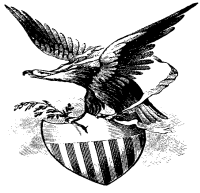


Light Brings Salt

Volume 5, Issue 49

December 30, 2007



Iron Range Bible Church

Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God
"Sanctify them in the truth: Your word is truth."



Thank You, America.

LTC Jim Crider

The following letter and photograph was sent to Michael Yon from LTC Jim Crider, the commander of the 1-4 CAV soldiers based at FOB Falcon. (Forward Operating Base)

Some time ago, I ran into an old high school friend who asked me if I was still in the Army. After I said yes, he slowly shook his head and asked me how much longer I had to go before I could get out. I am sure that in his mind it is like I am serving a prison sentence counting the days before my release. The truth is that I do not want sympathy. I not only enjoy Army life, I count it a privilege to serve. I frequently receive heart-felt thanks from people I do not even know for serving in the Armed Forces and I appreciate it. Cards, letters, emails and even a standing ovation as I traversed through the Dallas airport going home on leave from Iraq recently. However, I have been feeling lately like I should thank the American people for the honor of fighting for and representing the United States of America.

In the early summer of 2007, an IED detonated on the main street of a neighborhood in our area. A very small food store was the only thing open in the empty streets so I went inside to see if the owner was alright and if perhaps he had seen anything. The owner appeared utterly hopeless and almost in tears as he stood next to his wife. He did not know anything. Months later, the effects of the surge and our counterinsurgency strategy had taken hold.

The streets were full of people and that same owner had used a micro-grant to fix up and expand his once lonely store.

His grand kids were at his feet as I introduced him to a reporter accompanying me on a walk through the revitalized neighborhood. I had never heard him speak English but this day he looked at me and said, "I tell you, Sir, I love you with all of my heart!"



Right outside of our outpost in southern Baghdad is a dirt poor family of seven with children ranging in age from eighteen months to eleven years. Americans from all walks of life sent us toys and other small items to share with the Iraqi people over the holidays. We thought this would be the perfect family to share some of them with. We stopped by and the kids ran to the trucks. I asked the oldest boy if his parents were home and he said his mom was but that his dad was out picking through the trash. We later learned that he collected soda cans and sold them to make a living.

The children's mother walked up and was very grateful and in classic Arab tradition insisted that we come into her tiny home for tea. I told her that

we could not stay but saw immediately that she was disappointed. She told me that the soldiers never accepted her invitation. I promised her I would return the next day and did so the following afternoon. We arrived and to learn that she had been waiting since early in the morning and made her husband stay home so he could be there. We went inside and sat on the floor but not before she placed blankets under us!

While the mother went to make the tea, her little girl came in and sat down. We asked her how old she was and she did not know. She ran to her mother to ask and came back telling us she was six years old with a big smile. Her father came in shortly after and was thrilled beyond belief that we were in his home to have tea. We shared the only two tea glasses they had. After our visit we took a family photo for them and delivered it framed on Christmas Day.

The experience of war changes people. For some it is a negative change but most manage to absorb the experience and use it to make themselves stronger. I have said goodbye to a mortally wounded soldier in the hospital, spoken to grieving family members of our casualties, and tried to comfort soldiers who just lost their best friend in a single violent moment. I have been under fire, looked insurgents in the eye, and seen corruption up close. I have also seen people emerge from oppression and live with hope for the first time in years. I have seen children reach up and grasp the hands of American soldiers just because they trust them. I have felt the desire to help and then been given the resources to do it. Finally, I have felt the close knit camaraderie that develops when you serve with a group of people fighting for a cause larger than self. Yes, this experience has changed me. I am stronger, more driven, and humbled all at the same time.

Thank you, America.

LTC Jim Crider

Secular fundamentalists

By Cal Thomas

You don't have to be religious to qualify as a fundamentalist. You can be Al Gore, the messiah

figure for the global warming cult, whose followers truly believe their gospel of imminent extermination in a Noah-like flood, if we don't immediately change our carbon polluting ways.

