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

**Motion Debate on Combating the problem of Mainlanders
Engaging in Illegal Employment and Prostitution in Hong
Kong, 5 November 2003**



Selina Chow:

Madam President, I shall only respond briefly to two major points raised by Mr SIN Chung-kai on the remarks of Mr Tommy CHEUNG. Mr SIN Chung-kai said that the Liberal Party, or Mr Tommy CHEUNG, did not support the proposal on licence revocation because they were not determined to clamp down on illegal employment. I wish to reiterate one point, and actually, Mr Tommy CHEUNG has also made this point very clear, but I simply do not know why Mr SIN Chung-kai should still have such a misunderstanding. Anyway, I must still clarify that the Liberal Party is basically in total support of clamping down on illegal employment. However, we also insist very strongly that he who does the wrong thing must bear the responsibility. Licence revocation will mean the cessation of operation of the entire food establishment. In that case, the penalty is no longer confined to the one who employs illegal workers. This is not right, because the penalty is not directed solely at the person who hires illegal workers. Another undesirable effect of licence revocation is that other employees of the food establishment will be plunged into unemployment. We in the Liberal Party maintain that this is most undesirable, and this is also the main reason for our opposition to the amendment of the Democratic Party.

The Liberal Party thinks that in some cases, the Government may refer to the licensee's past records of employing illegal workers and use them as a reason for refusing to outsource a works project to him. But the Government must never revoke the licence of a food establishment simply because of the mistake or crime committed by one single person. As we all know, even if other employees know that the licensee is employing illegal workers, they will not report to the authorities, because this will victimize all employees. It is most unfair to victimize innocent employees. I wish to state very clearly the real reason for the Liberal Party's opposition. It is not as simple as alleged by Mr SIN Chung-kai. I must state the real reason. We have made it very clear, and I must reiterate that we oppose the Democratic Party's amendment for the reason stated above.