

Extinction Rebellion, What's Next?

An open letter to the leadership and members of #ExtinctionRebellion (XR)

This is the transcript of the following video addressed to XR Campaign members and organizers by an XR sympathizer: <https://youtu.be/xOA4wyZScUE>

It is a plea to focus on a global #DebitJubilee or “Debt Strike for Climate Emergency” starting on November the Fifth, 2019.

Transcript Reads:

It's April the 25th 2019 and I'd like to interrupt my normal monologue to just address the events up in London and around the world.

Huge Success, Now What?

Extinction Rebellion's actions last week were a huge success! They were very heartwarming and encouraging. I think everybody should be very proud of what they've achieved. It was an amazing sight to see. But assuming now that people are looking ahead to what to do next - maybe there's a complete battle plan and this is the first step, I don't know - but assuming that people are thinking what to do now, I would like to make a few suggestions.



I'm completely unqualified for making suggestions in this area. I believe Extinction Rebellion' organizer, Roger Hallam, has a PhD in effective campaign and strategizing. So I'm certainly not an authority on anything. I'm an anti-authoritarian. So take what I say with a pinch of salt. But as a sympathizer, I would like to give my opinion and make some suggestions on what to effectively do next.

I'll just give a brief summary, so that you don't have to watch the whole video. If you don't like the idea summary, then I can save you a bit of time.

First, I would suggest that the next thing should not be a repeat of what has just been done. I think that probably that's as far as you should go about direct nonviolent action in the streets. I think more than this will probably become counterproductive. **Extinction Rebellion probably only have one or two of these left in their hand of cards** before the average person will be alienated from the movement. After this, you'll start to aid the Right wing and aid the critics of this kind of movement.

Increasing Political Momentum

Second, I would say get ahead of the game, abandon this approach and do a new tactic. That new tactic would be to just bypass your current target, which I think is the politicians and raising public awareness. The public is now generally aware about climate change, although maybe not the severity of the climate emergency. But I think from what I can interpret, Extinction Rebellion is trying to get to the politicians and try to get them over their lethargy. **The problem with targeting the politicians is that the politicians are not leaders, they're followers, and they will follow the public's direction.** So yes, this has been a successful campaign in terms of raising awareness. It may result in *some* pressure on the politicians, but only if there's some kind of immediate climate catastrophe or something happens, maybe this year, that really shocks people.

Unless there's a bit of public panic, I don't think this latest street action will translate into much pressure on politicians. Even if it does, it will just result in a token response from the politicians. They'll take the path of least action.

The Degrees of Separation Challenge

Another reason why not to focus on the politicians is that's **there's too many degrees of separation from them and the outcome you're trying to achieve.** which, as Extinction Rebellion stated, is an outcome of net neutral carbon by 2025.

If you look at the chain of action, you have to achieve large public awareness, then public pressure affects the politicians, then the politicians have to change policy, that policy then results on reallocation of resources and new legislation, and then that slowly has an effect on corporate behavior and behavior of society in general.

With the above approach, you're probably on about a 30-year path to achieving your goal, which is way too long for a stated aim of 2025. So you'd have to have much more

radical action and a much more effective plan rather than this long, long chain of separation to your goal.

Focusing on politicians at this point, I think, is misdirected. You should rather **go for the politicians' bosses. The politicians bosses are the central banks and the central banks are just an arm of the financial industry and the banksters.** The central banks are put in place to keep the banksters' rackets in place. So you should go after the financiers directly. Go after the banksters, because bankers are used to crisis. They are used to radical action on a massive scale and they could determine an economic outcome that would get carbon net neutrality by 2025. So go and target them directly and bypass the slower politicians.



How a Debt Jubilee Could Work

Extinction Rebellion could actually achieve this with a mass action for a [Debt Jubilee](#) (#DebtJubilee). Basically we're in a debt slavery situation now. All the carbon that was emitted was done under the remit of debt. So if you take away the debt system, you will take away the means to create CO₂ in the atmosphere. How you tackle the debt system is by default. All the debtors would unite to have a unilateral default against creditors and the creditors are all ultimately either [rentiers](#) or financiers.

