

LET US PREY

THE CHURCH OF GORE SCIENCE HAS NO TOLERANCE FOR HERETICS. BY TIM FINDLEY

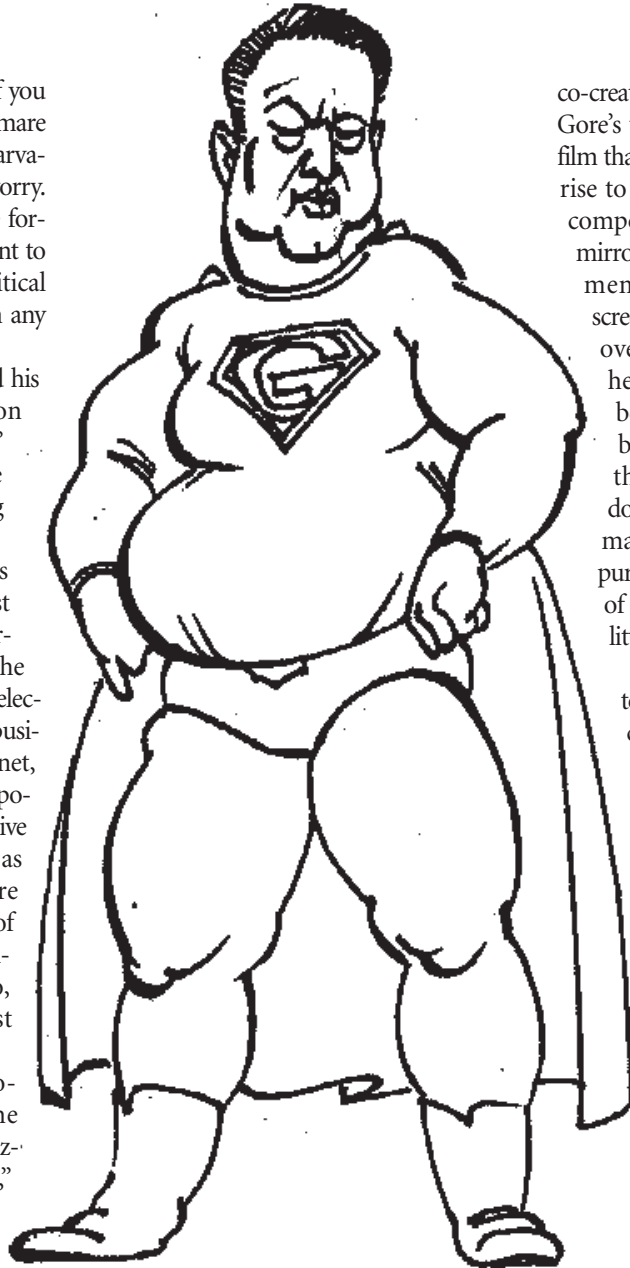
Al Gore is one scary dude. Even if you believe only a part of his nightmare vision of melting ice caps and starvation droughts, it's enough to cause you worry. Skeptics suggest, however, that what the former vice president is really doing is meant to galvanize a movement into an ecopolitical party more frightening to freedom than any mere meltdown.

Any way it goes, critics say, Gore and his religiously faithful green congregation intend to shape their "moral imperative" into demagogic power still beyond the imaginations of most well-meaning Americans.

What is perhaps more disturbing is the truth about who occupies the most important "Pews" in the church. The former vice president has some disciples he seldom introduces. Among them are a selection of the richest and most powerful business executives on the endangered planet, beginning with Goldman Sachs, the corporate investment giant whose chief executive officer last year put aside his position as chairman of the board of The Nature Conservancy to become U.S. secretary of the Treasury. Others include the Sun Oil-created Pew Trust, Du Pont, Texaco, British Petroleum, Toyota, and, most recently, General Motors.

Baptized by Gore in his self-proclaimed mission to make "saving the earth's environment...the central organizing element of the post-Cold War world," the corporate disciples have already set up their altars in what General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt describes as "a time period where environmental improvement is going to lead to profitability."

"An Inconvenient Truth," the film by Laurie David, does deal with the horrors of global warming, but it is also a paean to Gore himself. It seamlessly wanders away from its theme to muse on Gore's own life and his disappointment at losing the 2000 election. "We just have to get by it," he is heard to sigh as the film shows him gazing soulfully out the window of a helicopter after having



**LOOK, UP IN THE SKY!
IT'S, WELL, JUST THE SUN,
AND THE HEAT'S ON
FOR AL GORE AND
GLOBAL WARMING.**

been banished by the Supreme Court and despite winning the popular vote.

