

J. A. M. P.

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Answers sought from Zhao

By WALTER CHEUNG

A group of university graduates have questioned whether Hongkong people could be accused of "counter-revolutionary crimes" after 1997.

In what they describe as an open letter to the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr Zhao Ziyang, the 13 graduates also asked whether the four cardinal principles of the Chinese constitution will be applied to the basic law for Hongkong.

The principles include the leadership of the Communist Party and the guidance of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tsetung thought.

The group also questioned the effectiveness of statements made by the head of the Hongkong branch of the New China News Agency, Mr Xu Jianun.

The letter noted that China's top leader, Mr Deng Xiaoping, has said that apart from himself, there are only four official spokesmen on Hongkong.

These are Mr Zhao, the Director of the Hongkong and Macau Office, Mr Ji Pengfei, and the Foreign Minister plus his spokesman.

The group said in their letter: "We believe even more strongly that prosperity and stability alone should not be the ultimate goals of Hongkong after 1997.

"What we treasure most are our existing freedoms, the spirit of the rule of law and the sense of justice in Hongkong.

"These elements not only constitute fertile ground for stability and prosperity here, but will also contribute substantially to China's modernisation in all

respects, hence they are in line with the nation's long-term interests."

They asked whether the Chinese Government will interfere if, after 1997, the Hongkong Government's policies clash with Peking's on matters of material gain, such as competition in foreign trade.

The letter also sought clarification on whether people will have the freedom to criticise the Hongkong and Chinese Governments through the mass media and other public channels.

In another open letter to Umelco, the group asked its three delegates to let the public know what demands they will put forward in Peking.

They also demanded that the three disclose details of their talks on their return.