How that would work is, you just take an arbitrary day, for example, November the Fifth this year, and you just put all your resources into campaigning for that to be a #DebtJubilee day. That would mean that all debtors - public, private, corporate etc. would all unilaterally default on their debts on November the Fifth. **The participants simple action would be to take the repayments on their debt or principle or any rent they might be paying, then write a check and send it to the Treasury of the country.** So in the United States, to the IRS. They just write a check to the IRS with a cover letter saying this is for Climate Emergency. And Extinction Rebellion would do the same in the UK to the Inland Revenue. The same could be done to any other tax collection agency no matter what country.

Extinction Rebellion participants would send a letter along with the cheque saying this is a debt payment because of a climate emergency and "this emergency supersedes the

authority of the debt, therefore I'm sending this money to the Treasury to tackle the emergency." Participants would also send a corresponding letter to the creditor saying, "if you want your money I've sent it to the Treasury so you have to claim it from them."

Now what would happen is probably the IRS would just say, "Oh you have a net credit on your IRS account" and cut you a new check and send you the money back again. In which case you would just rinse and repeat and just carry on repeating ad infinitum.

This would probably gum up the financial system to the extent that you could get participation, and **it's far, far, more effective climate action gumming up the financial system than it is gluing yourself to a truck or a train.**

So that's the executive summary.

Now I'm going to give a deep dive into why I think this would work and to give you the details of the probable outcomes and just review the whole strategy.

Now, let's just go over Extinction Rebellion's three demands, because I think they probably need a complete do-over for good reasons.

Unworkable Demands

From the bottom up, demand Number Three is to have these citizen assemblies that guide the government in terms of climate and ecological justice. I would

scrap that demand entirely because it just makes you look completely clueless and naive. From a politician's point of view there are already citizen assemblies for overseeing this kind of thing and they are called Parliament, Congress, the Senate.

There is no way the people in government are going to allow any body to oversee anything that they do or any of the decisions they make. In terms of a place like America, I'm no constitutional expert, but probably that demand alone amounts to a constitutional crisis if not outright treason. So it's completely unworkable. It's never going to happen and it just makes the Extinction Rebellion movement look bad. So I would scrap it as naive. To tell the people that you are demanding things from that you just don't trust them is an awful negotiating strategy. So yeah, scrap that one.

WE DEMAND:

- >> GOVERNMENTS TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS
- >> ZERO EMISSIONS & DRAWDOWN BY 2025
- >> PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

Next, let's look at demand Number Two, which is to be net carbon neutral with greenhouse gases by 2025. I understand, this is what the science dictates. But this needs some careful thinking because again, it is a very naive thing to ask and it shows a massive disjunct in the movement's thinking. It also looks extremely naive. It's almost a childish ask. And the reason is because **what you're really asking for is a complete deindustrialization by 2025**. I understand, that that is what needs to happen according to the science, but it's a complete non-starter politically. **There has to be another route to the same result.**

Let me give you an example of what I mean. There seems to be a lot of BS going on in the Extinction Rebellion movement in terms of what people's thinking is and where it's at. There seems to be a large body of people that have completely misunderstood what's at issue here and it really shows in this demand Number Two. It looks like a lot of people in the movement think that we're going to retool society with a #greennewdeal. They think we're going to have all these green technologies and many want millions of new green tech jobs. All of this is unrealistic because **the CO₂ emissions cannot be halted with green technology**. If you think that's being terribly controversial, it's just something you have to look at seriously yourself and work through.

