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**STOP THE ATHEISTS AT GROUND ZERO**

**BY PETER HECK - GUEST COLUMNIST**

**It was one of the most iconic images that emerged from the smoke and rubble of Ground Zero in New York City after 9/11. Two intersecting steel beams from the once massive World Trade Center structure survived the collapse of the globe's most recognizable towers and rose from the ashes as a fitting symbol not just of lives lost, but of the eternal hope of a better life to come.**

**PETER, MOST RATIONAL AMERICANS THOUGHT THAT THE MOST ICONIC IMAGES THAT EMERGED FROM 9/11 WERE THE HEROIC EFFORTS OF FIREMEN, POLICEMEN, AND OTHER HEROES WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES ATTEMPTING TO SAVE THOSE STILL INSIDE.**

**YET FOR YOU, IT WAS A RUSTY CROSSBEAM THAT ONCE SERVED AS A SUPPORT IN THE BUILDING. IF ANYONE EVER NEEDED AN EXAMPLE OF THE VAST INTELLECTUAL GULF THAT SEPARATES RATIONAL PEOPLE FROM GHOST WORSHIPPERS ... YOU JUST PROVIDED IT.**

**AND IF YOU WANT ANOTHER EXAMPLE, HERE IS A LINK TO A STORY ABOUT THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF 9/11 IN NEW YORK; A STORY THAT REPORTS ON THE EXCLUSION OF THE 9/11 HEROES. BUT HAVE NO FEAR, I'M SURE THEY MADE ROOM FOR YOUR RUSTY CROSSBEAM.**

**http://www.newser.com/story/126039/no-room-for-first-responders-at-911-ceremony.html**

**AS FOR IT BEING A SYMBOL OF A BETTER LIFE TO COME, THAT DOESN'T APPLY TO NON-CHRISTIANS. FOR THEM THAT BEAM ONLY SYMBOLIZES ETERNAL TORTURE. BUT I AGREE WITH YOU ABOUT IT BEING A SYMBOL OF LIVES LOST; IT HAS BEEN A SYMBOL OF LIVES LOST FOR OVER 2,000 YEARS. IT ALSO SYMBOLIZES THE MAIN CAUSE BEHIND THE HORRIBLE EVENTS ON 9/11 ... RELIGIOUS TERRORISM.**

**So moving was the sight that rescue workers and clean-up crews -- men and women of various faiths, religious traditions and backgrounds -- left it untouched,**

**PETER, THAT SYMBOL PROMISES ETERNAL TORTURE FOR TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION, YET YOU WANT US TO BELIEVE THAT EVEN THEY WERE MOVED BY IT? WELL MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT: THEY WERE PROBABLY MOVED TO POUR ACID ON IT, BUT THEY KNEW THAT, GIVEN CHRISTIAN HISTORY, SUCH AN ACTION IN THE MIDST OF SO MANY CHRISTIANS WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN ... UNHEALTHY.**

**quarantining it off and shining spotlights on it through the night as a reminder of the hallowed presence of the Almighty, even there in the valley of the shadow of death.**

**PETER, IT'S TOO BAD "THE ALMIGHTY" DIDN'T SHOW HIS HALLOWED PRESENCE ON THE MORNING OF 9/11 WHEN HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO SOME GOOD. IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE THE ONLY "ALMIGHTY HALLOWED PRESENCE" WHO WAS IN ATTENDANCE ON THE MORNING OF 9/11 WENT BY THE NAME OF ALLAH.**

**I remember visiting Ground Zero the first time over a year after the attacks. And amidst the emotions of sorrow and grief that at times seemed overwhelming as I looked at the pictures and tributes left by the family members of victims, that steel cross remained as an inspirational reminder that there is a greater spirit that lives inside the human soul that is unassailable by any act of man, no matter how evil or devastating it is.**

