knows' and repercentaging those for and those againsts shows as follows:

	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Pollster</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
(1)	CSTEI	CSTEI	38%	62%
(2)	SCMP	FSA	58%	42%
(3)	SCMP	MDR	54%	46%
(4)	SCMP	MDR	66%	34%
(5)	SCMP	MDR	69%	31%
(6)	4 PAPERS	SRH	77%	23%
(7)	4 PAPERS	SRH	76%	24%
(8)	4 PAPERS	SRH	68%	32%
			65%	35%
(9)	4 PAPERS	SRH	69%	31%
			68%	32%

I must now spend a little time to deal with the first-mentioned survey conducted by CSTEI whose representatives had come to lodge a complaint with the Complaints Division of OMELCO yesterday. Their grievance was caused by the gross misrepresentation of their survey results both in the report and by some senior government servants. In their survey, a choice was given to the respondents to decide which was the most suitable year for the introduction of direct elections, so that the respondents could select from 1987, 1988, 1989 and

all the way until 1997. The figures showed that 1988 was the most favoured year for the introduction of direct elections. Their representatives told us that it would be totally wrong to group all the other percentages for the other years together as the total percentage against the introduction of direct elections in 1988. Although the respondents in this survey had not been asked the question whether direct elections should or should not be introduced in 1988, the results showed very clearly that of all the people who wanted to see direct elections introduced in Hong Kong, the support for 1988 was the greatest. When the results of this particular survey are properly understood, they should no longer be used to support the contention that the majority of respondents in that survey were against the introduction of direct elections in 1988. It will be seen, therefore, all validly-conducted territory-wide surveys show that those who support clearly outweigh those who oppose the introduction of direct elections in 1988.

I now turn to the written submissions; and I propose to divide them into three categories:

- (i) written submissions in printed standard forms with no options being given to the respondents;
- (ii) written submissions in printed standard forms with options given to the respondents;
- (iii) individual hand-written submissions.

In relation to (i), I suggest that it will be unrealistic to distinguish this type of submissions from the submissions collected in signature campaigns. Indeed, according to experts, there is no reason to differentiate one from the other. Therefore, the 223 886 signatures collected from the signature campaigns (after deducting 9 485 names which were found to be repetitive) should be treated as individual submissions just like the other 73 767 individuals who had made written submissions by way of printed standard forms without any options being given to the respondents. Viewed in that light, 225 213 persons or 76 per cent were for the introduction of direct elections in 1988 while 71 566 or 24 per cent were against it.

As to (ii) above, namely, those who submitted their views by the use of printed standard forms where options were given, 26 833 persons or 72 per cent were in support of the introduction of the direct elections in 1988, while 10 325 persons or 28 per cent were against it.

As to (iii) above, namely, hand-written submissions, 11 185 persons or 47 per cent were in support of the introduction of direct election in 1988, while 12 379 persons or 53 per cent were against it.

When the figures in (i), (ii) and (iii) above are taken together, those who favoured the introduction of direct elections in 1988 outnumbered those against by 74 per cent to 26 per cent.

I therefore entirely agree with my hon. Friend Mr. Andrew WONG that when the results contained in the report are properly analysed and understood, one sees that there is a clear majority support for the introduction of direct elections in 1988. I am asked by my hon. Friend Mr. Richard LAI, who is not present today, to say that he too agrees with this conclusion.

Sir, this is the approach I would respectfully commend to the Executive Council to adopt in their deliberations on the report in relation to the issue of whether direct elections should be introduced in 1988.

I would further respectfully invite the Executive Council to take note of the following matters:

- (a) In analysing the results contained in the report, it must also consider carefully the many useful views expressed by the public on the two surveys conducted by AGB McNair, including the experts in the field as well as statisticians.
- (b) Before coming to its decisions, the Executive Council will be well-advised to announce to the public the yardsticks it will adopt in assessing the report.
- (c) It must fully explain to the public the reasons for its decision, particularly in relation to the most vital issue of whether direct elections should be introduced in 1988. For not only must justice be done, but it must be manifestly seen to be done.

Sir, this Administration has repeatedly promised the people of Hong Kong that the 1987 political review will be a genuine one. The people of Hong Kong have been encouraged to speak up. Many have done so. And in spite of the apparently unfair way in which the public's views have been presented in this report on direct elections, the conclusion is clear: there is clear majority support in Hong Kong for the introduction of direct elections in 1988.

Sir, let this Administration show us its undaunted mettle and restore its credibility with us to the full by coming to the only correct decision in the circumstances: give our people a vote in 1988.

MR. LIU (in Cantonese): Sir, the Survey Office was set up only a short time ago and yet a wide range of public opinions was included in the Survey Office report coupled with the careful vetting and observations by the monitors. This shows that the Survey Office has done its utmost discharged its functions precisely and impartially, and acted in accordance with the procedures within its terms of reference. I think that this report deserves to be accepted by the public as well as the Council as a basis for assessment of public opinion on the development of representative government.

The report is comprehensive and detailed, providing us with a lot of information for careful study. Different people can, of course, draw different conclusions from the report. I think that instead of holding stubbornly onto the

views of any one party we should avail ourselves of a more objective viewpoint, a cool mind and an impartial attitude in assessing the content of this report. Since different people differ in viewpoints and since there is a myriad of ways of collecting opinions, to ask for identical viewpoints is to ask for the impossible. What is most important is to look at the overall picture to see whether the content of the report is by and large in agreement with general comments. If comments and methodology is generally the same minor points may not be unduly played up or emphasised. Only by doing so can we come up with a general consensus and a direction for our future political development.

Our debate today is mainly to show our concern with the content of the Survey Office report and to arrive at a more generally acceptable development guideline for the reference of the Government in finalising the White Paper. Because of time constraints I will not be commenting on the report point by point; rather I will only be stating my observations on the following points:

1. *Official Members*

Public opinion strongly indicates that the majority favours retaining the existing number of Official Members or even adding to it slightly. The purpose is to maintain the effective functioning of the Legislative Council and allow relevant officials to answer questions directly and to give clear accounts to this Council. I agree with this entirely.

2. *Appointed Members*

The report indicates that a larger number of people favour retaining the existing number of Appointed Members, though some advocate a cut in this number. In my opinion Appointed Members have specific characteristics and the appointment system should be retained so that Appointed Members can continue to render help in the overall effective functioning of our Council and to offer professional opinion, but I do not object to slightly reducing it if the number of Appointed Members is to be compensated for by increasing the number of functional constituency representatives.

3. *Members elected by functional constituencies*

The majority public view is to retain the existing system for functional constituencies to elect 12 representatives to our Council. However, some people advocate adding in new functional constituencies or increasing the number of members in this category. In principle I support adding slightly to the number of functional constituencies to strengthen their representativeness since very many organisations have registered or have requested recognition as functional constituencies. However, further study into how to select their organisations is necessary.

4. *Members elected by the Electoral College*

The majority view is not to change the existing system that is 12 constituencies to return one representative each. However, there is

the minority view that each geographical constituency should be given one more seat or that there should be an overall increase in the number of members elected by the electoral college. In my opinion, for constituencies made up of two or more districts and with average population the number of seats can remain unchanged. If, however, the difference in population between certain constituencies is too great the Government should study the matter closely and redelineate those constituencies.

5. *Direct Election*

This is the issue of greatest concern to the public and the most controversial one. The conclusions are, however, very clear; that is, in principle, most members of the public support direct election, but do not favour introducing it next year. The reason is that conditions are not yet ripe. It would be too hasty to introduce direct election next year as more time is needed to formulate an overall plan. I agree entirely with this view. In connection with direct election, the Government should lay down its objectives and time schedule for implementation and an early date to show its sincerity and determination in introducing more democratic systems.