The Fossil Fuel Dividend Dilemma

But here's the condensed version. Our entire economy as it stands today, our debt based economy, what people call "Capitalism", is based on a fossil fuel dividend. That means all the wind turbines that were put up today, all the solar that was put up today, any green technology from geothermal to hydroelectric that you can think of, all of it was subsidized by the petrodollar. It was created by the petrodollar and the debt system that is also underpinned by the fossil fuel dividend. So even though Green Tech is coming down in price and becoming more affordable, it will always be uneconomical without the petrodollar dividend. For example, if you build anything like a wind turbine with renewable dollars it would absolutely be unaffordable. The next turbine that you built would also be like a quixotic tilting at windmills. **Because the renewable dollar is a depreciating currency. A petrodollar is an inflationary currency** that they can inflate at will and that's what central banks have been doing since 1971. If you try and build the same economy on a "renewable dollar", every dollar that you spend for a new wind turbine or some other generator of new green tech energy, it will become more and more expensive as you go.

Here's why. If you have a look at a wind turbine it's made primarily by fossil fuel products. The wind turbines are about 60% glass fiber that's made by a greenhouse gas, natural gas, which is another name for methane. Then the epoxy that goes into it is a fossil fuel product that could be done with green tech, but at greater cost. So a turbine that is built from a turbine - one that generated "renewable dollars" - when that energy is used to create the next turbine iteration then it would be twice as expensive or more. Because the epoxy would have to come from a new source. The glass fiber in the turbines would have to be melted down with green electricity. So it would be much more expensive to take that renewable energy and put it into manufacturing a new turbine. Also, all the concrete would have to come from a new source that was carbon neutral, which is possible, but a big task. Additionally, all the steel is made by the Bessemer process which emits about two tons of carbon for every ton of steel you get. So that's another one of the problems in the thinking of the average member in Extinction Rebellion, because they don't seem to realize or appear to be cognizant of this basic reality.

This basic reality is that what people have in their minds that we will suddenly be carbon neutral by building all these new greentech sources of energy, by everybody going out and getting an electric car, or by having all these green tech jobs, they are totally counterproductive to the aim of reducing greenhouse gases. **The problem is it's the industrialization that you actually need cut to reduce carbon emissions.** If you say that everybody runs out and gets a new electric car before 2025, then that's a net *increase* in carbon emissions. There's more carbon-emitting manufacturing that would have to go on, there's more steel that would have to be produced for those cars and the green tech jobs.

Deep Adaptation and The Need to Deindustrialize

People need jobs in this current debt-based system to actually get money. But the money that's earned from these green tech jobs is not going to be spent in a green way. ***You are actually increasing carbon emissions by increasing industry. What we need to do is de-industrialize; not industrialize more.*** Yet a lot of people, particularly in America, with Alexandria Ocasio Cortez's Green New Deal, and the green new deal that Extinction Rebellion has (in certain factions) is a net carbon contributor, because it's a net industry contributor. There's no way that you can make that industry carbon neutral as you go. It's impossible to do and absurd to expect.

I can imagine the skepticism on this issue but the simple fact is this planet only really sustains about two billion people. In fact, it really only sustains them living like Amish, and I'm talking about vegetarian Amish. This is another thing that Extinction Rebellion and its members seem to have completely miscalculated - that's the scope of the problem, which is vast. You can go down to almost any street in America, particularly in the South, and find people that would rather die than stop eating meat. If you forced them by law to stop consuming meat, then life isn't worth living for them. I mean that quite literally. It's not even hyperbole. That's the kind of opposition that you are up against.

This is absolutely a climate war and it's not like people are going to suddenly see the writing on the wall. A lot of the people are really-believing Christian evangelists. A lot of these people are Pentecostal fundamentalists and they are looking forward to the Rapture. You'll be amazed at the opposition in America.