**PETER, THAT STEEL CROSS WAS ALSO AN INSPIRATIONAL REMINDER TO ALL THE RATIONAL VISITORS THAT RELIGION CONTINUES TO BE THE MAIN SOURCE OF EVIL AND DEVASTATION IN THE MODERN WORLD.**

**AND REGARDING THAT "GREATER SPIRIT LIVING INSIDE THE HUMAN SOUL," NO ONE HAS EVER PROVEN THAT EITHER ONE ACTUALLY EXISTS.**

**Yet what the murderous butchers of 9/11 could not bring down with exploding airliners and crumbling skyscrapers, a rabid group of atheists -- bizarrely obsessed with destroying the foundation of the very rights they ceaselessly exploit for the sake of self-aggrandizement -- are attempting to bring down with a lawsuit.**

**PETER, TAKE THIS HANDKERCHIEF AND WIPE ALL THE SPITTLE OFF YOUR CHIN WHILE I EXPLAIN ALL THE PLACES WHERE YOUR THINKING WENT IN THE TOILET.**

1. **THE "MURDEROUS BUTCHERS" DID BRING DOWN YOUR CROSS. THAT'S WHY THEY FOUND IT IN THE RUBBLE.**
2. **CALLING PEOPLE, YOU DISAGREE WITH, "RABID" IS CHILDISH. ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING THAT YOUR ADJECTIVE IS FAR MORE DESCRIPTIVE OF RELIGIOUS HISTORY THAN ANY LEGAL ACTION BEING BROUGHT BY ATHEISTS.**
3. **"BIZARRELY OBSESSED" IS ANOTHER CHILDISH PHRASE THAT HAS NO MEANING OTHER THAN TO SHOW HOW HYSTERICAL YOUR THINKING IS.**
4. **IF YOU ARE GOING TO ACCUSE ATHEISTS OF DESTROYING THE FOUNDATION OF RIGHTS, YOU NEED TO BACK THAT UP WITH EXAMPLES INDICATING EXACTLY WHICH RIGHTS YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.**
5. **"CEASELESSLY EXPLOIT" IS AN UNNECESSARY PHRASE MEANT ONLY TO DENIGRATE.**
6. **IF YOU THINK THEIR MOTIVATION IS SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT THEN YOU ARE EVEN DIMMER THAN YOUR WRITING WOULD INDICATE; THOUGH MANY MIGHT ARGUE, THAT IS PROBABLY NOT POSSIBLE.**

**The organization American Atheists has filed a legal challenge in state court in New York to halt the permanent display of the World Trade Center cross at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum.**

**SEE PETER, WHEN YOU CALM DOWN YOU *CAN* PUT TOGETHER A COHERENT SENTENCE; AND YOUR CHIN IS PROBABLY A LOT DRIER AS WELL.**

**It's important to note the distinction that exists between the majority of atheists in the United States and the fanatical anti-God extremists that characterize this militant organization.**

**PETER, YOUR CHIN IS FILLING WITH WHITE SPOTS AGAIN. WHY DON'T YOU LIE DOWN FOR A MINUTE WHILE WE EXAMINE YOUR LAST CHILDISH OUTBURST.**

**THE KEY WORD IN YOUR DIATRIBE WAS "ANTI-GOD." ALL THE OTHER ADJECTIVES YOU THREW IN: "FANATICAL," "EXTREMISTS," AND "MILITANT" WERE DESIGNED FOR NO OTHER PURPOSE THAN TO APPEAL TO THE EMOTIONS OF THE MOST IGNORANT READERS. AND EVEN ANTI-GOD IS TECHNICALLY INCORRECT. THAT'S LIKE SAYING A GROUP IS ANTI-FAIRY. YOU CAN'T BE "ANTI SOMETHING" THAT DOESN'T EXIST. WHAT THEY ARE, IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS ANTI-RELIGION, IN CASES WHERE THAT RELIGION ATTEMPTS TO FORCE ITS BELIEFS UPON THE UNWILLING.**

