

The Politics of Intelligent Design

s the recent federal court trial in Dover, Pennsylvania, over whether "Intelligent Design" (ID) may be taught in schools, has commanded the attention of the world, it has been fascinating to watch the classic strategies and tactics for achieving political advantage acted out. Once again we have been reminded that, indeed, there is nothing new under the sun.

Take, for example, the use of the word 'evolution.' There



is nothing in the current ID theory which denies the reality of evolution. In fact, much of the serious work on ID has to do with determining just what evolution itself may require in order to function. One needs a chicken to have an egg and an egg to get a chicken, so, clearly, evolution may occasionally need some help (i.e., an intelligent designer), but that does not mean evolution (i.e., progressive change) is not occurring. On the contrary, it is clear that such change is a fact, and serious proponents of intelligent design have no quarrel with it.

To us—notwithstanding accusations that ID is anti-evolution and anti-science—it seems that, instead, it may offer more of an enlightened middle way between false choices. Hereto-fore, we have been told we must select either Biblical Creationism or Evolution. But, what is challenged in the current debate is not Evolution, but 'Darwinism'—the idea that evolution could occur with only random and material forces at work, no intelligence involved. Ironi-cally, those who 'believe' the latter are in actuality staking out a metaphysical position and holding to it by faith without proof (i.e., adhering to a dogma) and are advancing a virtual religion of their own, albeit, while claiming to reject the authority of any religion. The cult of Darwinism, it seems to us, has usurped the role of the priesthood which it has ostensibly overthrown, suggesting that it and only it can provide the answers the world is seeking. And, all the while, feigning an air of injured innocence when its integrity is questioned and its authority challenged.

While the inner workings of minds at the upper echelons of the Darwinian religion may be difficult for non-believers to fathom, we can still study their influence at lower, lessinformed levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and make some useful observations. For instance, when called to defend the 'sacred' cause of 'science'—perceived as threatened by ID's growing influence—much of the secular press has obediently rushed to the ramparts. The shrill, even hysterical, denunciation of ID as nothing more than a front for Biblical fundamentalist creationism and the prophesying of doom—a virtual return to the dark ages reveals, however, more than the ignorance of the accusers. Indeed, the cries of alarm over the imminent "death of science," we suspect, reflect diminishing certainty and growing anxiety over the authority of the entire Darwinian position. In such a state, argument based on merit alone is far too threatening and must be abandoned.

Atlantis Rising Magazine exists because many of us have observed a deep disconnect in the orthodox truth-detection mechanisms of our society. The difficulty, we felt, wasn't so much due to a conspiracy as to a schism tearing apart the very soul of civilization. The result, it can be argued, has been a host of problems—alienation, wars, environmental collapse, etc. One symptom of the disorder is the elevation of the unworthy into positions of authority from which they—in an endless effort to preserve their own advantages—manipulate the levers of power. And where there is opportunity to corrupt, there is no shortage of willing corrupters. The condition is widespread and intolerable. But, hopefully, in the current conflict over intelligent design, we are witnessing one of those extraordinary moments when the system, in the interest of its own equilibrium, is entering into some much needed selfcorrection.

If that indeed is what is happening, we may witness some intense resistance. So, what else is new?

Publisher