HUMANITY IS NOT FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN EARTH AND SPACE, YET



SRI NEWSLETTER – July 15th 2020

by Adriano V. Autino, with a note by Jeff Greason

An article published by Lori Garver in 2019 proposed to “forget new crewed missions in space” and “NASA to focus on saving Earth.” (shorturl.at/eiqr4)

I thought such an extreme position was worth to be discussed, and strongly refuted.

No Lori. I strongly disagree with you.

I am not a US citizen, but NASA is a Planet Earth's primary space agency, therefore i am speaking as a Planet Earth's citizen.

I am not against taking care of planetary issues, that basically would mean to follow the UN 2030 17 SDGs. All initiatives that NASA and other major space agencies could undertake, to mitigate global issues, such as climate extreme phenomena, pollution, plastic in the sea, fighting against pandemics, are more than welcome, and should be pursued.

I am 100% in favor of active initiatives (opposite to passive de-growthist "solutions"), e.g. to build dams to protect coastal towns, and eventually use the water surplus (coming from ice melting) to claim deserts. Proper space technologies can be used to support such kind of active initiatives.

But we must be aware that none of the planetary global issues can be solved, none of the 17 SDGs can be achieved, without adding the 18th SDG: to kick-off civilian space development.

Manned space flight is key and part of the solution, not of the problem. NASA cannot abandon it, but should augment the dedicated budget.

Humanity is not, yet, forced to choose between Earth and Space. If a true space economy will really begin before 2025, we will never be forced to such an awful choice.

Opposite, should we stick on ideological promotion of unnecessary choices, seeing Earth and Space as alternative strategies, we could be not so far from the day we would be really forced to choose, due to a dramatic worsening of the global crisis, under the strokes of environmental, economic and social recurrent crisis.

Eight billion Planet Earth's Citizens cannot make it anymore, on one only planet. We don't have a planet B, yet. But we can definitely start to move and build our civilian infrastructures on the Moon, in orbit, Asteroids, Mars, and beyond.

Such an evolutionary step will relaunch the global economy, immediately. And, in perspective, the expanse will relief Earth's environment from the burden of our industrial development.

Btw, if you are concerned about the high cost of the next lunar missions, please consider the proposal recently made by Bob Zubrin and Homer Hickam, to use Space X resources, instead of the pharaonic SLS/Orion for the Artemis project (shorturl.at/gjzQR). That would be quicker, and save an enormous amount of money, part of such money could be used for the goals you are suggesting.

When the above short article was posted on Facebook, Jeff Greason added the following comment, quite to the point.

> In the United States, we have a Department of Energy to fund research in new energy technologies, so if one wishes to change the energy mix, that is where to go. We have a National Science Foundation for doing basic research. We have a host of National Laboratories for doing research in various relevant technologies. If one wishes to spend more on observing the Earth from space, we have a National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration which performs that task, operates weather satellites, and so on.
>
> It is not NASA's mission to "save the Earth".
>
> What IS the purpose of NASA? In the original 1958 act, it is:
>
> (1) The expansion of human knowledge of phenomena in the atmosphere and space;
> (2) The improvement of the usefulness, performance, speed, safety, and efficiency of aeronautical and space vehicles;
> (3) The development and operation of vehicles capable of carrying instruments, equipment, supplies and living organisms through space;
> (4) The establishment of long-range studies of the potential benefits to be gained from, the opportunities for, and the problems involved in the utilization of aeronautical and space activities for peaceful and scientific purposes.

(5) The preservation of the role of the United States as a leader in aeronautical and space science and technology and in the application thereof to the conduct of peaceful activities within and outside the atmosphere.

NASA already, to my mind, neglects many of these things because their funding is diverted to other tasks.

If one does not believe these are important missions, then defund NASA. I believe these *are* important missions and NASA should continue -- and indeed, be more focused on its core purpose.

If one wishes to change the U.S. energy mix, spend more on observing the Earth's atmosphere and oceans, or increase funding for basic science -- then go and fight for funding for those agencies that perform those functions.

#spacerenaissance #civilianspaceprotocol

The Space Renaissance Academy recently kicked-off a wide Mentorship Programme. Students and Mentors can apply here: https://spacerenaissance.space/the-space-renaissance-academy-mentorship-programme/

Space Renaissance International is a proud co-host, together with other Space Advocacy organizations, in a worldwide campaign, named "The Civilian Space Protocol" (CSP).
Please check it here: https://civilianspaceprotocol.space/

Organizations and companies are invited to **subscribe as co-hosts of the Civilian Space Protocol:**
https://civilianspaceprotocol.space/join-the-civilian-space-protocol/

Are you a space enthusiast? Are you willing to help Space Renaissance in our outreach continuous action and to develop our next programs?

Join us as a member:
https://spacerenaissance.space/membership/international-membership-registration/

Give some of your spare hours to SRI, joining our Volunteer Team:
https://spacerenaissance.space/volunteers/

or **make a donation to SRI:**
https://spacerenaissance.space/build-sri-with-us/donate-to-space-renaissance-international/

Also, you might be interested to the book **"A greater world is possible: The expansion of civilization beyond the limits of our home planet is the moral issue of our time"**, available on Amazon
https://www.amazon.com/greater-world-possible-expansion-civilization/dp/1727889924

Visit the Space Renaissance websites:
https://spacerenaissance.space
https://academy.spacerenaissance.space
https://spacerenaissance.com