6. *Presidency of the Legislative Council*

Undoubtedly, the great majority of the public are in favour of the Governor continuing to be the President.

7. *On the Voting Age and the Age of Eligibility for Candidature*

The majority view is to retain the age of 21 as the minimum age. The reasons are that young people under 21 do not have a deep understanding of our society and that any drastic changes will only have adverse effects on our society. In this regard, in this Council's debate on the Green Paper on the developments of representative government I express the same view.

Lastly, a lot of opinions expressed were in support of a pace of future political development and the drafting of the Basic Law to tie in with each other and of adopting a gradual approach to promote the development of our policies. I agree with this and consider that in the light of our current development in the Sino-British Joint Declaration on our future, this approach is in the interest of Hong Kong.

Sir, in conclusion, the setting up of a Survey Office and its collection of public opinion are efforts towards the future political development in Hong Kong. It deserves our support.

Sir, I support the motion.

MR. NGAI: Sir, in a civilised society like ours, whether we like it or not, we are daily bombarded by all sorts of numbers. If we are not critical enough in dealing with them, it is possible that we may be misled by them into formulating wrong conceptions, or, worse still, enslaved by them. Bertrand RUSSELL, in his

autobiography, said that he had always wanted to understand how numbers would hold sway above the flux. However, in his later years he thought that the flux would hold sway above numbers and not the other way round.

Sir, talking about bombardment by numbers, I believe none of us in this Council would have lacked that universal experience in the last two weeks when we religiously laboured through the voluminous report of the Survey Office. Yet, I think we ought to pay tribute to the commissioner and staff of the Survey Office for completing their tedious and unenviable task on schedule and also to the Monitors Mr. Li Fook-kow and Mr. Andrew So for their dedication to the project. All of them deserve our commendation for their efficiency which has been very outstanding indeed even by Hong Kong's standard.

Sir, to save time, I shall just briefly comment on a few general points arising from the Survey Office report in relation to how the report as a whole should be assessed in the light of the future development of our political system.

As expected, the response from the public at large on the Green Paper was concentrated on the desirability of introducing directly-elected seats into this Council. The report tells us that over 95 per cent of the respondents commented on this issue. No wonder. It is obvious that direct election has been the most widely publicised issue in the local media both before and after the release of the Green Paper. But what does the high response rate on this issue signify? Does it really signify a growing political awareness among our citizens, as some commentators suggest? Or does it merely signify that the mass is more prone to be swayed by the media or political activists into supporting something they may not fully understand? Should we take the so-called identical letter forms or signature campaigns to be conscious efforts on the part of the mass to support a worthy cause? Or should we take them to be just a parody of genuine political awareness? Sir, I honestly do not believe that the 130 000 odd responses to the Survey Office or the 220 000 odd signatures can provide satisfactory answers to the above questions. The anti-direct-electionist may use the former figure to justify his cause in the same way as the direct-electionist may the latter. So we may end up more confused than enlightened by the statistics. For this reason, Sir, I do not think it will be the correct approach for the Government to put too much emphasis on the numbers in its assessment of the Survey Office report. On the contrary, I would suggest that more attention be paid to the quality of the views submitted. After all, in an important issue like constitutional reform, the final decision must be based largely on rationalisation rather than on the number of voices.

Sir, it is a well-known fact that I am against the introduction of direct election in 1988, which I consider to be a hasty and risky step to take. Regarding the Survey Office report, the question that I want to raise is how much weight should we give to popular will and why.

The Government has been criticised by some for disregarding the will of the people over a number of issues and for being not democratic enough. In the light of the Survey Office report and, for that matter, any other survey reports and signature campaigns, I shall attempt to give my conception of a government by popular will since the term 'popular will' has often been used or abused by advocates of direct election in 1988. In short, under a system of government by popular will, if something is said to be willed by the people, then it implies that something shall be done. Any opposition, no matter how impartial and well-reasoned, becomes morally suspect. However, the problem still remains as to how to ascertain the content of popular will and how effective is the mechanism for expressing this will.

6.00 pm

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: It is now Six o'clock. Under Standing Order 8(2), this Council should now adjourn.

CHIEF SECRETARY: Sir, with your consent, I move that Standing Order 8(2) should be suspended so as to allow the Council's business this afternoon to be concluded.

Question put and agreed to.

MR. NGAI: Sir, on a controversial subject such as direct election, there are bound to be diverse opinions, some genuinely considered and some perhaps reckless. Those who advocate direct election in 1988 have often resorted to counting heads and reckon a certain so-called majority agreement as the will of the people, even if this may conflict with the will of the rest of the community or inflict harm on the community as a whole in the long run. It is clear that when we are reacting with emotion to highly charged issues, like political reforms, workers' welfare, nuclear power and so on, it is much easier to find a unity of will among an impressive number of people. Thus interest groups have also seen the need to engineer frenzied mass movements like signature campaigns and demonstrations. When such movements can be engineered, there is an apparent unity and a popular will. Sir, with the general lack of political awareness and general indifference to political issues among the majority of our people, it can be disastrous to the well-being of the whole community for the Government to act according to this apparent unity and so-called popular will.

Sir, there has been much over-reaction to the Survey Office report ever since its publication two weeks ago. Those who have pledged their faith to winning majority support for direct election in 1988 are understandably frustrated by the outcome of the survey. For those who have come forward to accuse the Government for being insincere and biased in this consultation exercise, I regret to say that their vindictive accusations could have been misfired, for it will be totally unthinkable for the Government to base its decision on whether to initiate

political reforms or not purely on the outcome of a survey and nothing else. It is reasonable to say the the Survey Office report can only be one of several considerations. There are other more crucial considerations apart from this.

Sir, I must again stress that Hong Kong's totally export-oriented economy is vulnerable to too many external factors beyond our control. We simply cannot afford to experiment with political reforms and gamble on the future stability and prosperity of our community. This, I think, is a reality we must face before taking the plunge. Another reality is, of course, the question of convergence of our political system with the Basic Law. Whether we like it or not, we must admit that this question is and shall be with us in the run-up to 1997, and it has to be addressed in the forthcoming White Paper on our future political development. Furthermore, we must bear in mind the fact that the success of our economy has been built upon a stable and predictable political structure. Sir, I am convinced that our existing government system can ensure a pragmatic and efficient functioning of the Administration, and I think that this factor should be duly considered in the White Paper.

With my remarks, Sir, I support the motion.

MR. PANG (in Cantonese): Sir, regarding the question of whether there should be direct election in 1988, as embodied in the survey of this report, I think the categorisation of the report is a cause for concern. I agree with the Chief Secretary, Mr. FORD, in saying that there are different opinions among Hong Kong people regarding the pace of political development, but I also think that the design of the questionnaire has led to confusion with its options making the results inauthentic. Moreover, the Survey Office report listed almost 70 000 preprinted identical letters as individual opinions but excluded 230 000 signatures with identity card numbers given voluntarily. When we look at the reliability of the two, the latter was connected through the initiative of the people who put down their signatures and identity card numbers voluntarily. It must, therefore, be more reliable than the former. Because of this, I regard the categorisation method of the report unfair and lacking in objectivity.