**Most atheists express little if any outright hostility to organized religion, particularly Christianity.**

**PETER, GET OUT YOUR HISTORY BOOKS AND READ WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE ATHEISTS WHO DID. CHRISTIANITY, LIKE ISLAM, HAS NEVER BEEN PARTICULARLY FOND OF THOSE WHO REFUSE TO SUBMIT TO THEIR DOMINATION. THAT IS WHY ATHEISTS, LIKE GAYS, ARE OFTEN REFERRED TO AS "IN THE CLOSET." IT IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF SURVIVAL.**

**THAT IS ALSO WHY SO MANY NONBELIEVERS IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AS AGNOSTIC. AGNOSTICS DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD, BUT THEY DO BELIEVE IN SURVIVAL. ATHEISTS ARE SIMPLY AGNOSTICS WHO HAVE THE COURAGE TO OPENLY STATE THEIR DISBELIEF AND RISK THE VIOLENCE THAT MAY ENSUE.**

**IN A CIVILIZED SOCIETY WHERE FREEDOM OF SPEECH TRULY EXISTED, IT WOULDN'T BE NECESSARY FOR ANYONE TO FEAR EXPRESSING THEIR HONEST BELIEFS. IN REALITY, THAT FREEDOM ONLY EXISTS FOR THE MAJORITY.**

**Indeed they are thankful to live in a civilization founded upon the Western values derived from the Judeo-Christian worldview**

**PETER, THEY ARE THANKFUL TO LIVE IN A COUNTRY FOUNDED UPON SECULAR VALUES DERIVED FROM ENGLISH COMMON LAW. PERHAPS YOU WOULD BE SO KIND AS TO PROVIDE SOME EXAMPLES OF LAWS DERIVED FROM THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW?**

**values like tolerance, brotherhood, and doing unto others as you would have them do unto you.**

**PETER, HOW DO YOU FIGURE THOSE ARE CHRISTIAN VALUES?**

* **THE LAST WORD ANY OUTSIDER WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE CHRISTIANITY IS "TOLERANT." DON'T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, JUST ASK HOMOSEXUALS, ATHEISTS, MUSLIMS, HINDUS, BUDDHISTS, MORMONS, AND PEOPLE WHO WORK ON SUNDAY.**
* **AND BROTHERHOOD? ARE YOU KIDDING? IN THE BIBLE, BROTHERHOOD IS ONLY RESERVED FOR CHRISTIANS. IT USES A DIFFERENT TERM FOR EVERYONE ELSE ... KINDLING.**
* **AND THE RULE "DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM DO UNTO YOU" WAS AROUND LONG BEFORE CHRISTIANITY EVER EXISTED.**

**PETER, NONE OF THE VALUES YOU LISTED WERE ORIGINATED BY, AND ARE ONLY OCCASIONALLY PRACTICED BY, CHRISTIANS.**

**They merely seek to exercise their right of conscience (something that they will acknowledge and admit is the product of the country's Christian foundation) to not believe in a Divine Authority.**

**NO PETER, ATHEISTS DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE, NOR ADMIT, THAT THEIR RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE IS A PRODUCT OF CHRISTIANITY. THEY ACKNOWLEDGE EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE, AS DOES OUR CONSTITUTION. THAT WOULD BE THE DOCUMENT THAT YOU KEEP MISREPRESENTING.**

**But not American Atheists. These are the folks who ignorantly theorize that it is their constitutional right not only to be a non-believer,**

**PETER, HOW DO YOU FIGURE THAT THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO BE A NONBELIEVER IS "IGNORANTLY THEORIZING?" CAN YOU POINT OUT WHERE IN THE CONSTITUTION THE RIGHT TO NON-BELIEF IS DENIED? NO, YOU CANNOT. BUT I WILL POINT OUT TO YOU WHERE NON-BELIEF IS PERMITTED: IT'S CALLED THE FIRST AMENDMENT. IT IS ONE OF THE GREATEST ENEMIES THAT CHRISTIANITY HAS EVER KNOWN, AND IT IS THE REASON THAT CHRISTIANS CONSTANTLY ATTACK THE CONSTITUTION. FREEDOM OF RELIGION MEANS THAT MILLIONS OF MUSLIMS, HINDUS, SCIENTOLOGISTS, NONBELIEVERS, AND OTHERS CAN BE NONBELIEVERS OF CHRISTIANITY.**

