

# Watt's Happening? #229

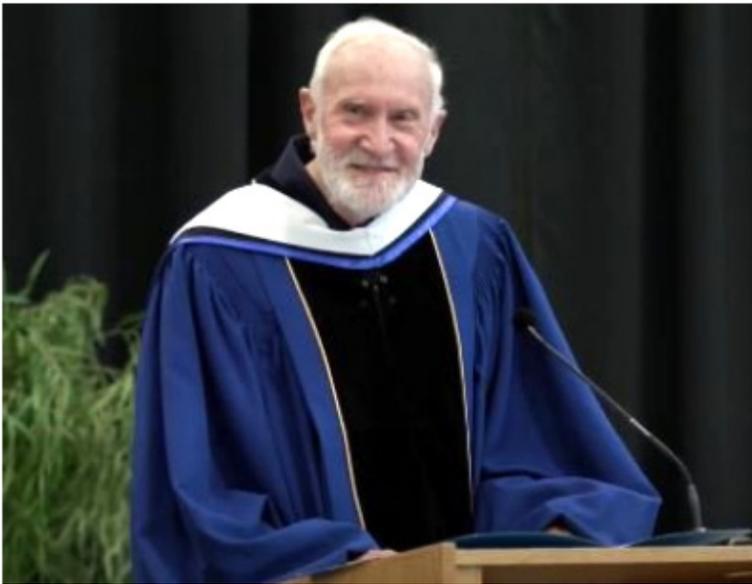
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## CLIMATE CHANGE: *it's not all bad*



*The changes we have to make to address the climate crisis are simply the things we have to do to build a better world. Many of us have been working on these changes for decades. Now it's time for the next generation to take over and finish the job!*

*I recently received an Honorary Associate Arts Degree from Northern Lights College for my environmental work – a big surprise and truly an honour!*

*However, it meant I was to give a positive and inspirational keynote address at the graduation ceremony in Dawson Creek to some 150 graduates and 400 parents and supporters ... live streamed too! Here is what I said:*

"I am very grateful for this opportunity to speak to you today and to be awarded this honour for my environmental work. I guess this makes me an honest to goodness, certified, accredited tree hugger . . . and I'm pretty proud of that too!

"I have spent the last 50 years or so studying the science of our environmental issues, organizing protest groups, and trying to slow down the rate of environmental destruction I was witnessing. I did this from a love and respect for nature, and of course a love and respect for humanity too. We are now such an important part of the natural world on our little blue planet, and we are such an amazing species.

"But eventually I got burned out on all that negativity, all the fighting and working against things. Instead, I did a 180. I decided to dedicate the rest of my life to positive

things, to real solutions, to help create the world I wanted to see, and that is what I have been doing for the last 20 years or so.

"I started by creating Peace Energy Renewable Energy Cooperative in 2003 here in Dawson Creek with my friend Paul Kurjata. That's western Canada's first renewable energy cooperative. We played a critical role in creating Bear Mountain Wind Park, BC's first wind facility, and now we are installing solar all around the Peace region.

"When it comes to negativity though, it would be hard to beat the negative news around climate change, wouldn't it? You are all probably sick of hearing about climate catastrophe and the climate crisis. All the sacrifices we are going to endure, all the life style changes we are going to have to make whether we want to or not. Bla, bla, bla.

"Well today I am here, not to sugar coat the situation, there will be tough times ahead, but I want to tell you that a lot of that negativity is a bunch of B.S. The changes we are going to have to make now, and we DO have to make them, are nothing but good news, and I want to tell you why.

## **HISTORIC CHANGE NOW**

“We are already well on our way into one of the biggest, most radical changes humanity has ever faced, and now, it must be done at breakneck speed. This is truly an historic moment, and all of you will have a critical role to play.

“You have inherited a brave new world, but now you are the teachers, the business managers, care givers, social workers; the technicians, carpenters, engineers, and builders; the trades people, scientists, innovators, entrepreneurs, the inventors, and the mothers and fathers who will actually make this massive, world-wide change happen.

“And this is not bad news. For you, there will be unlimited opportunities: for new, clean energy jobs; for new businesses that have hardly been imagined yet; for real prosperity that is no longer based on profit from environmental destruction. Instead, profit and progress will be based on efficiency, intelligent use and re-use of resources, new ways of manufacturing, new and exciting modes of transportation. These new and better ways of doing things are already being rapidly implemented all around the world.

## **THE END OF ENERGY SCARCITY**

“The sun shines every day, the wind blows every day, the earth is warm beneath our feet. These renewable energies are self-perpetuating and everybody, all around the world, has a lot of them, many thousands of times more energy than we will ever need.

“Once the infrastructure is in place - the solar farms, the wind farms, the geothermal plants and energy storage - we will never have to make energy again. Instead we will simply harvest the energy that the Earth gives away for free, the same energies that have powered life on this planet ever since there has been a planet, and the supply of these limitless energies will last forever. The age of energy scarcity is ending.

“As an amazing example, solar electricity, not even on the energy map just 20 years ago, has now become the fastest growing, least expensive form of energy ever developed. This very rapid energy transition, that we absolutely must make, is already happening all around the world, and right here in the Peace Country too.

“Almost a million watts of solar power have already been installed all around the BC and Alberta Peace region, on homes, businesses and city facilities. This college, at this very moment, is 100% powered by the wind turbines up on Bear Mountain, and so is most of the south Peace region, as that 100 million watts of wind energy flows into the local grid. Energies like these will power us through the twenty second century and far beyond.

“And YOU will make this happen, and you will reap the benefits too. Your homes will be powered by inexpensive sun and wind energy. You will be driving powerful electric

vehicles (if you choose to drive at all), also powered by the sun and wind.

“All this comes with a healthier, cleaner environment of course, driven by a growing respect for the natural world on which our very lives depend.

## **A BETTER WORLD WITHIN OUR GRASP**

“You get the idea. The climate crisis will create unprecedented challenges but it also lays out a clear path to a much, much better world, a world so close now it is well within our grasp. Right now is when we need to make this massive shift, and right now is exactly when we have the knowledge, expertise and technology to do so. Remarkably, the timing is perfect.

“Now, we entrust to you a global civilization based on science and technology, a world we all must understand. Trust the science. Science is by far, without the slightest doubt, our most reliable source of information and insight today.

“Remember that there is a very big difference between scientific fact, and opinion. Learn how to tell the difference. To understand the rapid changes that are upon us, and to make good decisions and choices, the advanced learning that you have begun here at Northern Lights College must continue.

“Over my long career I have been a chemistry research assistant, a photographer, a video producer, a book publisher, a marketing specialist, and now a renewable energy consultant. Pursue your interests and pursue them passionately, and you cannot fail.

## **ONLY ONE PATH FORWARD NOW**

“There are no for certain futures, just a very, very wide range of possible ones. The future that actually does unfold is one hundred percent determined by what we do now, you and me, individually and collectively, every day.

“There is only one path forward now. Just one. It is a path that is clearly marked. We know the steps we have to take along this path to a sustainable world, and we know how to take those steps. There are no mysteries here or great breakthroughs required. We already have everything we need.

“Many have already taken the first steps along this path. We stand by to help, but now, it is up to you, to lead us the rest of the way.

“From my heart, I thank you all.”

(To view my keynote address on youtube go to:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoRzFXmTOMM>  
and fast forward to about minute 49)