Filmmaker David, the wife of "Seinfeld"

co-creator Larry David, lovingly incorporates Gore's younger days with photos and news film that fawns on the former vice president's rise to his great revelation. The cinematic composition of "An Inconvenient Truth" mirrors David's passionate digital environmentalism and has the help of huge screens portraying graphics of ominously overwhelming charts. There's even a heartbreaking digitally created polar bear facing certain lonely doom. The bear, reminiscent of the spotted owl that helped Gore and Clinton shut down Pacific Northwest logging, might make the kiddies cry (although it is a pure fabrication), but the massive graphs of rising CO₂ leave everybody feeling a little queasy.

The church of Gore science has no tolerance for heretics—"deniers," as He calls them. There is very little patience even for sympathetic agnostics who agree with the condition of climate change but won't accept the premise that industrialized society is either solely to blame or ultimately capable of solving the problem.

Anthropogenic (human-based) activity, particularly in the overconsuming United States, is the sinful cause, Gore preaches as he rides a cherry-picker pulpit high above the crowd to illustrate the projected extent of the rising red horns of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which he expects by 2050 to doom the planet, unless we act now.

No serious scientist disagrees with that, he sermonizes, "zero. Not one." And that's another of the biblical pronouncements that bothers many, including at least some of the 17,000 scientists whose signatures appeared on a petition questioning that conclusion or its implications as early as 1997.

As recently as June 2007, noted environmental scientist Eric Steig, who studies arctic ice cores cited by Gore, joined other scientists in objecting to claims of "scientific consensus" requiring government

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN BARDWELL.

action on global warming. “In general,” Steig said, “the certainty with which this chapter presents our understanding of abrupt climate change is overstated. There is confusion between hypothesis and evidence through that chapter, a great deal of confusion on the differences between an abrupt ‘climate change’ and possible, hypothetical causes of such climate changes.”

And Josph Bast, president of Heartland Institute, wrote: “It is now abundantly clear why Al Gore will not accept our debate challenge. The supposed scientific consensus on global warming is pure fiction.”

In the film, and especially later at the Oscars, Gore looks a bit like a frumpily aging Superman who is letting his belly get a little out of control. You’d have to know that “Seinfeld” included an image of Superman in every episode to make that much of it, but filmmaker David doesn’t miss the opportunity to imply superhero status to the one-time reporter secretly on a mission to save the planet.

Gore says that while he was at Harvard in 1967, he was first awakened to global warming by his “mentor,” Dr. Roger Revelle. “[Revelle] was startled by what he found in his study of CO₂ and I soaked it up like a sponge,” Gore says.

Revelle has since died, but not before working with former NASA climate scientist Frederick Singer, who has for years been Gore’s nemesis, a man whom Gore accuses of being in the employ of the big oil companies (something Singer adamantly denies).

Before he died in 1991, Revelle produced a paper with Singer suggesting that people should not be made to become alarmed over the “greenhouse effect” and global warming.

“Drastic, precipitous and, especially, unilateral steps to delay the putative greenhouse impacts can cost jobs and prosperity and increase the human costs of global poverty, without being effective,” the article, subtitled “Look before you leap,” said.

It was a Judas kiss to Gore, who was already conducting congressional hearings meant to produce just the sort of alarm his former mentor was saying was unnecessary. Gore suggested that the professor had become the victim of Alzheimer’s disease.

After Harvard, where despite Cs and Ds on his transcript, he managed to graduate *cum laude*, Gore was working as a reporter for *The Tennessean* and wavering from the pressure of his mother especially to enter politics, and his own desire to carry out his faith by enrolling in Vanderbilt University Divinity

School where, in less than two years, he flunked out. He tried law school after that with largely the same result; too distracted, he said, by his other obligations.

No, his mother knew best. The future ecomessiah was not destined for higher education or media fame; he belonged in politics, just like his dad, a former Tennessee school-teacher prodded into running for office also by Gore’s mother.

In the film, Al Jr. lovingly remembers those days growing up, splitting his time between the family-owned Fairfax Hotel in

“IT IS NOW ABUNDANTLY CLEAR WHY AL GORE WILL NOT ACCEPT OUR DEBATE CHALLENGE. THE SUPPOSED SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS ON GLOBAL WARMING IS PURE FICTION.”

JOSEPH BAST, PRESIDENT, HEARTLAND INSTITUTE

Washington, D.C., where he was really raised, and the family’s Tennessee farm, where he says he spent four months every year, although critics say it was less.