**YOU KNOW PETER, JUST WHEN I THINK MY LIST OF "THE TOP TEN ALL TIME DUMBEST STATEMENTS EVER PUBLISHED" IS COMPLETE, SOMEONE LIKE YOU COMES ALONG AND SAYS SOMETHING LIKE THAT, AND I HAVE TO MOVE EVERY ITEM ON THE LIST, DOWN ONE.**

**but to never have to interact with, encounter or be subjected to the beliefs of anyone else.**

**PETER, HISTORY IS VERY CLEAR ABOUT HOW YOU GHOST WORSHIPPERS HAVE INTERACTED WITH THOSE WHOM YOU COULD NOT CONTROL. FROM DISCRIMINATION AND OSTRACIZATION ALL THE WAY TO GENOCIDE, THE VILE DEATH CULTS OF THE DESERT (CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM) HAVE MEANT UNMENTIONABLE AGONY FOR COUNTLESS HUMANS WHO REFUSED TO SUBMIT.**

**Therefore, they belligerently proselytize their unbelief,**

**PETER, WHAT GIVES AWAY THE ILLOGIC IN ALL YOUR ARGUMENTS IS YOUR CONSTANT USE OF EMOTIONALLY CHARGED, DENIGRATING ADJECTIVES TO MANIPULATE YOUR AUDIENCE; FOR EXAMPLE, NEEDLESS ADJECTIVES LIKE "BELLIGERENT" WHICH ARE ONLY USED IN AN ATTEMPT TO BIAS READERS.**

**AND PETER, STANDING UP FOR ONE'S RIGHTS IS NOT PROSELYTIZING. YOU ARE MISUSING A WORD THAT IS NORMALLY USED TO DESCRIBE RELIGION PEDDLING.**

**assailing nativity scenes, the Ten Commandments, candy canes, Christmas carols, public prayers, and now steel beams that form the shape of a cross.**

**NO PETER, WRONG AGAIN. IT IS HOW THESE THINGS ARE PRESENTED THAT MATTER. THERE IS NO PROBLEM WITH THEM IN THEIR PROPER PLACE: AMONG BELIEVERS IN A CHURCH SETTING. THERE IS A PROBLEM WHEN THESE THINGS ARE BEING FORCED ON THE PUBLIC IN VIOLATION OF THE CONSTITUTION.**

**Complaining that "the WTC cross has become a Christian icon," the group's president, Dave Silverman, issued a press release stating that the "government enshrinement of the cross was an impermissible mingling of church and state," and thus violated the Establishment clause of the First Amendment. Hogwash.**

**PETER, GOOD ARGUMENT. UP UNTIL NOW I FOUND YOUR ARGUMENTS ABOUT AS CHALLENGING AS DEBATING MY DOG. BUT "HOGWASH." BOY, YOU REALLY GOT ME ON THAT ONE.**

**Expounding on the true meaning of that clause in January of 1853, Mr. Badger issued the reported findings of congressional investigations into the Founders' intent in writing it. The Senate committee found that the authors of the First Amendment "had no fear or jealously of religion itself, nor did they wish to see us an irreligious people; they did not intend to prohibit a just expression of religious devotion by the legislators of the nation, even in their public character as legislators."**

**THAT'S RIGHT PETER, FREEDOM OF RELIGION IS GUARANTEED BY THE FIRST AMENDMENT. SO WHERE'S THE CONTROVERSY?**

**Therefore, even if American Atheists could prove their accusation that enshrining the 9/11 cross was an intentional expression of religious devotion by lawmakers, it would not run afoul of the First Amendment.**

