




Speech By  
**Tim Mander**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 November 2015

**MOTION: TRADE UNIONS**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise in support of the motion before the House this evening. Both sides of the House might be surprised by the fact that I actually believe in the concept of unionism. I think it makes sense that workers should be looked after. I think it makes sense that there should be a representative body that speaks to the employers as one vote. I support that. However, I will tell the House what I do not support: I do not support unions having preferential treatment; I do not support unions having a bigger say than other stakeholders; I do not support unions dictating policy to the government; and I support union members, but I do not support bullying union leaders.

There can be no greater example of the unions dictating government policy than the department of education and the Minister for Education. Over the past three years, they campaigned mercilessly to remove us from government. They campaigned against some of the most successful policies that the education department has seen for years. Great Teachers = Great Results was a program that promoted mentoring teachers and master teachers to recognise excellence in schools. But, no! Let us drag everybody back to the common denominator. Let us not recognise excellence. Most principals will say that the Great Results Guarantee was the most effective policy in the history of education. Principals have told me that they received so much money through the Great Results Guarantee that they did not know what to do with it. They campaigned against that as well.

They campaigned against independent public schools. In the first round, only 26 schools picked up it up. Why? Because the unions scared the living daylights out of the school principals. In the next round, 130 schools applied and it was oversubscribed. I know that in electorates represented by members on this side of the House and that side of the House, communities and principals want more IPSs, despite what the union has said. Under our advanced maintenance program, we provided \$300 million to get rid of the maintenance backlog, but the union would find a problem with anything that the previous government did.

The unions campaigned relentlessly and the unions have now been repaid in spades. The payback is underway. Let us look at some of the payback for the education union. The former vice-president of the union, Sam Pidgeon, who has had an entire career in teaching and education policy, now has been appointed to the board of Seqwater. She is extremely well qualified. Yesterday morning after a Remembrance Day service, I was driving back to parliament. I passed the local state school. Plastered all over the fence is union propaganda material, again politicising our school students and parents, who are subjected to that every day. It is absolutely disgraceful.

What do we see now? The unions are back on the selection panels for school principals. Can members imagine any organisation that allows unions to pick the leaders of an organisation? They are back in control. We have the president of the union, Kevin Bates, now on the selection panel for independent public schools. He campaigned against it, but he is now deciding which school should get independent public school status. However, it gets better than that. A whole school community can

decide 100 per cent that they want to be an independent public school. The principal can agree with that and the parents can agree with that, but the unions have a right of veto. They can veto the wishes of the parents. If the union does not want it, the school will not be granted IPS status.

In relation to the employment of more teachers, in its monthly journal the union boasted that the QTU has been closely involved in planning the distribution of additional teachers with the department. The union is dictating the policy of the education department. The other thing that is incredible is that this union has been totally silent on the fact that the education portfolio, which covers 20 per cent of the state budget, does not have a stand-alone minister. It is mixed with four other portfolios. Can members imagine an LNP government not having education as a stand-alone portfolio? This union has the hide to say that it is not affiliated with the ALP. They are not affiliated in word, but they are definitely affiliated in action.