



Jesper Petersens tale ved EE Solutions Summit

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Uddannelses- og
forskningsminister

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Alsion, Sønderborg

It is great for me to be back home in the south of Denmark. To hear your ideas, achievements and ambitions in the field of energy efficiency. Sønderborg and Southern Jutland really has its time to shine these days – and it is well deserved.

Earlier today I heard my good colleague, the parliamentarian Niels Fuglsang, talk about his nightmare that you might not have enough skilled labour to succeed with the green transition.

Education, qualifications and skills are essential. This is something that we give a lot of attention in the government – mostly in our waking hours. We want to educate and train people specifically to the green transition. And recently we mapped all the study programmes in Denmark that contains green elements to know how far we are and where we can improve.

Some of it takes place right here. In these buildings at Alsion. University of Southern Denmark educates engineers here, I think some of them mingled with us during lunch time. They give an enormous value, bringing their skills and innovation to the local area and the companies elsewhere.

I spoke to the dean of the university, Henrik Bindslev earlier today. He told me that the university will apply for educating in Physics and Technology and Software Engineering in Sønderborg to create an even stronger basis for growth in our companies here. This summer, just down the hall, we will open a new education in Marine Engineering as a result of the policy to create more possibilities for education in cities like Sønderborg.

Education is one leg in the green transition. Capable minds and hands. Another

one is research and innovation.

It is not just because of Tour de France coming to Sønderborg that we call it the innovation chain. It has had that name for a long time. In many years, we have talked about how to keep that chain tight and smoothly running. How we can become even better at pushing our knowledge, know-how and new solutions out to the companies. How we achieve innovation – and what Team Sky would call the “marginal gains” that give us a competitive edge.

Research only reaches its full potential when it is adopted by companies. That is why this government is in the process of establishing a new partnership for knowledge and growth where we gather stakeholders in the innovation system – from companies, universities and funds.

The partnership will prepare a number of recommendations. For example on how we can make political solutions to speed up the innovation process – to point the finger at myself and the Minister of Climate. And if I look at the people in the room today: How do we make sure that you and other stakeholders have the right incentives to cooperate.

Partnering and cooperation has played a big role in today's debate, starting with the panel this morning and the speech given by the president of the confederation. The overall purpose of the partnership is to help us understand how we best support that knowledge and science is transformed into innovation and new solutions.

Collaboration is essential if we are to succeed with the ambitious green transition that has been launched under this government, including a very strong ambition and increasing investment in the research. But these investments must be caught and adopted by businesses.

I don't know if you can bear any more praise in Sønderborg but I am of course going to give you some anyway. When it comes to ProjectZero you've managed to tie a beautiful green bow around businesses, knowledge institutions and the public sector - making them all move close together.

I'm elected in this part of the country and I have followed ProjectZero since your humble beginnings. I have visited businesses, district heating and

homeowners energy-renovating their homes. And today during the field trip also an energy efficient supermarket.

You have kept your ambitions all the way through. Even though sometimes debates became a bit heated if this was the right direction, the right way to go.

In addition to your strong businesses there's also a strong political green leadership in this municipality. I realise I might be a bit biased in this opinion. After all, the mayor of Sønderborg is my uncle. It's a terribly designed political dynasty by the way, not having the same last name. But we don't.

But Sønderborg is a frontrunner. Fatih Birol sums it up quite eloquently: Houston and Saudi Arabia can discuss who's the world's oil capital. But the undisputed energy-efficiency capital of the world is Sønderborg.

You got a very well deserved pat on the back recently when EU appointed 100 frontrunner green cities and put you on that list along with Aarhus and Copenhagen. It's impressive. You say that you are going to reach zero in 2029 – and that's just how that is! Now that's a strong attitude.

This whole region has now been appointed as a green pioneer area. As a national center for Green Energy and Sector Collaboration in Southern Jutland. This will help provide even more innovation power and further aid the collaboration between public and private actors. Well done!

These good news remind us that the whole field of municipalities, businesses, public actors and knowledge institutions has set sail towards a Danish business community with an even stronger green frontrunner position.

If we are standing on the other side of this green transition with more inequality and unemployment – then we are not a frontrunner. And this is an important political point I would like to leave you with today. It is important to me as a Socialdemocrat:

Green transition, economic growth and social justice has to go together. We can do that! Examples today gives us hope and positivity - I think we need that encouragement too. Denmark must and will become an even better country to live in while we make a transition towards a greener production and a greener

way of life. We want the green transition to be a benefit to the Danes – not something that gives us yellow vests in the streets.

The past months an extra factor has been added to the equation: Traditionally we have linked our visionary green politics to climate, employment and export – and a bit longer down the list of arguments, we have had safety and independence.

These arguments have moved up the list this spring. It has become clear that climate politics is also about safety, independence and democracy. We can not and will not be dependent on Russian oil and gas.

The invasion of Ukraine has only made it more clear that we are in a hurry. Both for the sake of the planet. For the sake of future generations. And not least for the sake of our democracy and democratic values. For all these reasons it has been an important day today – but also an inspiring and rewarding day for me as a minister.

When Tour de France passes over “King Christian 10th’s bridge” on the 3rd of July the bridge will be painted yellow. But when the Tour has left you can consider painting it green.

Thank you for your contribution everybody - to green industry and transition.

Thank you for your attention.

Kilde

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