Sir, the voice of Hong Kong people asking for a progressive democracy and an element of direct election in 1988 is heard more and more. The Government cannot ignore it or become hostile. I, myself, as well as the general public have criticised or questioned the Government's recent performance with an attitude of 'we are severe towards those who we love'. The motive is kind and well-intentioned. We are not playing any political game. Last week the Chief Secretary named me in his attack. I do not mind at all, but I find it very unfortunate. Actually, the reputation, image and credibility of the Government should be assessed by the public based on Government's performance. The Government said it did not need to be reminded by Mr. Martin LEE and myself, it is true. If it be true, then I will not be able to speak or question the Government as a Legislative Councillors elected by functional constituencies. What can I do then?

Sir, I sincerely hope that you and Executive Councillors would study this controversial Survey Office report carefully, conduct a detailed assessment and come up with a wise decision. The Chief Secretary has actually pledged in all sincerity; when interviewed by The Asia Week Magazine he said: 'We have betted the Government's credibility in this review'.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

MR. POON CHI-FAI (in Cantonese): Sir, since the Green Paper on the 1987 Review of Developments in Representative Government would throw light on the review and development of the future political system, it has attracted the attention of all sectors. After its release last May, Government sought to publicise it with much financial, manpower and other resources to encourage the public to give their views. An independent Survey Office was also set up to collect and collate public opinion on the Green Paper. Mr. LI Fook-kow and Mr. Andrew So were appointed independent monitors to monitor the work of the Survey Office. All this indicates Government's high regard for and sincerity towards the political review.

This opinion poll is comprehensive. It has incorporated views of this Council, district boards, the Urban Council, the Regional Council, groups and associations, individuals as well as media reports and signatures. Moreover, it commissioned a consultant company to interview as many as 6 000 persons in two surveys. In the past four months' consultation period the Survey Office received over 134 000 submissions and signatures of over 220 000 people. This can be said to be the most comprehensive opinion poll in Hong Kong's history.

Sir, an opinion poll of such skill cannot aspire to be perfect. We cannot hope that it would please all quarters. In fact, the question on direct election in 1988 as designed by the consultant company is really relatively complex and should be improved. But these defects cannot be used as excuses to negate the entire report. At the same time, if we look at this question carefully it is not that difficult to understand. Since interviewers of the company supplied simple explanations with show cards before asking complex questions, therefore, if a respondent is clearly in support of direct election in 1988, he would not choose that there should be no change, or that direct election for Legislative Council is undesirable, or that some element of direct election to Legislative Council is desirable but that it should not be implemented in 1988. Therefore, such a respondent would certainly take the appropriate option. Some people are of the view that the fact that there is only one option for direct election in 1988, as against several opposing direct election in 1988 will prejudice the chances of people supporting direct election in 1988. This argument may not be valid because if a respondent clearly supports direct election in 1988, no matter how many options there are that oppose direct election in 1988 he would still choose the one that supports it. Moreover, since the AGB McNair interviews involved as many as 6 000 people, the conclusions should form valuable reference material for the formulation of the White Paper on political reforms.

Sir, in order to have a comprehensive review, public opinion expressed through all channels and in all forms should be carefully considered by the Government. In considering these opinions, one should, of course, analyse the credibility and importance of the opinions and their different nature sources. Take the signature campaigns and preprinted identical submissions, for example. They have to be taken into consideration too. Although we cannot verify whether some people have been misled or if there were forged signatures, we should also be particularly careful in considering these two types of opinions.

Sir, over the past two days I have consulted or attempted to consult 33 Kwun Tong District Board members on their opinions on this report. Seventeen found the report acceptable in principle. Ten District Board Members found it unacceptable. Six others could not be contacted because some of them were out of town. In short, I think the Survey Office should be commended for compiling such a comprehensive and representative report in just four months. At the same time, the report is all the more credible because it was compiled under the careful monitoring of two independent monitors. Therefore, I think the report is acceptable in principle.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

PROF. POON (in Cantonese): Sir, last year in this Council when I spoke on the motion on the Green Paper on the 1987 review of developments in representative government, I spoke in support of direct election. However, I have reservations whether it should be implemented in 1988, because it is only right for any political reform to proceed cautiously and progressively. We should not rush this through. The Hong Kong society is susceptible to many outside forces; we cannot put down the stability and prosperity of over 5 million people as gambling bids. We should, on the contrary, be cautious so that a budding democratic system would have a chance to grow. We should wait until the social and political awareness of our people becomes more mature before implementing a major reform.

On that occasion, I also mention that the responsibility of the Survey Office, which was tasked to collect public opinion, was great. If the Survey Office's findings were such that the majority of Hong Kong people were in support of direct election in 1988, then I would go by the majority view, the reason being that Hong Kong people gave their views in response to Government's request. If the Government did not respect public opinion, in the end it would lose the trust of the people.

After the publication of the Survey Office report on public response to the 1987 review of developments on representative government, it is true that it has led to a lot of controversy. Yet, in the process, what I have observed is that the purpose of the Green Paper is to review the development in representative government. Direct election in 1988 is only one element within the whole review. Therefore, the spirit of the Survey Office report is to reflect the

opinions of people of all strata on the whole system of representative government; we should look at the issue with an equitable attitude.

Since I work in the field of science, I would like to take this opportunity to look at the report objectively and give my comments. I have discussed the report with colleagues in the Statistics Department of the University of Hong Kong and on the most controversial part of the Survey Office report, that is direct election to Legislative Council, we have done more detailed analyses.

First, submissions handed to the Survey Office came only from a minority of people. This method of handing in opinions is not as haphazard a sampling and it is not probability sampling. Therefore, we cannot project the opinions by proportion to apply to the total population. We should pay special attention to the thinking embodied in these submissions; for example, reasons for supporting or opposing direct election, as these opinions are very valuable reference material. Signature campaigns do not belong to probability sampling either. Since there is no record on, and comparison between those who have signed and those who refused to sign, we cannot know the percentage of people who are in support of introducing direct elections in 1988. At the same time, preprinted identical submissions are not very different from signature campaigns in nature. They should be treated separately as well.

The opinion surveys conducted by AGB McNair, as commissioned by the Survey Office and four other organisations, all adopted the method of probability sampling. The target of these surveys was the adult population of Hong Kong. It is appropriate for us to concentrate our attention on these survey findings. These can be found in the Survey Office report—paragraphs 13.37 and 13.39. Out of the four organisations only the concerned staff of tertiary educational institutions for constitutional development adopted the face-to-face interview mode, the same as AGB McNair. The other three conducted telephone interviews. As far as I know, the Survey Research Hong Kong conducted four surveys on the question of whether there shall be direct elections in 1988. The findings are 54 per cent, 54 per cent, 49 per cent and 46 per cent respectively. These findings show a downward trend. The Marketing Decision Research conducted three surveys on the same topic. The findings are 41 per cent, 39 per cent and 62 per cent respectively. But, in a public opinion and public opinion survey seminar conducted by the Basic Law Consultative Committee, a representative of Marketing Decision Research pointed out that the 62 per cent was arrived at because respondents were given detailed explanation before answering questions. The results of this kind of survey would almost certainly differ from those where respondents immediate response was gauged. Therefore, its representativeness has yet to be studied.

I would like to point out also that in paragraph 13.39 of the Survey Office report the findings of the 'Concerned Staff of Tertiary Education Institutions for Constitutional Development' indicate that people who are in support of or who have no objection to the introduction of direct elections in 1988 total 19 per

cent. While I do not think this reflects the true findings of the survey: the reason is that, in that survey, respondents were asked whether they supported direct election and then those who answered in the affirmative would fill in the year individually, and only 19 per cent supported direct election in 1988. In fact I think that there is no difference in spirit between those who advocate implementing direct election in 1987 and those who advocate direct election in 1988. Therefore, if we add the number of people who support implementing direct election in 1987 to the 19 per cent, the figure should be 22.3 per cent; but, we should look at those who advocate introducing direct elections in 1990 and they total 14.3 per cent. Those who think there should be direct election after 1990 total 25.8 per cent. So we can see that a lot of people are concerned about convergence of direct election with the Basic Law.

