

Gaiashield Group



01/01/05

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Planetary Defense

President Bush: Sir,

Why do we have to be advising the President of the United States on the details and specifics of an issue concerning national and global security? When did Astronomers, Astrobiologists and Minor Planetologists at NASA become qualified to do strategic and tactical threat assessments with the survival of mankind in the balance? Where is your Department of Defense in this? The prospect of the next large asteroid on its way to strike Earth should warrant the attention of the DoD to some degree: should rise to the level of a threat deserving their interest by now.

We have understood that the threat of asteroid impact was real since the Apollo astronauts brought back a bucket of Moon rocks and they were found to be not volcanic in origin as first speculated but were in fact asteroid impact ejecta. If asteroids can strike the Moon, they can strike the Earth. We have understood the dire potential magnitude of this threat for over a decade: since the discovery of the 200-kilometer impact crater at Chicxulub. If one asteroid can wipe out all the dinosaurs, one asteroid can just as easily wipe out mankind.

An eclectic collection of concerned individuals recently came together in a conference and submitted a broad range of opinions on the many aspects of this threat - yet who do we send the results of this conference to? Who in government cares enough to become informed enough to constitute an authority and make some decisions here? One of the concepts expressed at this conference was the Precautionary Principle, which requires that modern democratically oriented governments take action to prevent harm even when it is uncertain if, or where, or when the harm will occur. We know the 'if': that a large asteroid will strike Earth again is certain. We know the where: any large asteroid impact anywhere on Earth will be a catastrophic event for everyone on Earth. Just because we do not know the 'when', just because we do not know where the next large asteroid on its way to strike Earth is now, does not excuse the fundamental responsibility of any modern and evolved government from taking the first step in dealing with this threat now!

Do not take our word. Do not take NASA's word. Create an independent and discrete Executive advisory counsel of your own, expressly and exclusively tasked with the strategic and tactical assessment of this issue and reporting to the Office of the President on the suitability of existing policies concerning this threat. For balance you will need a soldier to appraise the strategic elements, a scientist to interpret the tactical technologies available and a statesman to insure that the strategy and technology do not exceed the tolerance of the people they are intended to serve.

You have empowered a ten-man commission to determine the feasibility of going to the Moon and to Mars justified by little more than Fame and Glory and Because it's There. How about three more to Save the World from the next large asteroid on its way to strike Earth?

The Universe is a dangerous place. It does not suffer dilettantes gladly.

At your disposal and convenience in this issue,

R. Dale Brownfield

Gaiashield Group: <http://Gaiashield.Com>

cc:

Prime Minister Tony Blair

V. President Richard Cheney

Hon. Colin L. Powell

Hon. Donald H. Rumsfeld

Gen Richard B. Myers

Adm James O. Ellis Jr.

Adm James R. Hogg

Dr. John H. Marburger

Hon. E C 'Pete' Aldridge