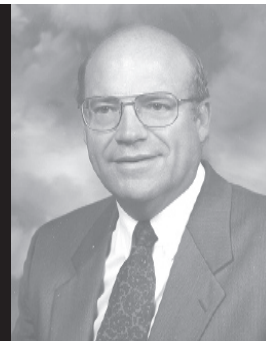




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



Dr. David Noebel

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The Battle for Latin America

by Sara A. Carter

Iran, Cuba and Venezuela are working together against the U.S. by undermining democracy in Latin America, allowing trafficking of illegal drugs and creating safe havens for extremist groups, intelligence officials said.

Testifying before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on Tuesday, National Intelligence Director Michael McConnell said that influence from the three countries—led respectively by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez—has spilled into Bolivia, Nicaragua and Ecuador, which “are pursuing agendas that undercut checks and balances” of democratic governments.

“Moreover, each of these governments, to varying degrees, has engaged in sharply anti-U.S. rhetoric, aligned with Venezuela and Cuba—and increasingly Iran—on international issues, and advocated measures that directly clash with U.S. initiatives,” said Mr. McConnell, whose department oversees all 16 U.S. intelligence agencies.

Mr. McConnell's statements only scratch the surface, according to interviews with U.S. intelligence and law-enforcement officials.

Federal law-enforcement officials contend that Islamic extremists and well-financed Iranian-backed Hezbollah militia groups in Latin America are recruiting members and using highly effective routines to smuggle narcotics to raise funds for their counterparts in the Middle East. Hezbollah, founded in 1982, is a Shi'ite Muslim group that believes in the creation of Iranian-style Islamic republic.

“We've known for some time that Islamic extremists groups were gaining momentum and exploiting the region,” said one U.S. federal law-enforcement official, on the condition of anonymity, who worked drug operations in Central America. “Iran is no exception—now with Cuba and Venezuela, the door is open.”

Web sites advocating Hezbollah and other Islamic extremist groups in Central America are used to recruit members and espouse extremist ideology.

On our Web page—now removed from the Internet—“Hezbollah Latin America” displayed photographs of members, with their faces covered and weapons raised. The Web site contained links to Hezbollah group members in Venezuela, El Salvador, Argentina and as far north as Chiapas, Mexico.

As for Cuba, Mr. Chavez “will continue to seek to unite Latin America,

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead expose them. Ephesians 5:11

“Dwell on the past and you'll lose an eye; forget the past and you'll lose both eyes.” Old Russian Proverb

under his leadership, behind an anti-U.S., radical leftist agenda and to look to Cuba as a key ideological ally,” Mr. McConnell told the committee.

The Cuban Armed Forces’ intelligence agents have been operating in South Florida for the past 48 years and “you are talking about intelligence agents who are training to smuggle anything that can help their government to destroy democracy and the U.S., and they know what they are doing,” said another U.S. law-enforcement official, on the condition of anonymity.

“The alliance between the Cuban government and Iran, makes them a terrorist proxy group like Hezbollah and other terrorists groups working for Iran with the capability to smuggle almost anyone or anything into the U.S.,” the official added. “Venezuela’s alliance with Iran, influenced by Cuba’s support, is a problem the U.S. must face now.”

In 2005, Venezuela became a major transit route for South American—predominantly Colombia—cocaine destined for the U.S. market and it continues to grow, U.S. intelligence officials said.

Mr. Chavez’s lack of counter-drug cooperation “undermines efforts by other countries, particularly Colombia, by giving traffickers access to alternative routes and transit points. Chavez is likely to remain unengaged on the counternarcotics front unless the drug trade is perceived to damage his international image or threaten his political longevity,” Mr. McConnell said.

Mr. McConnell said Mr. Chavez and Mr. Ahmadinejad have established a rapport, visiting each other seven times since 2005.

“Military cooperation between Tehran and Caracas is growing,” Mr. McConnell testified. “There are

growing signs of anxiety among Venezuela’s neighbors about this military buildup.”

