

Dear Mark,

Yes, I have received your DVD, and played it this morning.

It's fascinating – you have done an excellent job in blending the scientific, technological, political and military aspects of NEO threats. I cannot agree with you more that it's not if; it's just a matter of when!

Without exaggeration, I can say this is one of the most important documentaries made. You may quote me on this.

The current worldwide scare about climate change is certainly a valid concern. But we must not allow these terrestrial concerns to distract political attention -- or resources -- from preparing for very real dangers we face from outer space. How ironic it would be to mobilise billions of dollars to contain global warming, if our planet is then battered by what I once called 'The Hammer of God'!

I'm very pleased with what you have made of my own interview – that was done quite sometime ago! And I know several others you've interviewed: Duncan Steel, Rusty Schweickart and Pete Worden among them. I'm amused by Pete's reference to the 'giggle factor', which has held back progress in other important technologies, including the Space Elevator. But I'm glad that no one is laughing about that, or NEOs, any longer.

I like your chapter heading "the Space Guardians". They have been active for a number of years on several continents, but it's hard to get politicians to focus on a threat whose time horizon is too long, or too unpredictable. I'm copying this to Jonathan Tate, Director of Spaceguard UK, who's struggling to revive NEO research interest in Europe. Jay and his colleagues will find your film a very valuable educational and advocacy tool.

I was particularly interested in your discussion on various 'mitigation' options and technologies. I share Michael Belton's view that we won't know for sure what could work until some testing is done. And I'm intrigued by the prospect of using solar sails for NEO deflection – I've always been interested in solar sails for space propulsion, but this opens up new possibilities!

I'm amazed and impressed to see how you have done practically all the production and editing work by yourself, and hope some Canadian or US foundations would consider reimbursing your costs.

Thanks for crediting Rohan de Silva for his filming – I found some sections of the end credits hard to read as they roll on near-white backgrounds. You might want to fix this.

When is this film going to be released? Is there broadcast interest? This is a film that should be seen as widely as possible. I'm cc'ing to Tedson Meyers, who heads the very modestly-funded Arthur C Clarke Foundation, for his ideas on maximising outreach.

All good wishes,

Arthur

PS: A minor point: I don't consider myself a physicist – I studied physics and mathematics at King's College, London, nearly 60 years ago, but I've always seen myself as an author!

**Sir Arthur C. Clarke, Author (of many books including "2001: A Space Odyssey"), Colombo, Sri Lanka, May 23, 2007**