

Video 5

What is a Renaissance?

Part Three

Hello. I'm glad that you're back. I hope that you're glad that I'm back too.

The title of our talk today is **What is a Renaissance? Part Three**, of five parts, so we are making good progress.

Our Renaissance of the 21st Century is not limited to tackling the challenges of climate change. It encompasses every aspect of who we are today, and where we are going. As we address the evils of the 20th Century—the poverty, pollution, plundering, racism, and war—we must focus our attention on an evil which we ourselves have created and have nurtured for centuries: the hatred of one group of people toward another.

Young people of the world, *you*, we don't have time to be fighting with each other. Either *we work together* to save the planet we live on, or we are doomed to decades—during your lifetime—of monster storms, droughts that parch the farmland, increasing heat which will make the summers unbearable, the proliferation of a multitude of diseases, migrations of climate refugees who are not going to stop and present their papers at anybody's border, and battles over resources, battles which will become wars over resources, wars which will be fought at some point with nuclear weapons.

Young people of the world, is this what you want? No.

So we need to take a long hard look at the racism which poisons our lives today. It is a form of slow-motion suicide.

Perhaps we could ask the sun and the wind for a bit of help. The sun, you see, shines on every child's uplifted face, everywhere in the world. And the wind will raise into the sky every child's kite, everywhere in the world.

If you visit a clean energy company, such as the Vestas Wind Systems company in Denmark, and you take a tour of the headquarters, the research labs, and the factories where the enormous blades are built—blades fifty, sixty, seventy-five meters

long—and where the nacelles containing the gears and generators are assembled . . . who do you see working in all of these places? Men and women from around the world, from every possible cultural and racial background, all of them with high levels of education, and all of them absolutely devoted to producing magnificent machines which harness the wind.

If you have lunch in the Vestas cafeteria, you will find much more than hamburgers and French fries. You can fill your plate with different foods from different countries, so that you have a choice of home cooking (wherever home might be) or something absolutely exotic. Some of the food honors various religious traditions. Seated around the tables are people who are both colleagues and friends, discussing engineering problems, and discussing how their children are doing in the local kindergarten. After lunch, everyone goes back to work.

Another example. For several hundred years, the people of Northern Ireland battled with the people of southern Ireland. The Orange and the Green. The Protestants and the Catholics. The kids grew up throwing bricks at the kids on the other side.

Belfast was once a ship-building city. The Titanic was built in Belfast by hundreds of workers who never imaged that their unsinkable ship would collide with a giant iceberg in the middle of a misty night. But then ship-building moved to Asia and the great European shipyards shut down, putting a large number of people out of work.

Ah, but then came the clean energy Renaissance, which first built onshore wind turbines, and then *offshore* wind turbines, and then offshore *floating* wind turbines. The island of Ireland is blessed with strong and steady winds from the North Atlantic Ocean. The winds do not care about north and south, about orange or green. And thus today, the workers of Belfast are back at their jobs, building wind turbines. Offshore, out in the sea, wind turbines. And the workers of Dublin, just down the coast of the island of Ireland, are also at their jobs, building wind turbines. Folks in offices up in Belfast telephone to folks in offices down in Dublin, asking about generator components, asking about the aviation lights atop the turbines that blink in the night, so that planes can see them. Belfast telephones down to Dublin, “Do you have any spares? We need a couple of dozen.”

And the kids of Ireland now grow up attending schools which prepare them to work in a young and rapidly growing industry. They will work with colleagues from

around the world. Their jobs, their careers, give them an important *purpose* in their lives. They are building a better world.

Much better than throwing bricks.

Now imagine the level of international cooperation needed to build the global electricity grid which will receive the energy from wind farms and solar collectors and tidal turbines around the world, and then deliver this clean electricity to cities and towns and villages around the world, so that every school and every medical clinic is well lit and busy.

Does it really matter that your colleagues working on this unprecedented grid—this web of energy and expertise and friendship—does it really matter that your colleagues are Catholic or Protestant or Jewish or Muslim or Hindu or none of the above? They all speak the language of kilowatts and volts, and they all, in their own way, are grateful in their hearts that they are part of this unprecedented human endeavor which brings the benefits of the modern world to their families. To their communities. To their farms and their forests. And to their seas.

Together, they are building the Renaissance of the 21st Century.

Together, they are building the prosperity, and the democracy. And the peace.

Thank you.

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