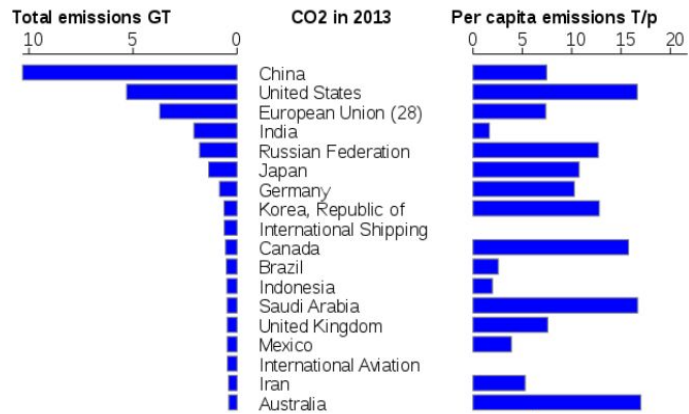
Now, you might take the opinion that, well, this is all about Britain and we'll worry about America later. This is the next hard truth that people need to start telling themselves, and I'm sorry to tell you this, but Britain is entirely irrelevant in the climate war. If Britain became like Bhutan and it were really carbon-negative in terms of emissions, it wouldn't make a blind bit of difference to the world. Some people might say, well, we have to show that it can be done and take leadership. But now it's time to get real and the political reality is that no one is going follow Britain's lead on climate action no matter how fantastic Britain's green environment looks.

The Two Elephants in the Room

It's time to admit some simple Realpolitik facts. **The fate of humanity is being decided by a dice game and there are only two players at the table rolling those dice - America and China.** It's simply the reality of the game. These are some very, very uncomfortable truths about climate change.

Of all the CO₂ above our heads here in the upper atmosphere heating our oceans, cumulatively about half of that, about 400 million tons, has been produced by the United States. Meanwhile, China has produced about half that amount, about 200 million tons. Also, China has produced it all in about the last two decades. So China has now completely outstripped America as the biggest global greenhouse gas emitter in the world.

Currently China is producing about 10.2 million tons of CO₂ a year and America is producing about 5.3 million tons - about half that. The interesting thing about this is that per capita, China is producing about *half what an American produces*.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_carbon_dioxide_emissions

So, back to Extinction Rebellion's demand Number One, that politicians tell the truth. The really inconvenient climate truth that no one wants to talk about is that climate catastrophe is really caused by the fact that the Chinese walrus is trying to clamber out of the water onto the standard of living ice flow that was barely supporting the American walrus. Of course, the Chinese walrus is four times the size of the American walrus in terms of human population. China has about 1.4 billion people now compared to America with 325 million people. That's a quarter the size. America was drowning the world in CO₂ and what's been happening is China has been trying to attain the same standard of living or higher. That's the essence of the real carbon emissions problem. It's very politically incorrect, but it's just the truth. And **unless Extinction Rebellion faces this truth, you can't really ask politicians to tell the truth either.**

You could say, well, China can follow Britain's example. Extinction Rebellion will do a fabulous job of leading the way and Xi Jinping will follow the example and Beijing will use it as a model to transform themselves. That's not likely to happen, because Extinction Rebellion and Britain have almost zero impact on China. Like it or not, that's just a reality you have to face.

If you don't really agree with that statement, then look at what happened at Tiananmen Square in 1989. The Chinese government felt no compunction about setting Chinese troops to massacre citizens of China - their own people, mainly students and young people in the streets. That was only just to settle a difference of opinion in how China should develop economically. The Chinese students were saying that China should follow the Western democracy style of development and the Communist Party took the line that it would be done with State Capitalism. To settle the dispute, the government mowed the people down en-mass. So imagine somebody in China standing up for climate change! Not only are we talking about a new direction for development we're

talking about the very opposite. We're talking about de-industrialization, which is scaling back on development. Now if "Tankman" disappeared for just having a different opinion on how to develop, you can imagine how quickly and strongly the Chinese government will clamp down on any activists that try and *scale back* development.

