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Making History and Hope Rhyme

A prominent global challenge that we currently face is the development of a sustainable infrastructure for producing and transporting energy. The world that we currently live in faces issues in this regard in that a large portion of the energy we consume is unclean. With production of electricity through coal, nuclear power, and other sources, we emit a large amount of greenhouse gasses and create a large hazard to our environment. Without attempting to reverse these potentially devastatingly harmful effects to our world, we may soon face a catastrophic disaster that will prove irreversible. Already scientists are noting global changes that are an effect of pollution from energy production; for instance, melting glaciers, frequent hurricanes, droughts, and floods. While these may not seem significant at the moment due to their infrequent occurrences, it has been predicted that such events may recur more often in the near future. Another important note is that these negative effects are most significantly impacting the disempowered ones who are contributing least to the pollution of the environment. Low-income and developing nations are not producing as much carbon waste in energy production as developed nations are, yet will be hit hardest by the natural disasters that follow. Without the proper infrastructure to avoid these disasters, these communities will suffer sometimes irreparable damage. It is evidently unfair that these communities should be the most negatively impacted.

Fortunately, this pressing global issue has received a lot of attention in the past few years and continues to attract the interest of scientists, politicians, and activists. In the next twenty years or more, when history and hope start to rhyme, we should see a world which produces all of its energy sustainably. We should see a world where developing nations have all obtained the necessary resources to establish an infrastructure through which they can produce energy in a sustainable manner. We should see a reversal in the negative global changes that we are just beginning to see today. Such a world would be a better place to live because of the stability it brings and the general fairness that it entails. However, to get to such a point would require an immense amount of collaboration between countries and leaders. Not a single country has the resources to provide for other developing nations while ensuring that its own infrastructure is properly developed and maintained to produce energy in a sustainable manner. Multiple countries have to coordinate their efforts to provide for these developing nations while cutting back on their own carbon emissions. Doing so would further require a joint effort of politicians, business leaders, activists, and the public. Reaching a consensus will certainly prove to be difficult, however, if reasonable progress can be achieved within a limited timeframe, then we can still hope to reach our goal in the near future.

Another aspect of this development is the scientific solution. Scientists have proposed solutions such as Solar Radiation Management to deal with the effects of inefficient production of energy. However, some forms of Solar Radiation Management such as global aerosols and ocean fertilization will have potentially catastrophic effects. Therefore we have to discuss the moral implications and thoroughly analyze the costs and benefits before employing any scientific method. Evidently, finding a sustainable solution to energy production will require the collaboration of individuals from a variety of disciplines and many countries. An ideal solution to obtain the ideal world will require the teamwork of people from diverse backgrounds, who can innovate and solve our global problem.