AGB McNair designed his questionnaire by copying from Chapter 7, that is, a summary of the Green Paper, and the questionnaire is therefore complicated and unclear on the issue of direct election in 1988. Certainly, the survey should aim at gauging opinions on the entire political system. However, since this element is related to the Legislative Council and it is the concern of public opinion recently, what should have been done would be to ask this question in the most direct and simple manner. If paragraph 107 of the Green Paper had been chosen as the basis for designing the question, it would have been much clearer and respondents would have found it much easier to give an answer.

Sir, from the report of the monitors on the work of the Survey Office attached to the Survey Office report, I know that the monitors followed a stringent monitoring procedure and looked into every aspect of the Survey Office's work. In the concluding remarks, they judged that 'the Survey Office has properly, accurately and impartially carried out its duties and followed the procedures prescribed in its terms of reference'. My personal experience of reading the entire report makes me feel that the Survey Office has been sincere in expressing the opinions of different sectors. Therefore, I think this report is acceptable, although improvements can be made to some information analysis procedures.

Direct election in 1988 is a major change to the whole of Hong Kong. I think this change should not come about without the support of 50 per cent of the general public.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

MR. SOHMEN: Sir, the debate this afternoon on the Survey Report on the 1987 Green Paper on Developments in Representative Government, and in particular Mr. Martin LEE'S erudite remarks, reminds me a bit of the Theatre of the Absurd. The dramatis personae are 'Exercise in Futility', pitted against 'Exercise in Frivolity', played by actors without a proper script and feeling their way forward. The reviewers are baffled but their professional pride demands that they find meaning; interpretations thus differ widely as to what is going on.

The audience at large briefly enjoy the thrill of being part of something new and incomprehensible, but ultimately leave with a sense of unease. The moral of the story somehow remains in doubt.

But it is really all quite simple once we cut through the posturing. Promises were made in 1984 but—due to changed circumstances—could not be fully kept, or at least required a change in timetable. It should have been relatively easy to explain the need for modification of the old plan, once the new parameters were in place. Much debate and acrimony would have been saved. But such a step needed the courage of plain speaking, and the admission of tactical errors. This was not forthcoming. We should all have learned the lesson that, when dealing with matters of such importance, clarity of purpose and expression is better than diplomatic shadow-boxing.

To protect the sensibilities of all concerned, Government decided to camouflage the retreat from previous positions by a decision to delegate the responsibility of choice to the people. The Green Paper emerged with its many options, excluding those that no longer fitted the new situation. There are only a few people left who still pretend that it was a legible document for the public at large; and of course its background could not be authoritatively explained either without running the immediate risk of complaints at government intervention.

The Survey Office was then established to gauge public opinion. Putting aside purely political considerations which now overshadow its efforts, it did an excellent job in a very short time for which the commissioner and his staff should be warmly thanked and congratulated. The survey outcome was highly predictable: in the opinion polls, a majority accepted the need for change but not in 1988; a smaller number expressed a preference for the introduction of direct elections in 1988; the larger part of the population remained stubbornly silent. An exercise in futility? Perhaps, but not entirely.

The Green Paper debate and the travails of the Survey Office have not been totally useless. While providing some much-needed civic education, the results have revealed the true identity of our democratic reformers. First they attacked the Green Paper, quite rightly, for being somewhat obscure and not containing all the promised options. Mr. Desmond LEE has done so again today. But people who do not see, or cannot accept objective reality which may necessitate policy changes obviously lack common sense. Let us, however, accept them as idealists.

But people who are so wrapped up in their own ideals that they become unaware of, or insensitive to the real strength of sentiment in the community as to available alternatives, while at the same time proclaiming that they, *and only they*, represent that community, are poor politicians.

And if these same people have to put up a smoke-screen of frivolous complaints to hide embarrassment and frustration over their failure to produce more convincing arguments or to make accurate predictions, then they are immature, hypocritical, or irresponsible politicians.

Sir, let us be conscious of the fact that bad losers never make good democrats. That is the second lesson we should all learn from this exercise.

This Council and others will remember that those of us who argued against hasty constitutional reforms in the July debate made a commitment in advance to respect the findings of the Survey Office. Some of those in favour of the early introduction of direct elections however warned Hong Kong of their likely departure if they could not have their brand of 'democracy'. What sort of democracy can we expect in Hong Kong from people making such puerile threats? What degree of commitment to Hong Kong and its future should we read into such egocentric behaviour and attempts at psychological blackmail? And what should we read into the attacks on the mechanics of the survey effort or the so-called flaws in the methodology of the opinion pollsters?

Let us face it: what cries of outrage would we have heard if the Survey Office had indeed given more specific instructions to AGB McNair Hong Kong Ltd, or if AGB McNair had substantially deviated in their questions from the terminology in the Green Paper, as Mr. Martin LEE has suggested they should have done. Conversely, I very much wonder, Sir, if we can assume that the criticisms of the Survey Office report would have been as strong if by chance the opinion polls had reflected the result desired by the pro-election lobby? How many disgruntled citizens would likely have taken to the streets in that event protesting against the 'unfavourable' findings of the Survey Office? And why should it be seen as 'unfair' to the activists not to get the full support of the people of Hong Kong? Given the pragmatic character of Hong Kong's population, what is so 'unusual' about the poll results? In talking about lack of credibility and in denouncing the Hong Kong Government, which has been most scrupulous in keeping away from the assessment exercise, are the reformers not in fact chiding the people of Hong Kong for having made the wrong decision—at least wrong in the minds of the reformers?

Sir, we have to accept that some people will never be satisfied until they get exactly what *they* want, and will even use the cloak of democratic principles to cover up their essentially undemocratic behaviour. Or they call the Government 'lame duck' if they do not get what they want. Hong Kong cannot afford political leaders without vision or without a sense of responsibility for the concerns of the whole community and not just those of their own little groups. We can do without frivolity. What we need are people with a commitment that is tempered by a sense of perspective, a knowledge of their own limitations, and an appreciation of achievable reality. Fortunately such people do exist in Hong Kong and I am encouraged by their dedication and am convinced that ultimately they, and not those shouting so loudly but so unconvincingly, will carry this territory through the transition period and beyond.

Whatever the final decision on the Green Paper options, I also hope that in 1988 all of us in this Chamber—both Appointed and Elected Members—will be put to the test as to what we really have achieved—individually and collectively—during the last three years. Those who so fervently argue for democracy should be the first to invite and accept this challenge.

Sir, the Survey Office report has adhered to its terms of reference; its findings and how they were arrived at are there for all to see and to draw conclusions from. The Survey Office only had to present and not to decide, and the attack on its work is a misplaced and last-ditch attempt to influence the ultimate political decision by suggesting that the available evidence should be disregarded. That evidence of course also includes the large silent majority who by their inaction have voted for the status quo. They simply want to get on with their work and are not interested in the Pied Piper. We should not make mountains out of mole hills but should heed the old Chinese idiom that says, if you pardon my Cantonese, Sir, 大事化小事, 小事化無事.

Sir, I support the motion.