**WRONG PETER, BECAUSE THE OTHER PART OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT FORBIDS GOVERNMENT FROM ADVANCING ONE PARTICULAR RELIGION OVER ANY OTHER. YOU CAN'T JUST PICK OUT THE WORDS YOU LIKE AND ACT AS IF THE REST OF THE CLAUSE DOESN'T EXIST.**

**OH, MY MISTAKE, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU JUST DID, WASN'T IT?**

**Interestingly, that congressional inquiry went on to state that the Founding Fathers "did not intend to spread over all the public authorities and the whole public action of the nation, the dead and revolting spectacle of atheistical apathy."**

**PETER, SO YOU FOUND SOME GUY, "MR. BADGER," WHO TOLD YOU WHAT YOU WANTED TO HEAR BY CLAIMING TO KNOW THE INTENT OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OVER 60 YEARS AFTER THE CONSTITUTION WAS WRITTEN, AND LONG AFTER MOST HAD DIED, AND FOR YOU, THAT IS EVIDENCE OF WHAT? THAT THEY DIDN'T LIKE ATHEISM?**

**WELL PETER, CONTRARY TO WHAT YOUR "MR. BADGER" HAD TO SAY, ATHEISM IS FAR FROM DEAD. IN FACT, IT IS GROWING RAPIDLY, ESPECIALLY IN EUROPE, WHILE YOUR BELIEFS, AS REPRESENTED BY CHRISTIANITY, ARE FALLING WORLDWIDE. EVEN ISLAM IS KICKING THE SNOT OUT OF CHRISTIANITY, NOT JUST ON 9/11, BUT WORLDWIDE IT IS THE FASTEST GROWING RELIGION ON EARTH.**

**IF I WERE YOU PETER, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, I WOULD START SKIMMING THROUGH THE KORAN. YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN THAT MIGHT COME IN HANDY.**

**And make no mistake, there are no better words to describe a lawsuit to obliterate the 9/11 cross than "revolting spectacle."**

**PETER, RATIONAL PEOPLE HAVE A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT TAKE ... NOT THAT YOU WOULD KNOW.**

**Maybe, in the end, that's the good that will come of this case.**

**PETER, THE BEST GOOD THAT COULD COME FROM ALL OF THIS, WOULD BE IF YOU QUIT BROADCASTING YOUR "MYSPACE MENTALITY" TO THE INTERNET FOR ALL THE WORLD TO SEE UNTIL YOU'VE HAD A CHANCE TO GROW UP. WATCHING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS ON YOUTUBE WAS LIKE BEING FORCED TO WATCH CARTOONS WITH LITTLE KIDS.**

**Though equally irrational,**

**PETER, HOLD IT. YOU BELIEVE IN INVISIBLE GHOSTS AND A WHOLE SET OF MIRACLES THAT NO SANE PERSON COULD POSSIBLY ACCEPT. YOU ARE LIGHT YEARS AWAY FROM EVEN BEING ABLE TO RECOGNIZE RATIONALITY.**

**when American Atheists sues a graduating senior for mentioning Jesus or attempts to disbar a judge for allowing a municipal nativity scene display, it flies under the radar of the national conscience.**

**PETER, HONORING YOUR FAVORITE ANCIENT RABBI IN CHURCH IS NOT A PROBLEM. BUT TRYING TO FORCE YOUR SILLY, CHILDISH FAIRY TALES ON OTHERS, IS.**

**But seeking to dismantle the 9/11 cross is such an egregious overreach of anti-Christian hostility, it offends the entire country's sensibilities.**

**PETER, SINCE 25% OF AMERICA IS NON-CHRISTIAN, IT'S A PRETTY SURE BET THAT YOU'VE SCORED YET ANOTHER POINT IN THE "I'M WRONG" COLUMN.**

