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CLIMATE SCIENCE

NASA Administrator Not Sure Global Warming A Problem

by Staff Writers

Washington DC (SPX) May 30, 2007

Michael Griffin NASA Administrator has told America's National Public Radio that while he has no doubt a trend of global warming exists "I am not sure that it is fair to say that it is a problem we must wrestle with."



NASA Administrator Michael Griffin. (file image)

In an interview with NPR's Steve Inskeep that will air in Thursday's edition of NPR News' Morning Edition, Administrator Griffin explains: "I guess I would ask which human beings - where and when - are to be accorded the privilege of deciding that this particular climate that we have right here today, right now is the best climate for all other human beings. I think that's a rather arrogant position for people to take."

The comments come at a difficult time for the Bush Administration which is under growing pressure from other members of the G8 club which under the current Chair of Germany is pushing for global action on Co2 emissions.

NASA scientists have also been in the spotlight in recent years for research papers and public statements that did not sit well with the Bush White House. After several highly public disagreements over the right of NASA scientists to speak their mind a stalemate was reached.

But in recent weeks a new squabble over NASA has broken out in Washington with the new Democrat dominated Congress passing an increasingly critical eye over NASA and it's operations, where budget pressures are building against a backdrop of competing programs, centers and agendas.

The transcribed excerpts were released by NPR on May 30 as a teaser to what will prove to be a an interview of much note in the next few days.

STEVE INSKEEP: One thing that's been mentioned that NASA is perhaps not spending as much money as it could on is studying climate change, global warming, from space. Are you concerned about global warming?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN: I am aware that global warming -- I'm aware that global warming exists. I understand that the bulk of scientific evidence accumulated supports the claim that we've had about a one degree centigrade rise in temperature over the last century to within an accuracy of 20 percent.

I'm also aware of recent findings that appear to have nailed down -- pretty well nailed down the conclusion that much of that is manmade. Whether that is a long term concern or not, I can't say.

INSKEEP: And I just wanted to make sure that I'm clear. Do you have any doubt that this is a problem that mankind has to wrestle with?

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GRIFFIN: I have no doubt that global -- that a trend of global warming exists. I am not sure that it is fair to say that it is a problem we must wrestle with. To assume that it is a problem is to assume that the state of earth's climate today is the optimal climate, the best climate that we could have or ever have had and that we need to take steps to make sure that it doesn't change.

First of all, I don't think it's within the power of human beings to assure that the climate does not change, as millions of years of history have shown, and second of all, I guess I would ask which human beings - where and when - are to be accorded the privilege of deciding that this particular climate that we have right here today, right now is the best climate for all other human beings. I think that's a rather arrogant position for people to take.

INSKEEP: Is that thinking that informs you as you put together the budget? That something is happening, that it's worth studying, but you're not sure that you want to be battling it as an army might battle an enemy.

GRIFFIN: Nowhere in NASA's authorization, which of course governs what we do, is there anything at all telling us that we should take actions to affect climate change in either one way or another. We study global climate change, that is in our authorization, we think we do it rather well. I'm proud of that, but NASA is not an agency chartered to quote "battle climate change."

(END PRESS RELEASE TRANSCRIPT)

Full transcription and audio available Thursday morning at www.npr.org

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Russia Knows How To Prevent Global Warming



Moscow (RIA Novosti) May 30, 2007

Russian scientists have found a way to prevent global warming of the Earth, the director of the Global Climate and Ecology Institute said Wednesday. Russian Academy of Sciences Academic Yury Izrael told a news conference that the method envisions air spraying of a sulfur-containing aerosol in lower stratosphere layers at a height of 10-14 kilometers (six to 10 miles). Sulfur drops would then reflect solar radiation.



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