Both countries are making strides on economic and energy fronts, “negotiating agreements in such areas as agriculture, automobile and tractor manufacture, petrochemicals, and oil exploration in Venezuela’s Orinoco region,” U.S. intelligence officials said.

In October, U.S. officials were made aware the government-run oil companies in Iran and Venezuela were planning a joint venture to create a fully integrated

oil company. The investment in Iran is estimated at roughly \$1 billion.

House Minority Whip Roy Blunt, Missouri Republican, urged the Bush administration yesterday to investigate whether Venezuela’s \$1 billion joint venture with Iran can be cited under the Iran Sanctions Act.

“Our country has a clear and growing interest in making sure Mahmoud Ahmadinejad doesn’t obtain the resources or capacity needed to support a nuclear weapons program,” he said.

“Venezuela’s influence in the region was made apparent yesterday when Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega proposed a military alliance with Mr. Chavez that would establish a “mutual defense” in case of any attack. Mr. Ortega, who challenged Colombia’s control of a small group of Caribbean islands with possible untapped oil, spoke angrily against the U.S. and Colombia.

Intelligence officials said, “the inauguration of Nicaragua’s Daniel Ortega in January 2007 has given Chavez another staunch ally and a location from which to expand Venezuela’s activities in Central America.”

—*The Washington Times*, February 8, 2008, p. 1

Director of National Intelligence, Michael McConnell, who appeared on Capitol Hill, warned that “military cooperation between Tehran and Caracas is growing” posing a danger to U.S. interests in Latin America.

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz, has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and Dr. Michael Bauman. The Crusade’s address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is (719) 685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (the Crusade is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. Permission to reproduce materials from this *Report* is granted provided our name and address are given.

FARC: Chavez's Blood Brothers

by Thor Halvorsen

The State Department and every European government designated the FARC, a rebel army in Colombia, a foreign terrorist organization. Yet last month Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez praised the FARC as a “real army...an insurgent force with a political project.” Mr. Chavez was cheered repeatedly by the Venezuelan congress when he insisted that the FARC must be “acknowledged” and called upon foreign governments to cease referring to the FARC as terrorists.

The FARC terrorist group has been fighting the democratic government of Colombia for more than 40 years. Founded as the armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party, this 16,000-strong terrorist force recruits children and funds its activities with billions of dollars from the cocaine trade. Its explicit objective is to take Colombia by force—it has kidnapped, extorted and executed thousands of innocent civilians, bombed buildings, assassinated hundreds of political leaders, and, with two other local terrorist organizations, have turned Colombia into one of the most violent and dangerous countries in the world. All in all, FARC has caused the deaths of more than 100,000 people.

Mr. Chavez has long sympathized with some of the world's most prolific human rights violators—from his proclaimed “brotherhood” with Saddam Hussein and kind words for the Taliban, to the close economic and political ties he sustains with the leaders of Iran and Cuba. Much of this is international demagoguery to promote himself as the world's leading anti-American. But the support Mr. Chavez and his government provide the FARC terrorists, support he has denied for nine years, is the clearest example of why he is a threat to human rights in the region.

The documentable ties between Venezuela and the FARC date back to August of 1999—just months into the Chavez presidency. Leaked letters signed by Ramon Rodriguez, a Chavez aide, revealed that the government had offered fuel, money and other support to the FARC. Mr. Chavez also ordered another henchman, Ignacio Arcaya (who later became Venezuelan ambassador in Washington) to give cash gifts to the FARC. Messrs. Arcaya, Rodriguez and Chavez denied the allegations despite eyewitnesses to the conversations.

More evidence surfaced over the years tying Mr. Chavez and his government to the FARC. In one in-

stance, the Colombian army seized hundreds of Venezuelan rifles in the hands of the FARC. Nothing came of it. On another occasion, Mr. Chavez included a FARC terrorist as a personal bodyguard on a state visit to Colombia. Despite photos and local outcry in Colombia, the rest of the world blithely ignored the incident. Meanwhile, FARC leaders were routinely welcomed in Venezuela and treated as heads of state. Prominent FARC leader Olga Marin, for example, spoke on the floor of Venezuela's National Assembly, praising Mr. Chavez as a hero of the rebel movement.

