



Speech By  
**Michael Berkman**


**MEMBER FOR MAIWAR**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Protesters

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.19 pm): On Tuesday the government announced its intention to introduce new laws that would create unnecessary new offences and extend police powers to stop and search individuals who might be carrying rope or glue which might be related to an action that might block traffic. This proposal is a bold-faced attempt to limit civil liberties and silence dissent. It is reminiscent of the type of police state that would make Joh proud.

Most concerning of all, the supposed justification for these new laws appears to be nothing more than a furphy. The Premier has claimed activists are using dangerous booby traps designed to harm anyone who cuts them free, yet police have never charged a climate change protester in Queensland with an offence alleging they had set a trap or intended to cause injury to others, and there appears to be no public record of police ever even alleging that this has occurred. Our laws already cover instances where one person seeks to harm another, including with the use of what is called a 'man trap'. It could easily cover the use of these devices, if they actually existed.

Police also have extensive powers to stop and search people who are suspected of being involved in a criminal act. They already use these powers liberally, including to raid the homes of individuals suspected of being involved with, or who simply even know, protesters. These new laws are a terrifying and misguided overreach designed to dehumanise, vilify and deliberately target climate justice activists, because the Labor government refuses to actually consider their reasonable policy demands. Labor are so scared of the next *Courier-Mail* headline that they are now taking policy pointers from Rupert Murdoch.

Let me put this simply. Peaceful protesters calling for action on the greatest threat that has ever faced civilisation are not extremists. Governments with their heads in the sand and their hands in the pockets of climate criminals are the real extremists here. Criminalising everyday people to protect their fossil fuel donors—that is extreme. Condemning our children, our Pacific neighbours and First Nations people on the front lines to a future of ecological collapse, job and food shortages, mass migration and increased natural disasters—that is extreme, unjust and unbelievably negligent.

I do not know how much more disappointed I could get with Labor at this point, but this latest effort to emulate the LNP has left even me feeling particularly shocked. I can only hope Labor wake up from this fever dream as soon as possible and pull themselves off the slippery slope we appear to be on at the moment. I hope they do it for all our sakes.