“My dad was cattle breeder of the year,” he says in the film, as it shows one of the Black Angus on his Tennessee pasture. He doesn’t mention that Al Gore Sr. got those prize bulls as a gift from his political buddy Armand Hammer, founder of Occidental Oil Company, and identified before his death in 1990 as an agent of the Soviet Union for the past 40 years or more. Al Gore Sr.’s main role with the cattle, critics have reported, was to extort political contacts to pay extreme prices for Black Angus they didn’t really need.

But no matter, aside from what he says in the film was his great delight as a youngster working in his father’s tobacco sheds, young Al was never a farmer. Nor was he the segregationist his father was said to be. Fresh out of Harvard, young Al was a liberal who knew the world was doomed. First though, there was the romance with Tipper, who would become his wife and mother of their four children.

In that is the first of the urban legends he managed to promote about himself while he was vice president. He just let slip at one point that he and Tipper had been the model for Eric Segal’s huge bestseller, “Love Story.” Segal, who attended Harvard at the same time and lived across the hall from them, corrected that only a bit later by saying that actually Tommy Lee Jones and Al Gore had been the model for his lead character in the book. Who was going to argue with the vice president, who already had a job and didn’t need a role in that movie?

Whether rationalizing his family’s ties to

Armand Hammer or bragging about being the model for Eric Segal’s “Love Story,” Gore has a pattern of manipulating facts to inflate his own importance and virtue. Word spread that he claimed he had “invented” the Internet. Actually, what he said in a TV interview was that he “created” the Internet link between scientists in the government with passage of his “High Performance Computer and Communications” Act in 1991, something many agree opened what Gore himself called “the information superhighway” to all of us.

Al doesn’t really lie; he just has a way of ignoring the truth. When he took all that money from a Buddhist temple during the 1996 campaign, he honestly said there was “no prevailing authority” telling him not to. And salting away the clean-burning coal reserves of Utah’s Grand Staircase Escalante as a monument had nothing he knew of to do with Chinese contributions making their way to the White House.

In the film, Gore concedes that he felt guilty about his father raising tobacco, especially when his sister died of lung cancer. He doesn’t mention that he later railed at a U.N. meeting that smoking was a major factor in creating global warming. He doesn’t claim that Gore Black Angus never have flatulence, but the guru of global warming also believes methane from cattle is a major contributor.

But it’s oil and the wasteful use of fossil fuel that he blames for most of it. That may explain why—in the largest disposal of U.S. resources in history, and in what would have been a major scandal only 20 years earlier—Gore (in 1998) engineered the sale of the Elk Hills Naval Oil Reserve to Occidental Petroleum, the company owned by his dad’s old buddy Armand Hammer, who had awarded the elder Gore with a lucrative shareholding position on the “Occi” board after he left the Senate.

Young Gore had developed a vision of a new world by that time; one, he said, that should be shared by rich and poor alike. And since most of the rich were in the United States, he advised them to step down a little. To a group of Future Farmers of America, the vice president suggested that they reconsider their ambition to work the land, on the basis that in the future most of the food would be grown in what was then called the Third World.

It all started coming together for him, Gore says, in the 1997 Kyoto Conference in Japan. By then, Gore had already written his first gospel, “Earth in the Balance,” and knew

he would find more followers among the increasingly strong nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) attaching themselves without any accountability to the United Nations. The NGOs own egg was hatched in the 1992 Rio de Janeiro "Earth Summit" in Brazil, where world-planning Agenda 21 was created, virtually without any representative government help at all.

Al Gore does not allow much time for people in general to evaluate global warming. "It's not a political issue; it's a moral issue," he repeatedly says. There will be no elections on the subject, unless perhaps you count 2008 when it may become a campaign issue, as it already is in Australia. But, whatever, Gore obviously doesn't think it will require majority approval to carry out the ritual, not when full-blown marketing and propaganda can work better.

The wholly convinced followers of the Gore church don't offer to debate as they make use of plentiful foundation funds to reach into schools, statehouses, news media and cartoons in a massive campaign that offers training to thousands of volunteers willing to prove themselves worthy.

The money for it, ironically, comes from trusts that were founded with oil wells and administered by fatcat and, some say, "guilty-

feeling" heirs.

Doubters like Singer and others don't have a chance against the kind of power that has captured everything from the European Union to *Time* magazine already. Another run at the White House risks disappointing somebody, even if Gore just can't resist his last chance. But perhaps the scariest thing is that Gore doesn't have to wait for time to prove him and his minions right about global warming. When the door is already open, the hungry tiger doesn't offer choices.

Quoting Winston Churchill, in what almost sounds like extortion, Gore says in the film that what lies ahead is "a period of consequences." It can't hurt though, can it, to go along with a program that would, after all, improve the planet, even if it can't really prevent some catastrophe? Paper instead of plastic, better fuel efficiency, less wasteful light bulbs, and recycled materials are easy enough for all of us to take.

