

# Put attention on improving ourselves

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“With high hopes for humanity’s future on Mars, Elon Musk’s space exploration company is developing a fully reusable space-launch system, set for its first cargo mission in 2022,” according to a recent report in The Guardian.

“A crewed mission is intended to follow in 2024, creating a base from which Musk hopes to develop a thriving city and, eventually, a self-sustaining civilization.”

OK. Not trying to sound pessimistic or stand in the way of progress, but have we really thought this through? Let’s look into the future and see how this undertaking will likely end.

Initially, a few private companies and maybe even a government or two will collaborate to establish the first colonies on Mars. After several decades, these early pioneers and their descendants will learn how to terraform the planet, making it suitable for human life. Restocking missions from earth will become unnecessary.

As the population grows, people will begin to spread out and develop their own economic system – which will lead to a push for self-determination. In due course, the citizens of Mars will declare themselves independent from their benefactors back on Earth.

Ultimately, inhabitants of the northern region, who enjoy a more temperate climate and access to greater natural resources, will become more prosperous than their southern counterparts. This will inevitably precipitate resentment.

Sooner or later, North Mars will tire of having to constantly subsidize their less affluent neighbors to the south. Their leader, fueled by a growing populist movement, will then call for the construction of a massive wall between the two municipalities.

The moral of the story? Before we go spending billions of dollars trying to establish a foothold on a distant world, I recommend we focus our attention on improving ourselves. Technology can accomplish many things; unfortunately, it can’t change human nature.

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