One of the traits of a cult is its refusal to consider any evidence that might disprove the faith. And so it is doubtful the global warming cultists will be moved by 400 scientists, many of whom, according to the Washington Times, "are current or former members of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that shares the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with Mr. Gore for publicizing a climate crisis." In a report by Republican staff of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, these scientists cast doubt on a "scientific consensus" that global warming caused by humans endangers the planet.

Like most cultists, the true believers struck back, not by debating science, but by charging that a small number of the scientists mentioned in the report have taken money from the petroleum industry. A spokeswoman for Al Gore said 25 or 30 of the scientists may have received funding from Exxon Mobile Corp. Exxon Mobile spokesman Gantt H. Walton dismissed the accusation, saying, "the company is concerned about climate-change issues and does not pay scientists to bash global-warming theories."

The pro-global warming cultists enjoy a huge money advantage. Paleoclimate scientist Bob Carter, who has testified before the Senate Environment and Public Works committee, noted in an EPW report how much money has been spent researching and promoting climate fears and so-called solutions: "In one of the more expensive ironies of history, the expenditure of more than \$50 billion (US) on research into global warming since 1990 has failed to demonstrate any human-caused climate trend, let alone a dangerous one," he wrote on June 18, 2007. The \$19 million spent on research that debunks the global warming faith pales in comparison.

Also included in the Republican report are comments by Dutch atmospheric scientist Hendrik Tennekes: "I find the Doomsday picture Al Gore is painting — a six-meter sea level rise, 15 times the IPCC number — entirely without merit. I

protest vigorously the idea that the climate reacts like a home heating system to a changed setting of the thermostat: just turn the dial, and the desired temperature will soon be reached."

Oklahoma Senator James M. Inhofe, ranking Republican on the Environment and Public Works Committee, said the report debunks Mr. Gore's claim that the "debate is over." In fact, the debate hasn't even begun because the global warming cultists won't debate. Despite numerous challenges, Al Gore has refused to debate the issue with any credible scientist who is a skeptic. Shouldn't the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize be willing to debate such an important issue? What does he have to fear? If his theory cannot stand up to scientific inquiry and skepticism, it needs to be exposed as a false religion and himself as a false prophet before he and his followers force us to change the way we live and alter the prosperous society that generations of Americans have built.

Gore and his disciples will still be living in their big houses, driving gas-guzzling cars and flying in private jets that leave carbon footprints as large as Bigfoot's, while most of us will be forced to drive tiny automobiles and live in huts resembling the Third World. But hypocrisy is just one of many traits displayed by secular fundamentalists like Gore.

Before adopting any faith, the agendas of the people attempting to impose it, along with the beliefs held by them and their disciples, should be considered. Gore and company are big government liberals who think government is the answer to all of our problems, including problems they create. In fact, as Ronald Reagan often said, in too many cases government is the problem.

The secular fundamentalists who believe in Al Gore as a prophet and global warming as a religious doctrine are being challenged by scientists and others who disbelieve and who think we ought to be spending more time on developing new technology and energy sources for the future and not preaching gloom, doom and retreat. Let them debate the issue. If they won't, we can only conclude that all they are spewing is hot air.

Creation Moment Plants Focus Light

Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

In many ways, a plant is like a machine that changes the energy of sunlight into food energy that is needed by the rest of the living world. The energy which runs the plant is light.

Now, if you were going to design a better, more efficient plant, how might you do it? Obviously, one way to improve a plant would be to create one that can do its job with less light. But remember, the plant cannot store more energy than it receives. And if the plant was too sensitive to light, a strong dose of sunlight could kill it. The obvious solution is to outfit the plant with tiny lenses which focus even dim light into the chemical centers where photosynthesis takes place.

Due to our ignorance, modern science has often regarded plants as though they were simple, unsophisticated forms of life. Now scientists have discovered that many plants do indeed have special cells which focus and concentrate the available light into the very centers where it is needed. One plant's shaded leaves were found to intensify available light by 26 times. And if the light gets so strong that it could damage the leaves, the light is focused onto cells which can absorb the extra light.

Plants are much more complex, higher performance living things than we ever suspected. Plants incorporate designs based on a highly sophisticated knowledge of both chemistry and physics. What a wonderful witness they are to our Creator!