Things got more complicated for the Venezuelan government when, on Dec. 14, 2004, Ricardo Granda, widely known as the FARC's “foreign secretary,” was arrested on the Colombian border. One of the most senior, well-connected and highly skilled political strategists in the FARC's history, Granda had been living in Venezuela's capital enjoying Venezuelan citizenship and even participating in a government-sponsored networking conference attended by Mr. Chavez. The capture of Granda had consequences: the military officer in charge of Venezuela's anti-terrorism unit, Humberto Quintero, was arrested, horrifically tortured and now sits in a maximum security prison for the charge of “treason.” Still, Venezuela kept denying its support of the FARC.

On Jan. 10 of this year, two female hostages held by the FARC were released in a widely publicized deal brokered by the Chavez government. The eagerness of the Venezuelan government to take credit for the release was such that they sent a camera crew that broadcast unedited footage. The broadcast shows a man shaking the hands of the terrorists (who happen to be bearing standard-issue Venezuelan army rifles). The man salutes them: “In the name of President Chavez...we are very attentive to your struggle. Keep that spirit, keep that force, and count on us.”

He ends with “Take care of yourselves, comrades.” The man is Ramon Rodriguez, the person who, in 1999, had written the letters offering the FARC government support. Mr. Rodriguez was an aide to Mr. Chavez back then—now he is the Venezuelan minister of justice.

Mr. Chavez's public call for the legitimization of the FARC and a video that shows the chief law enforcement officer of Venezuela shaking hands with and cheering on terrorists should lead to a swift condemnation by human rights NGOs and governments that have believed that “neutrality” in the Colombian conflict is a virtue. It is vital to recognize the role played by Venezuela in supporting a force that has done nothing but perpetuate misery and bloodshed in a bid to end Colombia's democracy and establish a brutal dictatorship.

—*The Washington Times*, February 7, 2008, p. A 24

Daniel Ortega: Chavez's Blood Brother

by Martin Arostegui

SANTA CRUZ, Bolivia—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega is proposing a military alliance with Venezuela, while pressing a legal challenge to Colombia's control over a tiny group of Caribbean islands in an area thought to have untapped oil deposits.

Mr. Ortega appeared to link the two issues during a weekend speech, using the common thread of virulent anti-Americanism and antipathy toward Colombia that he shares with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

At one point, Mr. Ortega said Nicaragua would establish a "mutual defense" against any attack. In the same address to his ruling Sandinista party, he accused Colombia of not respecting Nicaragua's "sovereignty" over three Caribbean islands and their surrounding waters. "We have to affirm our sovereign rights before international organisms, but we also have to defend ourselves mutually as nations of ALBA," Mr. Ortega said. He was referring to the "Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas," a regional pact promoted by Mr. Chavez that also includes Cuba and Bolivia.

Mr. Ortega's anti-American rhetoric was routine, but the significance of his speech was the revival of an 80-year-old dispute over the Caribbean islands of San Andres, Providencia and Santa Catalina.

Mr. Ortega spoke with Sandinista officials on Sunday, shortly after appearing with Mr. Chavez on the Venezuelan weekly talk show "Hello President," in which Mr. Chavez repeated calls for a regional military alliance against the U.S. and lambasted Colombian President Alvaro Uribe as a "pawn of imperialism."

Relations between Venezuela and Colombia have deteriorated as a result Mr. Uribe's reluctance to accept Mr. Chavez as a mediator in talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, a Marxist rebel group known by its Spanish acronym FARC.

A 1928 treaty granting Colombia sovereignty over the islands is considered invalid by Mr. Ortega, who says Nicaragua was under U.S. military occupation when the

document was signed.

