

17 votes take Tso to Legco

By LINDA CHOY
and PETER LI

THE conservative faction in the Regional Council yesterday won a battle over the liberals in the by-election to fill the Legislative Council seat vacated by convicted legislator Gilbert Leung Kam-ho.

Alfred Tso Shiu-wai, a candidate supported by the Heung Yee Kuk and pro-China councillors, beat United Democrat Chow Yick-hay as well as independents Lau Kwong-wah and Yeung Fuk-kwong.

Mr Tso secured 17 votes — more than half of the 33 votes cast.

Mr Yeung came second with six votes, while Mr Chow and Mr Lau each received five votes.

The losers attributed their defeat to the strength of the conservative rural forces in the Regional Council.

A smiling Mr Tso said he



Alfred Tso

would try to improve links between the Regional Council and the legislature during his two-year term. He also pledged to reflect the views of Hongkong people to the Chinese authorities.

He had been in contact

with Xinhua (New China News Agency), China's *de facto* embassy in Hongkong, about his decision to run for the election.

Dismissing suggestions he was paying homage to the Chinese Government, Mr Tso said it was a courtesy to open communication with senior Chinese officials.

He was cautious over the sensitive issue of the functional constituency election in the Regional Council, which has an electorate of only 35.

"I do agree the system is unfair but there is a need for its existence," he said.

Asked if he found himself unrepresentative, Mr Tso said: "No candidate could claim themselves to be representing all voters in Hongkong because the territory has been divided into numerous constituencies in every election."

He said he would vote against Governor Chris Pat-

ten's political reforms if they were tabled in the Legislative Council.

"Although many people will disagree with my views, we ought to bear in mind we have to follow the Basic Law after 1997," he said.

Mr Tso, a Liberal Democratic Federation member, said the interests of the Regional Council would be his first priority in his service to the Legislative Council.

● The Independent Commission Against Corruption has confirmed that it has received one report of corruption in relation to the upcoming by-election for Gilbert Leung's Regional Council seat.

Seven candidates are running for the seat in the Sai Kung constituency.

Leung, convicted on June 1 of buying votes and sentenced to three years in jail, was automatically disqualified from all his elected positions.