

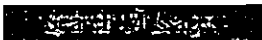
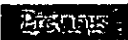

 Read Message Back to: [Inbox](#)**From:** Roger Houghton**Date:** 2004/03/30 Tue AM 08:02:07 CST**To:** views@cab-review.gov.hk**Subject:** Constitutional Reform    Move To:  

If the government of China has decided that its joint declaration is not what it meant and needs reinterpreting, that appears to me to be a derogation from its previous position and a matter of shame for China.

However the government of China relies for its authority on power not law. There is nothing the people of Hong Kong can do to encourage China to perform its agreements if it chooses not to do so.

In these circumstances, I think the appropriate action for the task force on constitutional reform is not to consider its proposed duty, which has been pre-empted by the NPC, but to focus on what China will offer to Hong Kong in compensation for those contractual agreements it does not intend to perform.

There must be a quid pro quo. Perhaps a majority of us will find it adequate. I believe the Task Force should be negotiating with the power-holders to get the best deal on offer. At least we can assert and preserve a principle that people who act unpredictably accept some penalty for their changeability.

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