Cesar Augusto Sandino, for whom the Sandinista party was named, battled U.S. troops in Nicaragua from 1927 until their withdrawal in 1933.

Today, Colombian gunboats chase away Nicaraguan vessels trying to fish near the islands.

Some analysts think Nicaragua is reviving its claim because the area could contain oil reserves.

The International Court at The Hague affirmed Colombia's sovereignty over the archipelago's three main islands, but the Dec. 31 ruling opened the way for Nicaraguan jurisdictional claims over some islets and rocks in the archipelago.

Mr. Ortega battled the U.S.-backed Contra rebels throughout the 1980s, but agreed to hold presidential elections in 1990, which he lost.

After winning the presidency again in 2006, he followed Mr. Chavez's lead with a series of anti-American gestures, including a visit last year to Iran.

At an ALBA summit last month, Mr. Chavez pledged to provide discounted oil to Nicaragua through joint state ventures.

Other countries, including Honduras and Dominica, which attended the meeting as observers, also were promised discounted Venezuelan oil if they joined the group.

—*The Washington Times*, February 8, 2008, p. A 15



2008 Colorado Adult Conference

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Hugo Chavez's Useful Idiots

by Douglas MacKinnon

“The more I see, the more I realize that almost no one really cares about right and wrong. They care about money and supporting anyone who opposes George W. Bush.”

Over a coffee last week with a high-level official of our government, that was the comment made to me regarding the Hugo Chavez-Citgo-Joe Kennedy II propaganda campaign now running across our nation. In TV commercials and in full-page print advertising, former Rep. Joe Kennedy thanks “our good friends in Venezuela” for helping to heat America’s poor.

Other than to accept blood money, the government official I spoke with was at a loss to understand why some in the American media would run ads by a thug who exploits and ignores the poor in his nation, creates fear in the region and is, as a major newspaper just described him, an ally to terrorists, drug traffickers and mass murderers.

Clearly, like Bolshevik revolutionary Vladimir Lenin, Venezuelan strongman Chavez has found his “useful idiots” in the guise of Mr. Kennedy; actors Sean Penn and Danny Glover; Democratic Reps. William Delahunt of Massachusetts and Jose Serrano of New York; and the sycophant he has installed to run Citgo here in the United States. All sing his praises, all do his bidding, and all shame themselves with their self-serving actions.

Those facilitating the Chavez-Citgo propaganda campaign—be it the above mentioned or the likes of Major League Baseball, ESPN, the Indy Car series or numerous U.S. charities—need to ask themselves a question: Would they be doing the same thing for the governments of Saddam Hussein, Pol Pot, Idi Amin or even Adolph Hitler? Those who think this question is a stretch know next to nothing of the history of Hugo Chavez.

Speak with the governments of Colombia and Mexico. They will tell you that Mr. Chavez is not only funding various guerilla movements in the region; he is also extending his power throughout Latin America, either directly with arms and military assistance or by bribing weak or needy leaders with oil or cash. One such example is the \$800,000 in cash brought to Argentina on behalf of the government of Venezuela in the form of an illegal campaign contribution meant for now Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner.

Those who naively support Mr. Chavez need to understand that his money truly is “blood money.” This is a man who twice as a junior officer in 1992 tried to or-

chestrate a coup against the legally elected government of Venezuela. Who really knows how many innocent people were killed by Mr. Chavez and his followers during those coup attempts?

Should those who support Mr. Chavez and his various propaganda campaigns think “those murders were a long time ago so they shouldn’t really count anymore,” then maybe recent history will prove more relevant and chilling. According to our own State Department, the human rights violations in the Venezuela of today include unlawful killings, disappearances involving security forces, torture, the abuse of detainees, arbitrary arrests and continued attacks on the independent media.

Beyond that, in late 2006, the House Committee on Homeland Security outlined why our U.S. military and intelligence officials believe that Venezuela is emerging as a “hub of terrorism” in the Western Hemisphere. The report stated that Mr. Chavez is providing support—including documents—that could prove useful to radical Islamic groups. The report detailed how the Venezuelan government had issued thousands of cedulas—the equivalent of U.S. Social Security cards—to a number of suspect nations, including Middle East nations that host foreign terrorist organizations.

