

2003.5.14

**Speech by the Hon Mrs Selina Chow Liang Shuk-ye, GBS, JP**

**Motion Debate on Calling for the Resignation of the Chief Executive, Mr Tung Chee-Hwa, 14 May 2003**



Selina Chow:

Madam President, we have just heard a version on the performance of the Chief Executive given by the Chief Secretary for Administration while the democratic faction also gives another which is exactly the opposite. Then where does the truth lie? I would think that both versions do carry some truths. However, after listening to the speeches made by Mr Albert CHAN and the pro-democracy camp, I am convinced that they are making the Chief Executive accountable for a lot of things which are outside the scope of his responsibilities. Over the past few years, Hong Kong has faced numerous challenges, but should the Chief Executive be blamed for every one of them? People who make comments with their hindsight can do so easily, but when they are actually in the soup, they will find it hard to make a proper response. I still vaguely remember that before the Chief Executive ran for his second term, he made a review of his past performance, and he admitted honestly that there were some things that he could have done better. I recall the public was quite receptive to his objective analysis of his work and his frank admission to his inadequacies. That had certainly helped in his approval rates at that time.

When Mr James TIEN spoke earlier, he said that the efforts made at toppling TUNG had been there all the time and so it would be no surprise to us if a motion on that was proposed. It has become a fad these days to ask people to resign. For myself, I am speaking this remark for the third time this month. It has become a fad these days when someone has done something that people would not approve of or find pleasing, or when he has done something not up to the expectation of others, the person will be asked to resign even though he may have tried his best. So it is not surprising at all that we have a motion like this today.

However, if we call on the Chief Executive Mr TUNG Chee-hwa to resign today, it would not be an appropriate time at all. I think that the people of Hong Kong know very well that the whole community should stand up and fight this battle against atypical pneumonia united. We also need to be understanding and tolerant. Therefore, I agree very much with Premier WEN Jiabao when he made the point that we should be united. I am sure many people in Hong Kong would do the same. We are like a house, and if the house is divided, it will certainly fall.

I have said in the past that for no apparent reason, the views of Hong Kong people on Hong Kong are always less favourable than those of foreigners on Hong Kong. Take for example the atypical pneumonia epidemic, many comments made by foreigners are that Hong Kong has done quite a good job in containing the epidemic, for they are aware that we are facing a new virus and we are just groping for a way to deal with it. So many of the things that have happened are really things beyond our control. I think Honourable Members will recall that many officials, especially those in charge of our battle against the epidemic, do feel bad because the things they do may not be in line with their expectations. If we take their position, can we be sure that certain things can be avoided? We can hear some words of praise from the United States and other countries, but for Hong Kong, we hear not just compliments but quite a number of curses.

When we look back at the work done by the Chief Executive, we always find that he is very dedicated. If we are to make an objective analysis, we cannot help but ask, "Since the Chief Executive has done so many things with such dedication and commitment, why does he give the people such a negative impression? Why are so many doubts cast on his way of doing things and to the extent that he is queried for his sincerity in doing things on the Hong Kong people?" All these doubts and queries are used by those who aim at toppling TUNG, they accuse him of not standing on the side of the Hong Kong people. We have heard of the saying that lies told a thousand times would be taken as truth, so if people make such remarks so frequently, in the end more and more people would believe in their truthfulness.

I think for many things there are not just a black and white side to them. In many cases we see that the Chief Executive or the SAR Government has really wanted to do things well, but the result is not what they want to see. Therefore, I think the Government should also think why have things become what they are. Instead of grumbling, feeling bad about things — I am sure many officials would do — they should think why are the results of opinion polls like these? If the officials think that they have done their best for Hong Kong, why is it that they earn the praises of foreign people but they are scolded by the people of Hong Kong? I would believe that there do exist some problems. In my opinion, the crux of the problem is that something has gone wrong in the relationship between the Government and the various classes and sectors in society as well as those who hold different political views. So very often, some good things may turn out exactly the opposite. Certain matters could have been tolerated, but they have not been so, for some people would view the matters from a negative perspective. Therefore, I think the Government must find a mode of doing things on the basis of co-operation and consensus