MR. SZETO (in Cantonese): Sir, a true tiger, a paper tiger, and the phrase 'have a tiger by its tails'. Around the same time last week, Sir, we heard in one breath three tigers. Three tigers, indeed, sounds like Tora! Tora! Tora! and I inevitably associate that with the code name of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. I lived through that period of history and my impressions are deep indeed. That period of history began with a stealthy attack and ended in tragic surrender bringing on countless deaths and immense suffering that was paid out for advancement of mankind. Mankind must always advance.

Mr. FORD, who released the three tigers, said that it was indeed a great pity that some people have sought to cast serious doubt on the integrity of the Survey Office and on the sincerity of the Government's wish to consult the people of Hong Kong. It is, indeed, a great pity but what has given rise to serious doubt is not that 'some people' referred to, but the report of the Survey Office, itself. Without such a report I do not believe anybody will be able to cast doubt on it. The facts are clear and the public have eyes and brains; they are no fools. Without facts no attempts to cast doubt can succeed.

Mr. FORD also said, and I quote: 'We deeply resent the fact that our integrity and motivation has been called into question'. The Government has resented too soon. What is called into question is the categorisation of opinions or submissions in the report and the design of the questionnaire. Although the Survey Office was commissioned by Government, and AGB McNair was commissioned by the Survey Office, the Government has said that the Survey Office is entirely independent and the Government did not intervene in its work. The Survey Office also said that AGB McNair Hong Kong Ltd. was entirely independent and the Survey Office did not intervene in its work either. If so, if really so, why is the hasty resentment on the part of Government. Whether the Government will be seriously doubted we will have to wait until the White Paper is released in early February and, by that time, if there is no doubt nobody can cast any doubt and if there is doubt no one can possibly suppress the doubt. The report will still be assessed by the Executive Council before a decision is made. Why such hasty resentment? Has the Government already assessed the situation and made a decision?

What is doubted is the categorisation of submissions of the report and the design of the questionnaire by AGB McNair. First the categorisation of submissions.

There is one item called 'signature campaigns and similar documents'. That is originally so, but in the report there is only signature campaigns, but no similar documents. Preprinted and similar letters represent a total of 73 767 individuals, 97 of whom are against heavy direct elections in 1988. Are they not similar documents? Why are they put in the same category as individuals and groups of individuals? I strongly demand, Sir, that the preprinted and identical letters be combined with signature campaigns in their computation and assessment.

Ignoring the preprinted and identical letters the remaining individual and groups of individual submissions can be further categorised into written letters and questionnaires, or questionnaire submissions. These two are different in nature. Why has the Survey Office put the two together and not clearly state the respective percentages of those people against and for the introduction of direct elections in 1988? I strongly demand, Sir, that the Survey Office should subdivide the remaining submissions in this category in this way and make known to the public the ratio of people for and against the introduction of direct elections in 1988.

Given these three categories of submissions as described, mainly: written letters, questionnaire submissions and signature campaigns and similar documents, then I can predict that the percentage of support for direct elections in 1988 would be vast indeed. This is the true reflection of public opinion.

Yesterday, Sir, a concerned group of academics met the Duty Roster Members of the Legislative Council strongly protesting against a misquotation in the report that those against the introduction of direct elections in 1988 accounted for 33 per cent. Actually, those in favour of introducing direct elections in their survey was highest among all others. Why did the Survey Office not consult the concerned group? After all, is it not clearly stated in the working practices and procedures that letters seeking further information were sent to the organisers of public opinion surveys in those cases where such data would assist the office to comment upon them? Is this a wilful mistake?

Serious doubt concerning the impartiality of the Survey Office is not without reason and it is not a case of people seeking to cast doubt.

Let me now turn to the matter of the design of the questionnaire. There are two statements in the monitors' report which are very significant. What puzzles us most is that some surveys adopting apparently similar methodology in sampling frame also produced different results and it would be up to the readers of the report to study carefully the respective methodology of these surveys and to judge for themselves whether the survey results are valid and reliable.

These two monitors, Sir, are being exceedingly polite and indirect. If we look through all of the questionnaires the answer is very clear and not puzzling at all.

In fact, the results are not entirely different. Apart from the issue of direct elections in 1988, the results of the McNair report and results of the other nine targeted at the Hong Kong adult population are basically similar. But why on the matter of introducing direct elections in 1988 do the results differ so greatly? The answer lies in the design of the questionnaire. Up to today, I still have not heard any professional in statistics publicly say that this part of the questionnaire by AGB McNair is not leading respondents in a particular direction and that it follows certain statistical principles.

I do not have much professional knowledge in statistics. I am only an ordinary respondent, but I find that the following tactics are used:

One is that people can only see leaves but not the wood. When the Green Paper was published it was very tedious, obscuring the main points and it was a case of causing the people not to see the wood for the trees, and it was the subject of much criticism. The questionnaire did not make up for the flaw, but made it worse with the result that people did not see the wood for the leaves. The introduction of direct election in 1988 is an issue of gravest concern, but it was only in one quarter of the question where people could express support. It is like finding one's own leaf in a wood.

The next tactic is storming through six city gates and overpowering seven generals. In the question concerning direct elections the third one is concerned with ignoring the introduction of direct elections in 1988. They are leading questions. In the fourth question there are four subparts, the first three diverted attention and only at the very last could one express support for introducing direct elections in 1988. So the one who answered that question in support of the introduction of direct elections in 1988 is braver than 'KWAN Wan-cheung' who stormed through five city gates and overpowered six generals.

It is also a strange ball game of one against 27. There were seven questions related to direct elections, which offered chance for people to support direct elections in 1988. A simple calculation will indicate that the chances of only one quarter of the seven question is only one in 28. It is similar to a strange ball game of one against 27 and I have not seen such a ball game except in the McNair questionnaire.

A game of maze. The options are muddled in concept and are not mutually exclusive. In many areas the respondent would hit walls and have to retract and make twist and turns before reaching the final goal.

With these tactics, whoever still clearly believes in having direct elections in 1988 will, I am sure, still call out for direction elections in 1988 with their last breath and in their dreams.

AGB McNair offered the shield that they followed closely Chapter 7 of the Green Paper but that is a paper shield. They are a research company, not a printing factory. They are commissioned to conduct public opinion survey, not commissioned to reprint the summary in Chapter 7 of the Green Paper.

Moreover, it is not completely faithful to that summary. In Question A3 and I1 of the questionnaire, they did not reprint faithfully the wording of the summary. They are not up to standard even as a printing factory.

Some have said that many people have voiced objections because the results of the survey did not accord with their own preference. I must now quote Mr. KWOK Hon-kin, Lecturer of Lingnan College, who said: 'Although up to now I still have reservations concerning the introduction of direct elections in 1988, to maintain academic dignity and professional dignity, I cannot but express rage at the errors in the McNair questionnaire. I find the results unacceptable and I call into question its professional level and professional ethics.'

It is said in the newspaper that the democratic lobby has been too honest this time. Yes, we are honest, but we do not regret it and we will continue to be honest. We hold fast to the principle of being consistent in motives, means and end.

The 1984 White Paper said that the majority of people in Hong Kong are in favour of having a number of directly-elected seats to the Legislative Council in 1988, and more directly-elected seats in 1997. If the White Paper released in February next year come to an entirely opposite conclusion, then we will ask: 'what are true public opinions, and what are falsehoods, and why is the change?'

Mr. FORD has said, 'It is incumbent upon the Hong Kong Government to continue to provide sound administration in the territory and to exercise responsibly the high degree of autonomy which it already enjoys under the British Government and which the government of the future Hong Kong SAR will enjoy under the Chinese government. We are determined to meet that requirement.' I welcome that statement and will see whether the White Paper published in three months' time reflects that spirit.