As U.S. citizens, companies and media outlets assist Mr. Chavez or happily take his money, they should also ask themselves why thousands of supporters of Hezbollah—the terrorist organization dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the United States—gleefully carry Mr. Chavez’s picture through the streets of Lebanon? Why do they love him so?

In a sad and telling bit of irony, as Mr. Chavez sends his oil to the poor of the United States, his own people are going without milk, eggs, rice, toilet paper and basically every other staple. As they suffer from Latin America’s highest inflation rates, they are forced to line up for hours or even days just to find and buy the necessities needed to feed themselves and their children.

Knowing that, why don’t Joe Kennedy and all those who support the Chavez-Citgo oil program here sell the oil they get from Venezuela on the open market, and then use that money to buy food for the people of Venezuela?

That, or they could simply stop shilling for one of the world’s leading terrorists.

—*The Washington Times*, Feb. 12, 2008, p. A 17

The Dawkins Confusion,

Part II

by Alvin Plantinga

Note: The following is a continuation of an article from last month. To read Part I, please check our website at www.schwarzreport.com or call 719-685-9043. To request a copy.

A second example of Dawkinsian-style argument. Recently a number of thinkers have proposed a new version of the argument from design, the so-called “Fine-Tuning Argument.” Starting in the late Sixties and early Seventies, astrophysicists and others noted that several of the basic physical constants must fall within very narrow limits if there is to be the development of intelligent life—at any rate in a way anything like the way in which we think it actually happened. For example, if the force of gravity were even slightly stronger, all stars would be blue giants; if even slightly weaker, all would be red dwarfs; in neither case could life have developed. The same goes for the weak and strong nuclear forces; if either had been even slightly different, life, at any rate life of the sort we have, could probably not have developed. Equally interesting in this connection is the so-called *flatness* problem: the existence of life also seems to depend very delicately upon the rate at which the universe is expanding. Thus Stephen Hawking:

reduction of the rate of expansion by one part in 10¹² at the time when the temperature of the Universe was 10¹⁰ K would have resulted in the Universe’s starting to recollapse when its radius was only 1/3000 of the present value and the temperature was still 10,000 K.

That would be much too warm for comfort. Hawking concludes that life is possible only because the universe is expanding at just the rate required to avoid recollapse. At an earlier time, he observes, the fine-tuning had to be even more remarkable:

we know that there has to have been a very close balance between the competing effect of explosive expansion and gravitational contraction which, at the very earliest epoch about which we can even pretend to speak (called the Planck time, 10⁻⁴³ sec. after the big bang), would have corresponded to the incredible degree of accuracy represented

by a deviation in their ratio from unity by only one part in 10 to the sixtieth.

One reaction to these apparent enormous coincidences is to see them as substantiating the theistic claim that the universe has been created by a personal God and as offering the material for a properly restrained theistic argument—hence the fine-tuning argument. It’s as if there are a large number of dials that have to be tuned to within extremely narrow limits for life to be possible in our universe. It is extremely unlikely that this should happen by chance, but much more likely that this should happen if there is such a person as God.

Now in response to this kind of theistic argument, Dawkins, along with others, proposes that possibly there are very many (perhaps even infinitely many) universes, with very many different distributions of values over the physical constants. Given that there are so many, it is likely that *some* of them would display values that are life-friendly. So if there are an enormous number of universes displaying different sets of values of the fundamental constants, it’s not at all improbable that some of them should be “fine-tuned.” We might wonder how likely it is that there are all these other universes, and whether there is any real reason (apart from wanting to blunt the fine-tuning arguments) for supposing there are any such things. But concede for the moment that indeed there are many universes and that it is likely that some are fine-tuned and life-friendly. That still leaves Dawkins with the following problem: even if it’s likely that *some* universes should be fine-tuned, it is still improbable that *this* universe should be fine-tuned. Name our universe alpha: the odds that *alpha* should be fine-tuned are exceedingly, astronomically low, even if it’s likely that some universe or other is fine-tuned.