Concern for the environment is not limited to only one side of political differences in the United States. The essential difference is in how much responsibility the United States should assume for what climate problems there may be. Gore excites a mass that has long wanted to chase the moneylenders from the temple. They will not be stopped by mere

tokens of reform. But they also may not know the full truth.

Those big corporate leaders like Goldman Sachs and British Petroleum apparently got religion after 1999 riots by leftists shut down the World Trade Organization conference in Seattle. The rioters were fresh with the mandate they considered granted to them by the Rio de Janeiro UN/NGO conference creating Agenda 21 and the International Panel on Climate Change. Rather than allow a mob to grow into an international problem in the way of the new global economy, the smart action was determined to be simply playing the protestors' own game.

And Gore himself, just as he had with the Internet, helped make it possible by suggesting ways the industrialized world might pay off developing nations with carbon offsets.

In the 10th century of Christianity, the Catholic Church raised money by allowing sinners to buy "indulgences," earning them a little slack for eternity. Carbon offsets work about the same way, although already some in developing nations have begun calling them "Carbon Colonialism." Got a smokestack you can't fix right away? Buy some trees in Patagonia, or a windmill in Africa, whether the locals need it or not.

Corporate eyes lit up at the prospects.

"THIS IS NOT A POLITICAL ISSUE, IT'S A MORAL ISSUE"

The "moral high ground" on global warming is being established with enormous economic and political implications, particularly to the United States, which is held to blame for the bulk of the problems created by CO₂ emissions. Economist George Reisman of Pepperdine University has said that meeting United Nations' goals for reduction of emissions in the United States would result in "economic devastation." So-called "developing nations" such as China and India would be exempt from dire reductions in emissions in order to allow them to "catch up" with the richer western world. But the political reality is that by reducing production and consumer use in the U.S. and other "developed" nations, the impact would be felt most by imposing conditions of new poverty on their citizens.

"THERE IS A CONSENSUS AMONG SCIENTISTS THAT GLOBAL WARMING IS PRIMARILY THE RESULT OF HUMAN ACTIVITY"

There is no such "consensus." Several sci-

PRO & CON

By Tim Findley

entists have complained of attempts to pressure or intimidate them into accepting that premise, but reputable climate scientists all over the world argue that global warming is mainly the result of solar activity which can be seen on Neptune and Mars as well, and which has happened before in geologic history, long before the use of fossil fuels.

Despite disagreements among scientists, the apparent "bandwagon" rush to agree that humans are responsible for global warming is orchestrated more by political agenda than by general scientific knowledge or agreement.

"ONLY IMMEDIATE AND DRASTIC ACTION TO REDUCE CO₂ EMISSIONS

CAN PREVENT A DISASTROUS RISE IN GLOBAL WARMING"

While even scientists who disagree with human-produced CO₂ as the cause of global warming also say that a reduction in fossil fuel emissions will be beneficial, most of them doubt the "Kyoto targets" can have more than a minor impact on climate change. In fact, some scientists argue that studies apart from alarmists' computer models indicate the warming trend begun in 1990 halted naturally in 1998.

Others, led by NASA scientist James Hansen, predict a "tipping point" by at most 2016 when global warming will be unstoppable. Coincidentally, the doomsday tipping point comes at the end of the next two U.S. presidential terms of office.

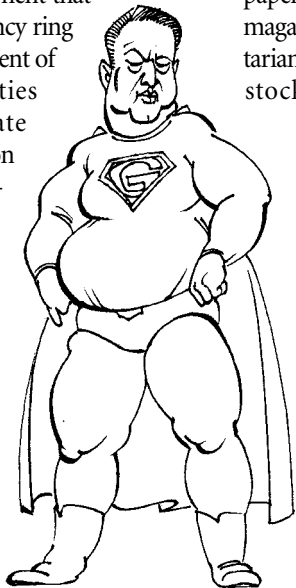
"THE EVIDENCE OF GLOBAL WARMING IS APPARENT IN MELTING GLACIERS, SEVERE WEATHER, AND LOSS OF ANIMAL SPECIES"

Glaciers have been melting since the end of the Ice Age 12,000 years ago and the Little Ice Age (1600-1900). A similar

There is money to be made by sending cash to Kyoto-absolved China and charging consumers for what it costs. Who really pays in the end? It's not the CEOs.

Goldman Sachs was so enthused about it, the Wall Street firm formed the Center for Environmental Markets. "We believe," the company said in a statement that had a Nature Conservancy ring to it, "that the management of risks and opportunities arising from climate change and its regulation will be particularly significant and will garner increasing attention from capital market participants." Little guys with light bulbs need not apply.

