

Our point-by-point rebuttal of Plimer's Book

This Internet article is based on word-processor-printed notes which CSF (now CMI) has prepared as a commentary to most of the points raised in the Plimer book *Telling Lies for God*. The notes cover a great range of issues, though not necessarily every minor point. There is a running index throughout, based on the pages (in sequence) of the Plimer book on which the relevant issues are raised. There is some repetition, because the Plimer book raises some of the same issues more than once. Because we have already had occasion to add to these notes since the first draft was prepared (others have pointed out additional errors and distortions in the Plimer book, for example), this is not a publication as such. This information represents our comments at the point in time we last upgraded and issued a printout from the word-processor file.

The information has been prepared in good faith, and the contents are accurate to the best of our knowledge and understanding at the time of preparation.

The integrity of this ministry has been affirmed by an intensive [independent enquiry by eminent citizens](#) (with reputations outside of any sympathy they may or may not feel for CSF or its stance on creation). They chose to investigate all of the serious Plimer allegations, plus a random selection from the hundreds of other ones (they indicated that they had covered about 200 items in some depth) and found them ALL to be without any substance whatsoever and highly misrepresentative of the facts.

These notes cover not only the major allegations, but also the vast majority of the others in the book which tend to cumulatively prejudice the reader against CSF and its ministry.

CMI has available two items produced by anti-creationist US Skeptic Jim Lippard. The first was published in the world's leading anti-creation journal, the humanist-founded *Creation/Evolution*. In spite of Plimer's attempts to neutralise Lippard in the book by painting him as sympathetic to creationists, Lippard has a long track record of vigorous pro-evolutionism (see [this site](#)).

Writing in Australia's *The Skeptic* 15(1):53, Autumn 95, philosopher Dr William Grey from the University of Queensland (no friend of creationists, as he makes clear) reluctantly (and ever so gently) takes Plimer to task for the fact that his book contains what Grey calls 'falsehoods, misrepresentations and distortions'. In particular, Grey is upset at the treatment Plimer metes out to fellow anti-creationist Lippard, who has challenged the ethics of Plimer's methodology. Grey chides Plimer for 'scholarly and moral improprieties', while hastening to say that he believes Plimer's book is mostly 'admirable and right'.

A professional copywriter in New South Wales (not then connected with CSF) has gone through the Plimer book, analysing the way in which Plimer uses well-known writers' tricks to engender various emotions and prejudices in the reader. He calls it a 'critique of HOW the content has been expressed in terms of emotionalism and propagandist technique'. He says he did this to 'alert the reader of the book of how the author of the book has chosen to manipulate rather than merely inform and let the evidence stand'.

We have not dealt with these rhetorical tricks used by Plimer in any detail in our notes, but a brief listing of some of these, as pointed out in the essay, is given here for the interest of readers wishing to work through the book in a scholarly, analytical manner.

- The illusion of guilt by (unsubstantiated) association (e.g. featuring comments by some extremist person or group unassociated with CSF, so that a subtle 'linkage' occurs in the reader's mind).
- The illusion of guilt by cultural prejudice (e.g. dark hints at takeover by American interests; using false, emotive labels which carry certain 'images'—e.g. 'cult').

Table of Contents

[Introduction—p.52](#)

[PP. 54–100](#)

[PP. 101–149](#)

[PP. 150–200](#)

[PP. 200–249](#)

[PP. 250–Conclusion](#)

- The frequent use of unsubstantiated generalisations and ad hominem attacks.
- False representations of Plimer's impotence (a helpless academic under threat by powerful forces, when in fact he has demonstrated excellent and extremely effective use of (and support by) powerful media outlets during the publicity campaign, whereas CSF found it nigh-impossible to get a 'fair go'); also illusions of impartiality, and of fatherly public 'concern'.
- Misleading innuendo, often by means of a questioning technique, allowing illusions of guilt to be created which are far beyond any evidence he puts forward (even if one were to assume that all his evidence is genuinely stated). For example, in the matter of Dr Duane Gish's qualifications, many people have been convinced after reading the Plimer book that Duane Gish had bogus qualifications, when Plimer cunningly did not actually say that, but allowed the reader to think so. Gish is a member of the prestigious honorary scholastic society Phi Beta Kappa, for example (Gish wrote about this to him years ago, inviting him to check, and we have a copy of his membership certificate), but through rhetorical flourish Plimer manages to raise a doubt in the reader's mind about this (see more on this in these notes).