What is Dawkins’ reply? He appeals to “the anthropic principle,” the thought that the only sort of universe in which we could be discussing this question is one which is fine-tuned for life:

the anthropic answer, in its most general form, is that we could only be discussing the question in the kind of universe that was capable of producing us. Our existence therefore determines that the fundamental constants of physics had to be in their respective Goldilocks [life-friendly] zones.

Well, of *course* our universe would have to be fine-tuned, given that we live in it. But how does that so much

as begin to explain why it is that *alpha* is fine-tuned? One can't explain this by pointing out that we are indeed here—any more than I can “explain” the fact that God decided to create me (instead of passing me over in favor of someone else) by pointing out that if God had not thus decided, I wouldn't be here to raise that question. It still seems striking that these constants should have just the values they do have; it is still monumentally improbable, given chance, that they should have just those values; and it is still much less improbable that they should have those values, if there is a God who wanted a life-friendly universe.

One more example of Dawkinsian thought. In *The Blind Watchmaker*, he considers the claim that since the self-replicating machinery of life is required for natural selection to work, God must have jumpstarted the whole evolutionary process by specially creating life in the first place—by specially creating the original replicating machinery of DNA and protein that makes natural selection possible. Dawkins retorts as follows:

This is a transparently feeble argument, indeed it is obviously self-defeating. Organized complexity is the thing that we are having difficulty in explaining. Once we are allowed simply to postulate organized complexity, if only the organized complexity of the DNA/protein replicating machine, it is relatively easy to invoke it as a generator of yet more organized complexity... . But of course any God capable of intelligently designing something as complex as the DNA/protein machine must have been at least as complex and organized as that machine itself... . To explain the origin of the DNA/protein machine by invoking a supernatural Designer is to explain precisely nothing, for it leaves unexplained the origin of the Designer.

In *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, Daniel Dennett approvingly quotes this passage from Dawkins and declares it an “unrebuttable refutation, as devastating today as when Philo used it to trounce Cleanthes in Hume's *Dialogues* two centuries earlier.” Now here in *The God Delusion* Dawkins approvingly quotes Dennett approvingly quoting Dawkins, and adds that Dennett (i.e., Dawkins) is entirely correct.

Here there is much to say, but I'll say only a bit of it. First, suppose we land on an alien planet orbiting a distant star and discover machine-like objects that look and work just like tractors; our leader says “there must

be intelligent beings on this planet who built those tractors.” A first-year philosophy student on our expedition objects: “Hey, hold on a minute! You have explained nothing at all! Any intelligent life that designed those tractors would have to be at least as complex as they are.” No doubt we'd tell him that a little learning is a dangerous thing and advise him to take the next rocket ship home and enroll in another philosophy course or two. For of course it is perfectly sensible, in that context, to explain the existence of those tractors in terms of intelligent life, even though (as we can concede for the moment) that intelligent life would have to be at least as complex as the tractors. The point is we aren't trying to give an *ultimate* explanation of organized complexity, and we aren't trying to explain organized complexity *in general*; we are only trying to explain one particular manifestation of it (those tractors). And (unless you are trying to give an ultimate explanation of organized complexity) it is perfectly proper to explain one manifestation of organized complexity in terms of another. Similarly, in invoking God as the original creator of life, we aren't trying to explain organized complexity *in general*, but only a particular kind of it, i.e., terrestrial life. So even if (contrary to fact, as I see it) God himself displays organized complexity, we would be perfectly sensible in explaining the existence of terrestrial life in terms of divine activity.