Mrs. FORD advised, quite rightly, against donning tiger skins in future. I fully admire her for her advice. Real tigers have no need for tiger skin. People who don tiger skins are not real tigers. Moreover, tigers have become rare and protected species in the world, and donning tiger skins is not popular with nature enthusiasts.

Sir, I recommend to you and the Executive Council:

1. To commission an independent consultant firm to assess the Survey Office report for you and the Executive Council's reference and render an account to the public. Because the Government was not in a position to make a decision concerning employing an independent expert to look into the remedial measures to the Daya Bay episode we can only say that we regret the case, but now that the Government is in the position to make a decision in this case.

2. Call a referendum on whether or not direct elections should be held in 1988. This is the true public opinion.
3. So long as the clouds are cleared and with impartiality and the courage to resist intervention, actually there is enough material in the Survey Office report to confirm what is said in the 1984 White Paper that the majority of the people of Hong Kong are in favour of a number of directly-elected seats to the Legislative Council in 1988 and a considerable number of such seats by 1997. The public opinion is much stronger now than in 1984.
4. For these reasons the Executive Council should decide in the context of the White Paper that there be direct elections in 1988 to this Council.

Sir, I am an Elected Member and I must express the views and feelings of my voters. The arrow is on the bow and must be shot. Please do not take offence, Sir.

MR. TAI: Sir, the problem of the survey report is two-fold. First of all, the classification of individual opinions and signature campaigns on the issue of direct election in 1988 invites possibilities for dispute. Individual opinions collected are presented in section A, Part 2 of Chapter 13 of the report, whereas the results of various signature campaigns towards direct election in 1988 is being categorised in section C, Part 2, of the same chapter.

The wet issue then is the different weight that has been attached by the commissioner to two different types of submissions. Hence, the percentage presented in the report supporting the introduction of direct election in 1988 is somewhat distorted. Whether it is a proper treatment of the various opinions expressed due to the different ways of representation remains to be debated. The format and number of signatures in the signature campaigns have clearly been stated in the report, and I am sure due notice and careful consideration to this aspect will be given by the Governor in Council, when making decision on further constitutional changes. Personally, I fail to see the validity of any grounds suggesting conspiracy to undermine the support for the introduction of direct elections in 1988, because all relevant data have been fully set out in the Survey Office report and it is the Governor in Council to take decisions on any future constitutional changes. Hence, it would be fair to attach different weights to different forms of representation. A reasonable man, Sir, would attach more weight to a lengthy and thoroughly presented representation than a representation made in simple preset printed letters, and for that matter, signature campaign.

Secondly, criticism has been laid against the format, style and wording of the questionnaire designed by AGB McNair Hong Kong Ltd. In the absence of any evidence to show that AGB McNair is not acting independently it would be difficult to draw any conclusive opinion on whether the questions in the questionnaire should or should not follow the wording of the Green Paper. After all, they have been charged with the responsibility for conducting an

independent survey on various issues arising out of the options contained in the Green Paper. Critics who have based their argument on the wordings in the Green Paper to design the questionnaire has missed the essence of the survey. The data concerning the options on various opinions expressed will constitute a factor in deciding our constitutional changes.

Sir, may I refer to the monitors' report prepared by Mr. F. K. LI and Mr. K. W. SO. In paragraph 17 of the report, it is mentioned that the issue of direct elections becomes the focus during the consultative period. Over 95 per cent of the representation are on direct election. The monitors suggest that the issue of direct election gains popularity through exhaustive effort of mass media to introduce and reiterate this particular aspect. It should be pointed out that too much attention is being drawn to the issue of direct election and this means that there is insufficient coverage and discussion about other aspects of constitutional changes. The lower responding rates of these issues reflect the situation and it is worrying that a comprehensive constitutional review will be forced to give way to an enthusiasm for direct election.

In paragraph 18 of the monitors' report it is suggested that there are discrepancies of results about various opinion surveys even though some have adopted similar research methods and sampling frame. Nevertheless, the two monitors have concluded that it may be due to different variables and environmental factors in the different surveys. The logic then follows that different variables and environmental factors of survey may bring about different results. Perhaps the commissioner as well as AGB McNair can enlighten us on the variables and the different environmental factors and how they would affect the results.

With these remarks, Sir, I support the motion.

MRS. TAM (in Cantonese): Sir, the Survey Office report is a very important document in this year's constitutional review. Its significance lies not only in showing the overall results of public consultation, but also in reflecting whether or not Government has undertaken public consultation accurately, objectively and impartially. Since its publication, the report has been the object of intense public discussion and criticism. This is but a normal and healthy state of affairs.

I have observed in the report, Sir, certain flaws in the Survey Office's presentation of public submissions and in the two public opinion surveys commissioned.

First, with regard to the presentation of public submissions, I agree that there is an essential difference between the result of signature campaigns and that of group or individual submissions sent to the Survey Office and nothing is amiss so far as their separate treatment and computation report is concerned. Moreover, I accept that separate treatment does not show that the results of the signature campaigns have not been given due recognition and importance. However, I beg to differ, Sir, in respect of the failure to provide a clearer

breakdown of the signed preprinted letters in the general category of public submissions. Some of these letters offered a choice of options to the people who signed them, while some only carry a set stand or statement on the political system for those who share that opinion to sign individually or collectively. I fail to see any difference in essence or form between these letters and documents used in signature campaigns, given especially the fact that the views expressed in the letters are surprisingly consistent, particularly in respect of direct elections in 1988. It is confusing to sweep all these letters into the broad category of submissions without providing a clear breakdown. I believe, therefore, that it would have been more appropriate, Sir, to have counted these letters separately and treated them no differently than in the case of documents in signature campaigns.

Second. There are flaws in the two public opinion surveys commissioned by the Survey Office. The questionnaire used in these surveys was designed to carry the wording of the options in Chapter 7 of the 1987 Green Paper Review of Developments in Representative Government. This is undoubtedly the most direct way of gauging public opinion on the Green Paper. The trouble is, however, that the options in the Green Paper itself are presented in a way that is less than clear. I pointed out in the debate on the Green Paper in July and I quote: 'that the presentation of the Green Paper this year is rather disappointing in certain aspects. It is tedious, confusing and at times illogical. More importantly, Government has not fulfilled its duties, namely to bring clear ideas on future development.' It is no wonder that the Survey Office's questionnaire which copied the options in the Green Paper has seen so much public dissatisfaction and criticism in the matter of its design.

When considering the Survey Office's report it would be unrealistic to assume that there is a conspiracy and engage in undue speculation about ulterior motives. I do not believe that the entire report should be completely repudiated. After all, what the report contains are facts. Recent public criticism has clearly shown up the flaws in the report and the authorities as well as Members of the Executive Council who are about to make a decision on the contents of the White Paper must already have a pretty good idea of the situation. May I take this opportunity, Sir, to urge the Executive Council when making the decision to fully consider the flaws in the report and take full account of the results of the many surveys conducted scientifically by market research firms commissioned by local organisations in assessing public opinion.