This problem is really serious. **China is now creating a new coal-fired power station every single week.** The demand for energy in the world is growing so fast that the IEA says that we should expect by 2030 that the total energy demand in the world

Country	Announced	Pre-permit	Permitted	Announced + Pre-permit + Permitted	Construction	Shelved	Operating	Cancelled 2010-2018
China	56	80	65	201	263	494	2,927	630
India	15	31	38	84	63	118	866	637
Indonesia	51	14	9	74	36	33	144	66
Vietnam	12	36	16	64	20	7	57	44
Turkey	6	29	12	47	4	31	71	62
Bangladesh	10	10	2	22	4	17	3	5
Philippines	3	15	7	25	13	15	45	20
Japan	0	11	1	12	17	2	136	9
Pakistan	3	7	3	13	7	8	12	42
Zimbabwe	4	0	9	13	2	4	7	3
South Africa	1	8	4	13	8	5	117	19

will probably exceed 50 percent over 2005. The demand for energy is growing at the fastest pace that it's ever grown. The idea that this will be done with green tech is absolute fantasy. It can only be done with a fossil fuel dividend and that's a reality that we, and especially Extinction Rebellion have to face now.

China did, for a little while, begin a big initiative on sustainability and anti-pollution green energy sources. But it was just PR and as soon as the world turned its back, it carried on emitting like crazy. So China clearly showed that when it comes to green tech and environmentalism (as opposed to economic growth), they will always sacrifice environmentalism for economic growth.

So it's China's economic growth that is going to sink this planet. That's just simply the reality no one will talk about. But it is the truth and Extinction Rebellion needs to face facts because your primary demand is that governments tell the truth. You can only start with that kind of demand if the members of Extinction Rebellion themselves start telling themselves the truth. The truth hurts and in this case it's a bitter truth.

XR's Inescapable Truth

The inescapable truth is that **a thousand arrests in London have a zero impact on Xi Jinping and Beijing and they have zero impact on president Trump and the White**

House. So, just move ahead to try and have an impact on the American people. It's only realistic to say that in the West, we can only influence America. People in Britain might say, "Well okay, we understand that affecting China and America is a moon shot but we have to start somewhere, so let's start local. Then you know, we might as well start climbing the tree closest to us. At least we are starting our journey to the moon." Well that's ludicrous, because no matter how tall that tree is, you will reach the top of the tree and you will have wasted all of your time. It's not really a journey to the moon climbing up to a dead end. Even if you transformed Britain, you would be at a dead end stake. The citadel to storm is America; China is impregnable.

The government has been preparing for eco-terrorism for a long time now, and it's only a matter of time before Extinction Rebellion actually treads on one of the landmines that the government have set up in preparation for a mass eco-rebellion. You might ask, well, if the government expects an eco-rebellion and they understand about this imminent climate catastrophe, why aren't they doing anything about it? I suggest that you go home tonight and you sleep on that fact.

Think of it like this. **The go-to analogy is the Titanic. You are one of the passengers on the Titanic.** Liberal Americans and people in Britain have been playing Pokemon Go and they've been taking selfies and posting them to *Instagloat*. And while they've been doing all that, the government up on the bridge deck, they've had all the facts at their fingertips. Already the Titanic is half-full of water. The bow is really down in the water and suddenly all the passengers are waking up to the fact that hitting that iceberg was probably something quite serious. **In that situation, ask yourself, why isn't the captain and crew doing something about this emergency?**



The answer is pretty obvious. It obvious that they've done the calculations already. They've looked at the watertight bulkheads and they've already seen that the ship is not salvageable. They know that there are no lifeboats. **So all they are doing at this point is managing the panic.** It's written over every move they make. Even Theresa May's response to Extinction Rebellion was, "Yes but why aren't you looking at all the positive things that have been done? You're only spreading fear!" You can clearly see her biggest issue is panic in the population, not enacting new climate policy.

But let's leave that aside, because that is a big Red Pill to stomach and I understand that the average person in Extinction Rebellion is not really ready for that yet. So, what *can* be done?

The Financial System is the Key

Let's look again about attacking the financial system. Extinction Rebellion has to accept that really, realistically, China is out of the picture. In the West we cannot really have much influence on China. However, **there is one sliver of hope for people that are pre-Realists: you attack the financial system.** It will have repercussions in Britain. It will have repercussions in America. And it may even have secondary repercussions in China. Best of all, it will certainly make the Establishment sit up and take notice if you can mount a credible threat to the banksters.

