

EXTINCTION REBELLION RALLY — PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Statement

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [6.20 pm]: Yesterday, as the house was about to rise, my good friend Hon Tim Clifford gave a member's statement. He was kind enough to make a passing reference to bounce an idea off me and I thank him for that. I always like to feel like I am a bit involved. My colleagues and I had a meeting to attend straight after the house rose. We did not end up getting home until very late—in the wee hours anyway—so I did not want to respond on that occasion, but I will now. Firstly, I thank the honourable member for seeking to involve me in the point that he was raising in the house, which is that apparently, I think tomorrow, 15 August, there will be a thing called an Extinction Rebellion rally. I do not normally get involved with Extinction Rebellion rallies and this one will be no exception. Since I made that a bit clear to Hon Tim Clifford by interjection, I have been inundated with an email. Admittedly, I think all members have probably received the same email.

Hon Charles Smith: Just you.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: No, I know Hon Michael Mischin has. This is from a person who says they live in Maylands. Similarly, I have been to Maylands, even though it is not in my area. This email discloses a little more about the Extinction Rebellion rally. This is now twice within 24 hours that I have been invited.

Hon Diane Evers: Make it three. Come along.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: Is Hon Diane Evers extending the invitation—she is not going as well, is she?

Hon Diane Evers: I will be there and I would love to see you there.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: This is awful. The house will be sitting at that hour and I think members should know where their responsibilities lie.

Hon Diane Evers: It goes on beyond one o'clock.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: How on earth will it go for that long? Will people be glued to the spot or something?

Hon Diane Evers interjected.

Hon Sue Ellery: They have been practising that.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: Have they? It strikes me that this message that I received is really addressed to government members. I will read out a bit of it, because I am sure that this person is very sincere. Basically, it lectures me. It says that various global catastrophes are imminent and then offers me this advice —

If this information is new or surprising to you, I suggest you start with David Attenborough's recent documentary *Climate Change: The Facts*, which gives a good overview.

Apparently, that is to be the basis upon which we will make certain further decisions. She continues —

As our representatives in Western Australia it is your responsibility to be informed and to act in the interests of all Western Australians.

Hon Diane Evers: Great idea.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: Absolutely. She continues —

I too have three demands for the Government of Western Australia and this Parliament:

1. You must tell the truth by declaring a Climate and Ecological Emergency.
2. You must act now to reduce our carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and halt biodiversity loss.

[Interruption.]

The PRESIDENT: I will confiscate my own phone. Sorry.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN: It continues —

3. You must create and be led by the decisions of a Citizen's Assembly that ensures a just transition to a safe and sustainable future.

I am interested to see how the Leader of the House and her colleagues in government respond to these three demands. I do not know whether the Leader of the House is the sort who responds that well to ultimatums, but maybe we will find out in due course. In reviewing this, I thought: well may have I interjected on Hon Tim Clifford last night when, according to the uncorrected *Hansard*, I said something along the lines of, "What some of your supporters need to do is grow up." Indeed. I do not know who these people might be, but I think that they are seriously

misguided. I am not that impressed by overly precious, precocious and earnest youth who pretend they know everything, having seen a David Attenborough program.

Hon Diane Evers: I think they have seen more than that.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Hon Diane Evers can get up in a minute if she has anything intelligent to say.

Several members interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: If she is a spokesperson for this bunch, I doubt it very much indeed.

The PRESIDENT: All right.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: The aim apparently, as has been demonstrated by those who advocate for them, is that if anyone wants to disagree with them, they have to shout them down and declare that they are not entitled to that point of view, because they know it all. They are entitled to demand the things that they want to demand and no-one else is entitled to any other view. Never mind that I have been an elected member in this place and a holder of senior office in a number of roles over very many years, possibly since before some of these people who presume to lecture us were even born. It is all very well for people to aspire to make the world a better place, but there is a way to go about it.

We have these demands to show leadership. Let me tell members a few things about showing leadership. Showing leadership is about standing up to bullies, standing up to people who want to shout us down—hell's bells. I have been standing up to people on the steps of Parliament, as I say, probably since before a lot of these people were born, and now they presume to lecture me about what they demand. Showing leadership is not about trying to make demands while disrupting good folk going about their normal business by gluing or chaining yourself to things or generally disrupting life and saying, "You will do what we tell you to do", even though they do not even know what they are talking about. Tell me, members: what is meant by this person's idea of a citizens' assembly that the rebellion demands this government establish? I thought we had something better than that. It is called a Parliament. What do these people think? Do they think that the institutions that have nurtured them now need to be totally overthrown and replaced with something else? Probably those are the sentiments that are behind that. It is immature. It is stupid. They need to be called out for the —

Hon Diane Evers: Looking for change.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: They are not looking for change. They are demanding that certain things be done. They are rebels in search of a cause. Currently, they have settled on something that was apparently reported in a David Attenborough documentary. If we look at members of the mob that calls itself Extinction Rebellion, we see that they are motivated by anarchism and nihilism. None of that will serve to build a better or more civil society. None of that deserves the support of members in this place. None of it will be taken seriously by the McGowan Labor government and neither should it. I would be very surprised were the government to give in to these demands and address those people. Having announced that their purpose is to come to this precinct and disrupt it, I do not know why they are being allowed. They should be prevented from doing what they are threatening to do. I want to make clear that these people are not representative of the aspirations of those who elected me to this place. Those who elected me can rely on the leadership that I will continue to provide to them for the whole time that I am here.