A second point: Dawkins (and again Dennett echoes him) argues that “the main thing we want to explain” is “organized complexity.” He goes on to say that “The one thing that makes evolution such a neat theory is that it explains how organized complexity can arise out of primeval simplicity,” and he faults theism for being unable to explain organized complexity. Now *mind* would be an outstanding example of organized complexity, according to Dawkins, and of course (unlike with organized complexity) it is uncontroversial that God is a being who thinks and knows; so suppose we take Dawkins to be complaining that theism doesn't offer an explanation of mind. It is obvious that theists won't be able to give an ultimate explanation of mind, because, naturally enough, there isn't any explanation of the existence of God. Still, how is that a point against theism? Explanations come to an end; for theism they come to an end in God. Of course the same goes for any other view; on *any* view explanations come to an end. The materialist or physicalist, for example, doesn't have an explanation for the existence of elementary particles: they just are. So to claim that what we want or what we need is an ultimate explanation of mind is, once more,

just to beg the question against theism; the theist neither wants nor needs an ultimate explanation of personhood, or thinking, or mind.

Toward the end of the book, Dawkins endorses a certain limited skepticism. Since we have been cobbled together by (unguided) evolution, it is unlikely, he thinks, that our view of the world is overall accurate; natural selection is interested in adaptive behavior, not in true belief. But Dawkins fails to plumb the real depths of the skeptical implications of the view that we have come to be by way of unguided evolution. We can see this as follows. Like most naturalists, Dawkins is a materialist about human beings: human persons are material objects; they are not immaterial selves or souls or substances joined to a body, and they don't contain any immaterial substance as a part. From this point of view, our beliefs would be dependent on neurophysiology, and (no doubt) a belief would just be a neurological structure of some complex kind. Now the neurophysiology on which our beliefs depend will doubtless be adaptive; but why think for a moment that the beliefs dependent on or caused by that neurophysiology will be mostly true? Why think our cognitive faculties are reliable?

From a theistic point of view, we'd expect that our cognitive faculties would be (for the most part, and given certain qualifications and caveats) reliable. God has created us in his image, and an important part of our image bearing is our resembling him in being able to form true beliefs and achieve knowledge. But from a naturalist point of view the thought that our cognitive faculties are reliable (produce a preponderance of true beliefs) would be at best a naïve hope. The naturalist can be reasonably sure that the neurophysiology underlying belief formation is adaptive, but nothing follows about the *truth of the beliefs* depending on that neurophysiology. In fact he'd have to hold that it is unlikely, given unguided evolution, that our cognitive faculties are reliable. It's as likely, given unguided evolution, that we live in a sort of dream world as that we actually know something about ourselves and our world.

If this is so, the naturalist has a *defeater* for the natural assumption that his cognitive faculties are reliable—a reason for rejecting that belief, for no longer holding it. (Example of a defeater: suppose someone once told me that you were born in Michigan and I believed her; but now I ask you, and you tell me you were born in Brazil. That gives me a defeater for my belief that you were born in Michigan.) And if he has a defeater for *that* belief, he also has a defeater for any belief that is a product of his cognitive faculties. But of course that would be *all* of

his beliefs—including naturalism itself. So the naturalist has a defeater for naturalism; naturalism, therefore, is self-defeating and cannot be rationally believed.

The real problem here, obviously, is Dawkins' naturalism, his belief that there is no such person as God or anyone like God. That is because naturalism implies that evolution is unguided. So a broader conclusion is that one can't rationally accept both naturalism and evolution; naturalism, therefore, is in conflict with a premier doctrine of contemporary science. People like Dawkins hold that there is a conflict between science and religion because they think there is a conflict between evolution and theism; the truth of the matter, however, is that the conflict is between science and *naturalism*, not between science and belief in God.

The God Delusion is full of bluster and bombast, but it really doesn't give even the slightest reason for thinking belief in God mistaken, let alone a "delusion."

The naturalism that Dawkins embraces, furthermore, in addition to its intrinsic unloveliness and its dispiriting conclusions about human beings and their place in the universe, is in deep self-referential trouble. There is no reason to believe it; and there is excellent reason to reject it.

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Session 5 – July 20-August 1

Session 6 – August 3-15

Session 7 – August 17-29

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