Lastly, Sir, I would like to talk about the much debated issue of direct elections. I have always supported direct elections being introduced into this Council and believe that 1988 is the right time to do so. I made this point very clearly when debating the Green Paper in July. In this consultation exercise on the matter of direct elections I cannot deny the fact that quite apart from the surveys commissioned by the Survey Office other surveys have also indicated that there is a split in opinion. But it is very clear that the people of Hong Kong do want direct elections in principle, whether it is the public opinion survey

commissioned by the Survey Office or whether they are conducted by other private firms, the vast majority of respondents agree to direct elections in Hong Kong in principle. So my strong opinion is that even if we do not unfortunately have any direct elections next year, the Executive Council should make the commitment for introducing direct elections as early as possible in the White Paper.

I support the motion with these words.

MR. TAM (in Cantonese): Sir, the four months' consultation period has ended and the Survey Office report has been completed. The Governor in Council will shortly take decisions on further development of Hong Kong's political system. At this time to take an overall view of all the opinions expressed will be more in line with the wishes of the people and will be in the public interest.

From personal observations the discussions on political development in the past few months have indicated that most people support the idea that we should develop towards democratic government in an evolutionary manner. As to whether there should be directly-elected elements to the Legislative Council, the general view is also supportive. I always believe that direct election is in the public interest and is what the people want.

The views expressed in the discussions have further confirmed my belief. However, contrary to the above, regarding the question of whether direct elections should be introduced in 1988, views expressed are quite divergent. From personal observations I tend to believe another view which is, on this issue most people do not clearly favour one way or another. Rather, they are more concerned with finding a way that is more reliable, feasible, and in line with the pace in democratisation. Such a way of thinking is similar to the views I expressed in the July debate. We have a common starting point. Here, I would like once again to express my views on this issue. I believe that we should wait for the propagation of the Basic Law and then use the provisions as the basis and make changes to our existing political system in a planned and systematic way and introduce direct elections. This will be a more reliable and feasible approach and will be in line with our pace of democratisation.

The Government released the Survey Office report at the beginning of this month. I am willing to believe that it is the result of serious work, but it does not mean that it is without shortcomings. No matter what, this report can reflect the views of the general public on the political review to a certain extent and thus have value as reference material.

Sir, with these remarks I support the motion.

MR. LAU (in Cantonese): Sir, after the release of the Survey Office report, there has been a lot of heated debate. This is understandable. I am sure that when the Governor in Council assesses the report he will consider comments and opinions on the reports received from all sectors.

The Survey Office was responsible for collecting and collating views on the 1987 Green Paper on political review. This consultation exercise was on a scale unprecedented in our history. The issues involved were also the most debatable. The task of the Survey Office was not at all easy. The Survey Office report might have its shortcomings. However, basically it has managed to collate views from all sources. Besides during the period of collection of views, independent monitors were appointed by the Governor to oversee the work of the Survey Office. In fact, both the Survey Office and the monitors were performing the tasks according to the terms of reference.

I feel that the terms of reference of the Survey Office were quite different from the nature of the Assessment Office in 1984. The Survey Office report is not a document drawing conclusions on political reforms. Rather, it lists views from different sources on political reforms and it is to be used as reference material for the Governor in Council.

Sir, in your policy address, you stated that in reaching decisions on political changes the Government would give full regard to other relevant factors and it would also take into consideration all the views contained in the report and all findings would be taken into account.

I hope that the Governor in Council will fully consider all views listed in the report; in this way the Governor in Council will really be assessing the views in depth and in this way he can decide on a political system that will bring stability and prosperity to our future society.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. EDWARD HO: Sir, the consultation exercise in regard to the Green Paper can be described as a success in terms of quantity as more than 130 000 submissions had been received by the Survey Office. However, it is regrettable that most comments seem to focus on only one or two issues, namely direct elections and whether they should be introduced in 1988. The rest of the issues raised in the Green Paper were somewhat overshadowed by the debate on direct elections and their timing.

Whether there should be direct elections, and when they should be introduced, are certainly important considerations in the development of a representative government; but these are just two related issues out of the total picture of our government system that we are asked to consider. The other issues, although less controversial, nevertheless carry considerable weight in the constitution of an open, responsible and efficient government. It is disappointing that public responses towards these other issues are relatively scarce compared to those on direct elections. The 1987 political review, in this respect, can only be described as a partial success.

Having said that, I still believe that the survey exercise has provided a valuable indication of the next step to be taken in the development of Hong Kong's government system. I am not a professional statistician, and I believe most of us here are not either. I do not intend to argue whether any of the opinion polls, AGB McNair and those organised by the private sector, are valid, or the questionnaires were drafted properly. If we widen our scope to take into consideration all the professionally conducted opinion polls together with the submissions received, we can still find a clear trend in the public's mind, which is that there is no overwhelming demand for hasty changes. This applies to most aspects of government system. On the question of direct elections, even if we disregard the AGB McNair survey, nine surveys undertaken by the private sector which aimed to cover the entire adult population indicated that although there is a strong support for an element of direct elections to the Legislative Council, there is not an overwhelming desire to introduce it in 1988. According to these surveys, the actual percentages indicated for such support are:

Survey Research (Hong Kong) Ltd: 54 per cent, 54 per cent, 49 per cent, 46 per cent.

Marketing Decision Research Co. Ltd.: 41 per cent, 41 per cent, 62 per cent.

Concerned Staff of Tertiary Educational Institutions: 19 per cent.

Frank Small & Associates: 43 per cent.

I now attempt to comment on our 'silent majority'. Despite tremendous efforts by both the Government and the various bodies urging the public to comment on the Green Paper, it appears that there is still a considerable number of people in Hong Kong who can only be called the 'silent majority'. First of all, let us examine the responses from some of the professional institutions that I am more familiar with. Response rates to questionnaires sent out by professional institutions to solicit their respective members' comments on the Green Paper were disappointingly low. The response rate for the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers was 25.8 per cent; the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, 12.5 per cent and 13.6 per cent respectively in two surveys; the Hong Kong Society of Accountants, 8.2 per cent, and the Hong Kong Medical Association, 8.5 per cent. The Hong Kong Institute of Architects, of which I am a member, sent out its council's opinion to 940 members; only 14 replied.

One might well ask: why are the professionals, the backbone of our community, so uninterested in responding to the Green Paper, a document so important to our future?

This lack of response does not exist only among the professionals but is also found among all strata of our community. The AGB McNair finding shows that although awareness of the Green Paper was high, at 80 per cent, some two thirds of the respondents claimed to know very little about the contents of the Green Paper and less than 1 per cent claimed to know a great deal about it.

It has been claimed that the Green Paper is too complicated for the public to give comprehensive comments. This may be true. The structure of a government is complicated. Perhaps it is better to withhold one's comments on the subject unless one understands it.

In order to generate a higher rate of response, some individuals and organisations have chosen to confine the issues down to that of direct elections and their introduction in 1988.

It would not be unreasonable to suggest that most of the people in Hong Kong are now aware of this subject, as it had been debated and reported extensively and uninterruptedly in the media throughout the past six months. And how has the public reacted to it? Take the question of direct elections for 1988. The AGB McNair findings show that 40 to 45 per cent of the respondents in the two surveys picked the options of 'don't know/no opinion', 'don't understand the question' or 'not clear about the respective concept'.

Beside the official survey, other surveys conducted by the private sector also reveal a similar pattern in public response. Again, take the question of direct elections for 1988. The Survey Research Hong Kong Company conducted four surveys, and respondents who picked the option of 'other views/no comments/ no opinion' ranged from 28 to 33 per cent; in the Marketing Decision Research Company Ltd.'s three surveys, those who picked this option ranged from 10 to 35 per cent; in the survey conducted by the Concerned Staff of Tertiary Education Institutions for Constitutional Development, 41 per cent; and in the survey by Frank Small & Associates, 23 per cent.

