

Adviser invitation for Lee

Shadow cabinet would 'violate' agreements

CHINA has invited Co-operative Resources Centre convener Allen Lee to become a Hongkong adviser, stepping up controversy over the touted shadow government.

Allen Lee said he would be consulting the organising committee of the new party before reaching a decision.

He said Beijing was enlarging its pool of Hongkong advisers and others were expected to be announced before the end of the month.

"It is important, we the people of Hongkong have our views fully reflected to the Chinese Government with regard to a smooth transfer of government," he said.

United Democrat Martin Lee said if China were to create a shadow cabinet to discuss Hongkong affairs, it would contradict the Joint Declaration as Britain continued to rule Hongkong until 30 June 1997.

He said clause four of the Joint Declaration clearly stated the British would run Hongkong until 1997, a condition China agreed to honour. He said the agreement would be contravened if it set up a "competing government, second government or second stove" as Beijing calls it.

Meeting Point's chairman Anthony Cheung, who returned from Beijing yesterday following talks with Director for Hongkong and Macau Affairs Office Lu Ping, said he believed it was Lu's wish that both sides resolve the current stand-off "calm down, sit down and begin to talk".

He said Lu was adamant China would abide by the Basic Law and the Joint Declaration on the issue of Hongkong people governing Hongkong after 1997 and promised some sort of channel to consult Hongkong people over their future.

Cheung said Lu told him the second round of Hongkong advisers to China would come from a wider range of political beliefs.

Last year Beijing appointed 44 Hongkong people as advisers during the change of sovereignty.