



## Poll find public distaste for politicians' racial comments

By Sam Strangeways

Politicians should be stopped from making racial comments in public, according to two thirds of people who responded to an opinion poll.

Research.bm asked 402 people whether they agreed with the statement: "Political leaders should be censored when making public racial comments".

Sixty-seven percent strongly agreed and 14 percent strongly disagreed in the telephone poll conducted in April.

A remark about "house niggers" made by Sen. David Burch on his radio show last summer recently hit the headlines again, after rulings by the Human Rights and Broadcasting commissions on a complaint about the comment.

Nosheen Syed, chief operating officer of Research.bm, said the question was posed in light of recent news stories and was one of a series devised by staff at the market research company to gauge public opinion on current affairs.

The survey also asked whether the Island's cricket team was worth \$11 million – the size of a grant given by the Government to the sport last October.

Thirty-six percent of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement and 26 percent strongly agreed.

Half of those surveyed strongly agreed that Bermuda needed a new hospital and that the law banning oversized cars needed to be revised. Twenty-two percent disagreed with those statements.

Forty percent of those polled were strongly against women being recruited into Bermuda Regiment, compared to 25 percent strongly in favour.

Research.bm also asked whether the Chamber of Commerce's Buy Bermuda campaign – aimed at boosting the local economy – had affected whether respondents shopped for local or overseas produce.

Thirty-eight percent of those polled strongly disagreed with the statement "The Buy Bermuda campaign has impacted my decision to shop locally rather than overseas" and 22 percent strongly agreed.

More than half of the respondents believed there was value in the public school system and 63 percent believed the Government should provide low-cost single-room housing to replace the Canadian Hotel, which closed in March.

"We sat down as a team and thought what we as a company wanted to know," said Ms Syed.

"It's kind of fun for us. We conduct a survey once every six months and next time we will probably add in more about issues which are big right now, such as sexual discrimination."

The poll has a margin of error of plus/minus 4.9 percent.