A credible threat to the banksters is going for the jugular, which is going for the debt-based system. Because almost everybody is a debt-slave, the obvious way to do this is to have a unilateral cancellation of all debts by debtors.

Let's imagine how that might work out. Let's say that there was a token response. Let's say that the very active and committed members in Extinction Rebellion were the only ones to actually do this action of debt cancellation. That would mean they would probably be punished in the courts legally for default on debt.

The Good Parts

There are a number of good things to note here. First, **it's a much better use of resources to fight non-payment of debt in court than it is to fight one of these draconian anti eco-terrorism measures that they've prepared.** If members of an organization wind up in court facing charges that may result in lifetime imprisonment, the organization and the members themselves will have to use resources to fight those lawsuits. It's much easier to fight a non-repayment of debt lawsuit. So if you educate the public - particularly in America - and prepare them to fight legal counteraction in the courts by insisting on a jury and not having any of the streamlined process, you use up a lot of the government's resources and make it difficult for them to fight mass actions.

Second, the other thing to prepare the public for is to educate jurors that in America there's something called [Jury nullification](#). It's possible to make a legal case to say that

non-payment of debt in favor of climate action is defensible and any law where somebody is prosecuted for non repayment of debt can be struck down by a jury in America through Jury nullification. So it's important to let the public know that there is such a thing as Jury nullification and if somebody is prosecuted for non repayment of debt because of climate change activism they can strike down the laws based on debt. That should send absolutely tectonic changes through the legal and financial systems. It would also terrify the powers-that-be if the laws on debt are changed in that way.

Now, people might say, well you might induce a financial panic. You might induce a financial collapse and that would cost jobs. It would cause a lot of misery for a lot of people. To that I'd say I think **it's time to think of a world where we have to decouple income as remuneration for work and income for survival in the face of climate change catastrophe.**

What I mean is, in the future it's not realistic to think that you will get your income and maintain your standard of living from a job. I can't see a scenario where this will all work out. You certainly won't be able to do it with green jobs. So it's time to look ahead to a complete reworking of the system. One of the ways to do that is to burn the current system down to the ground and work from there so that it will be built up in a sustainable way, if that is at all possible. **There's simply too much lethargy, too much inertia in the current system to get it to convert directly to a zero emission carbon system by 2025.** It is utterly ludicrous. But it may just be possible to burn the current system down to the ground and to rebuild it in a eco-friendly and environmentally friendly way now.

Third, why a date like November the 5th works is because you have a good lead time. You have a lot of time for the Establishment to panic. **The whole financial system works on trust.** So if there is a credible erosion of trust, in other words, if it looks like you can achieve your aim of getting a broad mass debt strike on November the 5th, you could panic the establishment into ceding to your demands just to stave off the fact that the action might possibly be successful.

At some stage you have to imagine that there is a tipping point where people would come on board, not even because they agreed entirely with your demands and actions, but just because they liked the sound of debt default. It's very attractive to get out of debt and you would capitalize on that.

It's even possible to cancel the debt strike before November the 5th if there was dramatic enough movement by the Establishment. The effects of that deadline coming up could be dramatic enough, because people just have to say they'll come on board to cause a panic amongst the Establishment. Even if the people don't realistically intend to carry through with their threat, the threat alone is enough to destabilize markets. And **if you can deeply destabilize markets you'll probably get all of the climate-saving demands you want and much quicker.** But first you really need to rethink those demands.

Well I hope these ideas are not completely ignored and I look forward to answering any questions in the meantime. Good luck, Extinction Rebellion, and great job so far. Keep it up!

Lord Hugh

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Background Resources:

Debt Jubilee:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jubilee_\(biblical\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jubilee_(biblical))

<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4239903-year-american-jubilee-coming>

CO₂ and other Greenhouse Gas Emissions

<https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

1989 Tiananmen Square massacre:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1989_Tiananmen_Square_protests

Tank Man:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tank_Man

Jury Nullification:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jury_nullification

#SAIM-Climate