Because of the extremely tangled nature of the various 'sorties' in the book, CSF personnel have already spent an inordinate amount of time on the preparation of these notes and our other public responses. There is an ever-increasing need and demand for our ministry both here and overseas, and much of this has been hindered (including worthwhile writing and research projects) because of these wild accusations. In view of this, and in view of the fact that an independent inquiry has had access to every piece of required documentation, we trust that *bona fide* recipients of these notes will understand our reluctance to waste further time in going into any more detail than is contained in these voluminous notes. Therefore, only under very special circumstances will we be engaging in any further correspondence on the Plimer nonsense, which surely now has no further credibility.

Those interested in seriously delving into the very few genuine scientific issues raised by Plimer should acquaint themselves thoroughly with what creationists are saying in the areas of Flood geology—our catalogue is available free on request (or visit our Online Bookstore). For a detailed, scholarly book which is a case study in Flood geology applied to a practical field example, we suggest Dr Steve Austin's *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe*. Without pretending that there are no remaining unsolved problems, the fact is that in spite of the absence of government funding and with the work of only a few dedicated, qualified earth scientists, creationist (flood) geology has made great strides since that book was published.

PP. 1-2 (of *Telling Lies for God*)

The misrepresentation begins early. We know of no creationists who believe that all sedimentary rocks and fossils were formed in Noah's Flood. We also think that very few would claim that the earth was exactly six thousand years old. (Both these Plimer claims are repeated on p. 4, but there he concedes 6,000-10,000 years as our date for special creation.)

Plimer says that creation 'scientists' (his quote marks) 'engage in blatant scientific fraud'. This is a completely unjustified smear, and we will show that the credibility of this and his numerous other smears and allegations is totally lacking. (No doubt there may be both creationists as well as evolutionists who have done this—but not the individuals or organizations he accuses of this in his book.) He also calls creationism a 'cult' all the way through. This is pure propaganda. Creationism is simply the historic, evangelical, orthodox view of the Church, which has become more and more unpopular. Plimer's book is an attempt to marginalize the remaining adherents to what the Bible teaches and link them to unpleasant images, by repetition of words like 'cult', 'cult leaders' and 'sect' (thus conjuring up memories of Jim Jones, etc.).

He says that creationists with scientific qualifications 'know it is fraud'—this is a bizarre, serious accusation, totally without foundation, and is in fact fraudulent, as will be shown later. But note here that he concedes that there are creationists with 'scientific qualifications' ('genuine scientific qualifications' on p. 14).

P. 3

Plimer claims that we use the same science and the same criticisms against Darwin's thesis that were used 150 years ago—false. However, if it were true, it would merely show that the objections were valid. Plimer implies that only 'a few sects and cults' rejected evolution in 1859. This is historically false. Many in orthodox, evangelical churches have never accepted it. However, the author is the same man who stated in an interview on Sydney radio station 2JJJ that creation-believers never help others when there are bushfires and floods, and that Christians who claim to be 'born again' tend to have severe psychological problems and 'savage' personalities. Plimer says that creationism began in 1859, but of course most people, including leading scientists such as Sir Isaac Newton, etc. were creationists before 1859.

P. 4

Plimer says we believe that evolution 'does not occur'—potentially misleading, as many changes labelled 'evolution' are not uphill, information-building changes, but are simply variations in species and form a part of the modern creationist model. Plimer uses his classic technique of contrasting 'creationists' with 'scientists'. So by definition, no matter what someone's scientific qualifications (which Plimer admits some creationists do have), all scientists are portrayed as believing in evolution/old earth. This is definitely misleading.

Plimer suggests that in order to establish their case, creationists need to demonstrate that 'basic science is wrong'. This is palpable nonsense. Creationists make great use of the established laws of science (i.e. basic science such as physics and chemistry).

Plimer makes it look as if creation science depends on the claim that the speed of light has decreased. This was put forward in the 1980s as one possible hypothesis and was the subject of much controversy in creationist circles, but it is largely on the way out now because creationists have used basic science to show it to be scientifically untenable. Being well abreast of creationist writings, Plimer should know this, and therefore it appears he is not concerned with accurate representation. More on this speed-of-light issue later.