**NOR IS ANYONE ASKING FOR IT TO BE DISMANTLED. IN FACT, I THINK IT WOULD MAKE A GREAT GRAVEN IMAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH PARKING LOT. OH SHOOT, I WASN'T SUPPOSED TO MENTION THAT, WAS I PETER? BUT WHAT THE "HECK" - YOU GUYS HAVE NEVER OBEYED THE BIBLE ANYWAY SO WHAT'S ONE MORE LITTLE COMMANDMENT VIOLATION?**

**THINK ABOUT THIS ONE PETER: AS AN ATHEIST I CAN'T BREAK THE FIRST COMMANDMENT BECAUSE WE DON'T WORSHIP GODS, YET CATHOLICS AND CROSS WORSHIPPERS BREAK IT ALL THE TIME. YOU HAD BETTER HOPE THAT THIS ISN'T ONE OF GOD'S FAVORITES, OR HE MIGHT DECIDE THAT YOU AND I SHOULD TRADE ETERNAL RESTING PLACES.**

**Perhaps it will prove to be the wake-up call necessary for people with common sense, be they atheist or Christian,**

**PETER, YOUR BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD STOPPED THE SUN FOR 24 HOURS. AS A BIBLE BELIEVER, EXACTLY HOW DO YOU FIGURE THAT YOU QUALIFY AS HAVING "COMMON SENSE?"**

**to rise up and finally say to the radical extremists determined to eradicate our nation's heritage: "Enough."**

**PETER, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO.**

**YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?**

**THINK THAT ONE OVER FOR AWHILE, AND THEN ASK JESUS TO EXPLAIN IT TO YOU. YOU DO HEAR THE VOICES, DON'T YOU PETER?**

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**THE SCIENCE SEGMENT**

**HOW SPIDERS BREATHE UNDER WATER:**

**SPIDER'S DIVING BELL PERFORMS LIKE GILL EXTRACTING OXYGEN FROM WATER**

**WATER SPIDERS SPEND THEIR ENTIRE LIVES UNDER WATER, ONLY VENTURING TO THE SURFACE TO REPLENISH THEIR DIVING BELL AIR SUPPLY. YET NO ONE KNEW HOW LONG THE SPIDERS COULD REMAIN SUBMERGED. RESEARCHERS FOUND THAT THE DIVING BELL BEHAVES LIKE A GILL SUCKING OXYGEN FROM THE WATER AND THE SPIDERS ONLY NEED TO DASH TO THE SURFACE ONCE A DAY TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR AIR SUPPLY.**

**GAZING INTO THE DEPTHS OF A POND, IT'S HARD TO MISS THE INSECTS THAT WHIRL AND ZIP BENEATH THE SURFACE. HOWEVER, ONLY ONE SPECIES OF SPIDER HAS JOINED THEM: THE DIVING BELL SPIDER.**

**EACH SPIDER CONSTRUCTS A NET OF SILK IN VEGETATION BENEATH THE SURFACE AND FILLS IT WITH AIR CARRIED DOWN ON ITS ABDOMEN. THE SPIDERS SPEND THEIR ENTIRE LIVES SUBMERGED AND EVEN LAY THEIR EGGS IN THEIR DIVING BELLS. RESEARCHERS REPORT THAT THE SPIDERS CAN USE THE DIVING BELL LIKE A GILL TO EXTRACT OXYGEN FROM WATER TO REMAIN HIDDEN BENEATH THE SURFACE.**

**SADLY, DIVING BELL SPIDERS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY RARE IN EUROPE. SO, RETURNING TO THE LAB, RESEARCHERS REPRODUCED THE CONDITIONS IN A WARM STAGNANT WEEDY POND ON A HOT SUMMER'S DAY TO FIND OUT HOW THE SPIDERS FARE IN THE MOST CHALLENGING OF CONDITIONS.**