Though he doesn't mention it as he flies by private jet to his \$20,000-plus appearances to show "An Inconvenient Truth," Al Gore is, of course, on the cutting edge of paying off for his carbon footprint. It is worth noting, however, that most of that carbon offset goes to his own



company, London-based Generation Investment Management, which he formed with Goldman Sachs executive David Blood.

Time magazine, uncritically supportive of the need to act on global warming (April 9, 2007), produced a list of 50 things us common folk can do to help. Beyond the usual paper versus plastic and new light bulbs, the magazine suggests more of us become vegetarians as we reduce our herds of gaseous livestock. Humans also puff methane and

GORE IS MORE THAN JUST A PROPHET. HE HAS IT IN HIS CAPACITY TO BECOME A DEMOGOGUE IN THE PULPIT OF POLITICAL ECOLOGY, AND HE MUST KNOW THAT.

breathe out CO₂, but it's only the most radical of the righteous who openly suggest reducing our population as well.

Did you know that Hitler was a nonsmoking vegetarian?

Unfair, unfair. Al Gore has clearly paid his dues as a public servant, and he doesn't really lie. He is no tyrant and not yet a saint. The scientific arguments against his "Inconvenient Truth" include the facts that

polar bears aren't drowning and Hurricane Katrina wasn't caused by global warming. The sun and even the warming earth core may be more responsible for the problem. Even in the unlikely case CO₂ reaches the extremes Gore predicts, nothing short of reverting to a society like that before the Industrial Revolution will have more than a minimal effect on it. Only time alone will settle the question.

But in the film, Gore stands upon his cherry-picker pulpit high above the crowd and bulb by bag by better mileage proclaims that we can go back to "our emissions in the nineteen seventies."

Useless as that might even be, economists say the cost would be 2.3 percent of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product.

Al Gore preaches to the choir, but that's not what makes him scary. It's when he says, "Let us Prey," and they all reply, "A-Men"—like red-robed monks of the Inquisition. That should start the real worry. ■

Tim Findley didn't invent the Internet, but he did have a role in a seldom-seen cowboy movie.

warming period in the 11th century, long before the industrial use of fossil fuels, permitted a great period of exploration, including the Viking settlement of Greenland when it was actually green. Other historic warming periods produced beneficial results in greater crop production and expanded lands for farming. Even the current period of warming has shown similar results in some areas with longer growing seasons and healthier crops. In any case, despite alarmist claims, the seas are not rising beyond long-term measurements, and polar bears, to use the cited example of species threatened, are actually increasing in numbers.

"BUT THE REAL EVIDENCE CAN BE SEEN IN THE POLAR ICE CAPS, WHICH ARE SHRINKING"

Again, scientists disagree among themselves. The Arctic appears to be shrinking, but the Antarctic ice sheet shows signs of shrinking in some areas while expanding in others. Global warming may be responsible for both conditions, but scientists are still

unsure.

In 1975, Newsweek magazine covered itself in the doomsday forecast of a new ice age the writers called "ominous."

"The drop in food output could begin quite soon," the article said, "perhaps only 10 years from now."

Following on the 1970 Earth Day apocalyptic predictions of Stanford scientist Paul Ehrlich, the magazine cited "the most devastating outbreaks of tornadoes ever recorded" in 1974 as part of the evidence of fundamental changes in the world's weather.

"The central fact is that after three quarters of a century of extraordinarily mild conditions, the earth's climate seems to be cooling down," the article warned. It suggested that among the solutions to the "grim reality" might be man-made melting of the Arctic ice cap.

World temperatures, the magazine reported reliable scientists as saying, had been falling since 1940, leading to concurrence with Ehrlich's gloomy outlook of ice age famine in his book, "The Population Bomb," which suggested there were already

too many people on earth creating conditions for the big freeze. He predicted that a billion people might starve to death in the 1980s.

But in 1979, the temperature of the earth started to rise again. And by 1980, new doomsayer Dr. James Hansen of Columbia University was testifying before Sen. Al Gore about the ultimate dangers of global warming. He suggested that the ultimate cause of it was too many people on earth causing greenhouse warming.

Interesting that presumptive "scientists" like Ehrlich and Hansen presenting opposite versions of catastrophe in a mere 10 years nevertheless come to the same conclusion as to the cause—too many people on earth.

Both Ehrlich and Hansen blamed U.S. economic growth as the major problem. It is not a far leap from what German Nazis concluded in 1938.

Ehrlich, by the way, is still regarded as a respected climate scientist. Hansen has his bets on the table. ■