It is a pity that designers of these surveys did not pursue this further and find out why people did not have any opinion in regard to the Green Paper. I consider that 'no opinion' in itself can be treated as a form of opinion, and it should be taken into account in the evaluation of the survey report.

The lack of information on why such a large number of people have no comment leaves us now with the task of interpreting what they mean. Are the people of Hong Kong so indifferent to politics? Are they so satisfied with the present system that they do not feel the need to voice their views? Or, although they are not satisfied with the status quo, are their feelings not strong enough to compel them to ask for change?

I think all three assumptions are valid, as developments in recent years have shown that Hong Kong people will no longer hesitate to stand up and make their voices heard if they have any grievances. Their silence towards the Green Paper can be taken as a strong indication that they are satisfied with the status quo and do not want to risk any hasty and unnecessary change.

The people of Hong Kong are pragmatic and prudent. They value the present stability and prosperity and will not call for changes just for the sake of changing. I urge the Government to take the same approach in assessing the findings of the Survey Office.

With these remarks. Sir, I support the motion.

CHIEF SECRETARY: Sir, the speeches we have heard this afternoon reflect a broad balance of opinions from the community at large and demonstrate also the keen interest which Members have in this very important document.

Sir, the Survey Office report reflects the views contained in over 130 000 submissions sent direct to the Survey Office, as well as in nearly 170 public opinion surveys and over 20 signature campaigns. It is a faithful record of the full range of views which have been expressed on the Green Paper and of the wide variety of forms in which those views were submitted.

When the Survey Office report was published just two weeks ago, it was reported to me that one journalist having quickly read through the report asked indignantly at the press conference 'Well, what is the answer? What are your conclusions?'

A question of that sort indicates a misunderstanding of the role of the Survey Office. It is a misunderstanding, Sir, which seems to be shared by many commentators on the report and judging by some of the comments made this afternoon, even by a few Members of this Council.

The terms of the reference of the Survey Office were very clear. Its job was to invite as wide a public response as possible to the issues discussed in the Green Paper, to receive and record all views expressed in writing, including those submitted directly to it or indirectly through established consultative channels and to submit to the Governor in Council an impartial and accurate report collating and presenting all such views. It was not for the Survey Office to assess these views or draw conclusions from them.

The question that should have been asked more frequently, I suggest, is whether the Survey Office has done its job impartially and accurately as was required by its terms of reference. In answering that important question, I do not rely entirely on my own judgment. When the office was established, as many Members have commented, two independent monitors were appointed to oversee its work and to report to the Governor personally on whether they were satisfied that the Survey Office had properly followed its terms of reference.

In their 12 page report, Sir, which outside this Council has received scant attention over the two weeks, the monitors stated, and I quote, 'In conclusion, we judge that the Survey Office has properly, accurately and impartially carried out its duties and followed the procedures prescribed in its terms of reference.'

Sir, much has been made this afternoon of the way in which different types of submissions to the Survey Office have been presented. Of course, the information can be presented in many different ways. But in commenting on this issue, may I again refer Members to the assessment of the monitors and I quote:

'We are satisfied with the way in which submissions were classified by the Survey Office as shown in paragraph 1.14 in Part I of the Commissioner's report. The classification, which formed the basis of subsequent grouping and tabulation of views by the Survey Office, was in compliance with the directions prescribed in its terms of reference. We also noted that the Survey Office had followed the prescribed directions in processing the different types of submissions including signature campaigns and similar documents as well as public opinion surveys submitted to the Survey Office. As regards the latter, we noted the Commissioner's observations in Appendix VII in Part II of his report and consider that the Survey Office has attempted to be as impartial and objective as possible in making those comments.'

Sir, it seems to me that the people who have criticised the report on the basis of its presentation are somewhat missing the point. Whether one type of submission is categorised in one way or another, whether signature campaigns are treated differently from printed forms, whether printed forms should have been excluded from the tables of statistics are not matters of such monumental importance as some Members have suggested this afternoon. What is important, Sir, is that all submissions have been included, all have been faithfully reported and all are there for all to see. As I have said, the Survey Office was not required to provide answers or conclusions.

May I turn briefly, Sir, to the comments that have been made on the AGB McNair surveys, which have taken up much of Members' time this afternoon. As in any survey of this nature, there will inevitably be different judgment as to how precisely any particular question should be put. I do not believe, Sir, it to be part of my task to defend the professional judgment of the company or the approach it has adopted. Listening to Members' speeches this afternoon, it is clear that while there is strong criticism of the report from some Members, others have been satisfied by the careful explanations which the company has provided. I believe, however, Sir, I should assure Members that both views will of course be taken into account by the Executive Council when considering the report.

Sir, accusations have been made outside this Council that the Government has deliberately manipulated public opinion to meet its own ends and has deceived the people of Hong Kong. I am sure that no one would expect me, as the Government's chief spokesman in this Council, to produce lame excuses or to try to duck the issue. Our critics have sought to credit us with a deviousness which is almost beyond belief. It is certainly beyond our capability. The word 'credibility' has been much used recently. I suggest, Sir, it is not our credibility which is now in question but the credibility of those who seek to concoct the conspiracy theory, for what they are suggesting is that this Government has deliberately written a Green Paper in a confusing way to mislead the public of Hong Kong. It has then set up a Survey Office with the deliberate intention of distorting the statistics it produced to suit the so-called wishes of the Hong

Kong Government. So, do people who make such accusations really believe that there has been such a conspiracy? Do they really believe that the monitors, who have been closely involved at every stage of the survey, would be a party to a plot to deceive the people of Hong Kong.

Sir, the truth is we have approached the survey on the Green Paper with a completely open mind. We have made it very clear that we have no preconceived ideas on the outcome of the consultation exercise and that we would not lead public opinion. Indeed, at the time of publication of the Green Paper, we were often criticised for being too neutral. We have sought the widest possible public response to the issues contained in that paper. That response has been of a scale unprecedented in Hong Kong's history. It has been meticulously recorded by an independent Survey Office, under the close scrutiny of independent monitors of the highest calibre and integrity. The public opinion surveys commissioned by the Survey Office, over which the Government has had no influence whatsoever, Sir, have been conducted impartially by professionals in their own field. Apart from laying down the terms of reference of the Survey Office before the whole exercise started, the Government has in no way sought to influence the way in which the Survey Office carried out its task. Sir, against this background, the conspiracy theory can be seen for what it is. It would seem that those who pursue it do so because the conclusions they have chosen to draw from the facts presented in the report are not to their liking. If further appears that the only report which would have been accepted by those critics outside this Council is one which is in total accord with their own views.

Sir, I believe, however, the truth is clear to all those who are willing to see it. Many Members who have spoken this afternoon have expressed their firm conviction in the integrity of the Green Paper survey and of the Survey Office report. I too am confident that the majority of Hong Kong people will accept the report for what it is: an impartial record of the views that have been expressed—no more, no less.

It is now for Members of Executive Council to take careful note of the views which are included in the Survey Office report and the comments which have been made on the report inside and outside the Chamber and to take them into account when deciding what advice to give you, Sir, on what changes should be made to our system of representative government in 1988.

Sir, when the White Paper is published next year the people of Hong Kong will be able to see for themselves whether their views and their needs have indeed been fully taken into account.

Sir, I support the motion.

Question proposed, put and agreed to.

Adjournment and next sitting

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: In accordance with Standing Orders I now adjourn the Council until 2.30 pm on Wednesday, 25 November 1987.

Adjourned accordingly at thirty-two minutes past Seven o'clock.