**AFTER WATCHING THE SPIDERS BUILD THEIR SHIMMERING DIVING BELLS, RESEARCHERS GINGERLY POKED AN OXYGEN SENSING OPTODE INTO THE BUBBLE TO SEE HOW THE ANIMAL REACTED. MIRACULOUSLY, THE SPIDER WAS UNPERTURBED, SO THEY CONTINUED RECORDING THE OXYGEN LEVEL. THEN RESEARCHERS REALIZED THAT THEY COULD USE THE BUBBLE AS A RESPIROMETER TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH OXYGEN THE SPIDERS CONSUME.**

**TAKING A SERIES OF OXYGEN MEASUREMENTS IN THE BUBBLE AND SURROUNDING WATER, THEY CALCULATED THE AMOUNT OF OXYGEN FLOWING INTO THE BUBBLE BEFORE CALCULATING THE SPIDER'S OXYGEN CONSUMPTION RATE AND FOUND THAT THE DIVING BELL COULD EXTRACT OXYGEN FROM THE MOST STAGNANT WATER EVEN ON A HOT DAY. ALSO, THE METABOLIC RATE OF THE AQUATIC SPIDER WAS LOW AND SIMILAR TO THE LOW METABOLIC RATES OF OTHER SPIDERS THAT SIT WAITING FOR PREY TO PASS.**

**HOWEVER, DESPITE SATISFYING THE SPIDER'S OXYGEN DEMANDS, THE BUBBLE CONTINUALLY SHRINKS BECAUSE NITROGEN DIFFUSES BACK INTO THE WATER, EVENTUALLY FORCING THE OCCUPANT TO VENTURE TO THE SURFACE TO RESUPPLY THE DIVING BELL. SO HOW LONG COULD THE BUBBLE SURVIVE BEFORE THE SPIDER HAD TO DASH UP FOR AIR? CALCULATING THE DIFFUSION RATE OF NITROGEN OUT OF THE BUBBLE, RESEARCHERS WERE SURPRISED TO FIND THAT THE SPIDERS COULD SIT TIGHT FOR MORE THAN A DAY. IT IS ADVANTAGEOUS FOR THE SPIDERS TO STAY STILL FOR SO LONG WITHOUT HAVING TO GO TO THE SURFACE TO RENEW THE BUBBLE, NOT ONLY TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM PREDATION BUT ALSO SO THEY DON'T ALERT POTENTIAL PREY THAT COME NEAR."**

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**FAMOUS QUOTES**

**CARL SAGAN (SEE PREVIOUS BIO)**

**“ . . . INTELLIGENCE . . . IS IN PLENTIFUL SUPPLY**

**. . . THE SCARCE COMMODITY IS SYSTEMATIC TRAINING IN CRITICAL THINKING.”**

**"THERE IS NO OTHER SPECIES ON EARTH THAT DOES SCIENCE.**

**IT IS, SO FAR, ENTIRELY A HUMAN INVENTION,**

**EVOLVED BY NATURAL SELECTION IN THE CEREBRAL CORTEX**

**FOR ONE SIMPLE REASON: IT WORKS.**

**IT IS NOT PERFECT. IT CAN BE MISUSED. IT IS ONLY A TOOL.**

**BUT IT IS BY FAR THE BEST TOOL WE HAVE,**

**SELF-CORRECTING, ONGOING, APPLICABLE TO EVERYTHING."**

**"MICROBIOLOGY AND METEOROLOGY NOW EXPLAIN, WHAT ONLY A FEW CENTURIES AGO WAS CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT CAUSE TO BURN WOMEN TO DEATH."**

**"THE WORLD IS SO EXQUISITE WITH SO MUCH LOVE AND MORAL DEPTH,**

**THAT THERE IS NO REASON TO DECEIVE OURSELVES WITH PRETTY STORIES**

**FOR WHICH THERE’S LITTLE GOOD EVIDENCE.**

**FAR BETTER IT SEEMS TO ME, IN OUR VULNERABILITY, IS TO LOOK DEATH IN THE EYE AND TO BE GRATEFUL EVERY DAY FOR THE BRIEF BUT MAGNIFICENT OPPORTUNITY THAT LIFE PROVIDES."**