



Speech by

## Howard Hobbs

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Hansard Wednesday, 14 November 2007

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### LOCAL TRANSITION COMMITTEES

**Mr HOBBS** (Warrego—NPA) (11.49 am): If there was any doubt that the unions ran the Labor Party, there will be no doubt any more when we look at the union representation on the council local transition committees. All transition committees now by law have to have up to three union members as well as elected councillors. When we examine the union membership of those transition committees, not only can we see unelected representatives forced on our communities but also we can see a tribal hierarchical system that has allowed some union chiefs to sit on more than one council local transition committee.

Some of these chief sitting bulls sit on up to 10 transition committees. The biggest sitting bull of them all is Michael Riek, who is on 10 committees. Jade Ingham is on eight committees; Frank Young is on five; Ed Taylor is on five; Peter Ryan is on four; Steve Rodgers is on four; Glenn Owens is on four; Danny Reeves is on four; and there is a token woman, Jan Kelly, on four. Even Shane Guley, whom Labor would not let run as a candidate for Maranoa, is on one of these council transition committees.

Maybe someone from the Labor Party could tell the local communities why this union stacking is going on. Does Labor not have enough membership to go around so it has to stack the committees with the heavyweights? Or is it that Labor does not trust union membership to do the job and it has to put heavies on the committees to keep control? Or is it that normal union membership cannot cut the mustard with elected councillors?

Union domination even goes to the extreme in the Torres Strait. There is no union membership in the Torres Strait but the government has parachuted three union members into the Torres Strait regional council. How disgraceful is that? Union membership on councils ranges from two per cent up to 30 per cent and falling fast. This Labor government is hell-bent on stopping Queensland workers from signing up to WorkChoices agreements and are using council committees to gain political advantage for themselves even though the majority of the communities do not want or support them.