



Stanford eCorner

Reigniting the Dream of Apollo

Elon Musk, *SpaceX*

October 07, 2015

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3623/Reigniting-the-Dream-of-Apollo>

Elon Musk talks about how the goal of SpaceX was not to launch another lucrative startup, but to encourage the U.S. government to renew and increase funding for space exploration. The visionary entrepreneur, in conversation with Steve Jurvetson, paints a picture of a greenhouse on Mars that would inspire people to see colonization as a reality.



Transcript

The precursor to SpaceX wasn't really to create a company. It was to try to figure out why we hadn't sent people to Mars. So we went from step two to PayPal. And then going from PayPal to the next thing, I was sort of thinking, well, is there some way to reignite the dream of Apollo? And I thought, well, it was maybe a question of we'd lost the will to explore. But I actually think that my original premise was wrong. We have not lost the will to explore. But people did not think there was a way. If people don't think there's a way, then they just don't bash their head against the wall continuously. They'll sort of give up so. But in the beginning, I thought it was a question of will.

So if we can send a small greenhouse to the surface of Mars, and you have seeds, and a nutrient gel, and you hydrate it upon landing. And then you'd have this little greenhouse on the surface of Mars. And people tend to respond to precedents and superlatives. And this would be the first life on Mars, as far as we knew-- furthest that life's ever traveled. We have this great shot of green plants on a red background. And I thought, well, maybe that would get people excited about sending people to Mars. So the headlines were clear in your mind once you had success, and what that would lead to, to catalyze action. And actually, the goal was to get the public excited about that, and get NASA's budget increased.