P. 5

We know of no reputable creationist who has argued that the sort of science which makes aeroplanes fly is wrong, which Plimer argues that we do. Plimer says that we use 'calculated deceit, doctored evidence and blatant lies', and then says he is going to 'prove the charge of fraud' in his book. Such accusations would have substance only if his 'documentation' were accurate and honest—let the reader judge.

Plimer claims that no 'original research' is undertaken on creationism (repeated on p. 38). Plimer must surely know this is untrue, since he is able to read the results of such research in our *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, for example. Because of the lack of personnel and funding, the amount spent on this is minuscule in comparison with evolution-based research. However, several examples could be given of our own research projects, let alone the papers published in other creationist journals and the Proceedings of the International Conferences on Creationism. (Hundreds of millions of dollars of government money is spent on evolution-based research worldwide each year. Creationist research survives on donations, which are not tax-deductible in Australia.)

P. 6

Plimer says that creationists 'commonly accuse scientific organizations and scientists of fraud without providing evidence.'

In nearly 17 years of publishing *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine, there is only one item which makes such a claim, to our recollection—the one Plimer refers to, in 1985. It was part of the regular 'Focus' series in which the items never have authors' names (the actual author in this case has not been with CSF for many years, incidentally). While the current CSF management and Board would not support even one instance

of such intemperate language as in the quoted comments, the fact remains that there are not 'hundreds of thousands' of fossil organisms that are proven evolutionary transitions, as has been well documented by other evolutionists. Any suggestion that CSF publications 'commonly accuse scientific organisations and scientists of fraud' is utterly wrong, as any reading of our publications will reveal.

P. 8

Plimer describes CSF (and ICR in the USA) as 'cults'. The arguments he uses for this definition include the fact that those working for CSF have to agree to a statement of faith. By this definition, any credal churches (and most parachurch agencies) would have to be regarded as cults. Organizations like the Bible Society or Scripture Union would have to be regarded as cults. We're not sure what he means by 'the structure is authoritarian'. Since CSF is, in fact, a legal non-profit company controlled by a Board of Directors, there is naturally a hierarchy, but no one working for the Foundation regards it as 'authoritarian' in style. Furthermore, no parachurch missionary organizations (such as the two mentioned previously) allow their supporters to vote and control those organizations. Plimer makes this sound sinister. Such a process would be chaotic and make us subject to takeover by real cults. Finally, he says that CSF and ICR are 'lucrative businesses'. This is an easily discredited smear. Four of the seven current directors of CSF are not employed by it, and receive no income from it whatsoever (one of the four is employed by an affiliated, but independent, creationist organization in the USA). The turnover of CSF is substantially less than that of some other respectable evangelical organizations, and those directors who are employed by CSF do so sacrificially; they earn considerably less than they could be earning in their own highly skilled professions.

P. 9

Plimer claims that evolution is 'testable, reproducible'. In this he contradicts the observations of many philosophers of science. Small changes in living things do occur; the argument is whether real fish-to-man type of evolution (or any part thereof) has ever been observed. Ironically, Plimer contrasts the science which sent mankind to the moon with creationism. Ironic, because the rockets which propelled man to the moon were based upon the scientific research undertaken by creationist Wernher von Braun. Yet on p. 12 Plimer says that, 'In today's world of science and technology, there is not one item in use that derived from scientific research undertaken by creationists.' Plimer hammers this point, but if he reads our literature as he claims, he should know full well that, for example, creationist Dr Raymond V. Damadian invented the life-saving MRI scanner which is in use nowadays. (Were one to use Plimer's own intemperate language and standards, would not one be tempted to use such words as 'lie' and 'fraudulent'?) To say that 'if creationist "science" was correct, then we would have no television (and no cars, telephones, aeroplane travel etc.)' (p. 13) is such a blatant distortion that we can only presume that this is propaganda aimed at the unsophisticated reader. Even the most committed anti-creationist, if honest, would concede that this is completely unsustainable.

P. 10

This page is amusing with its 'warning' that we will try to have the book banned/discredited. He had 'leaked' news of its impending release to us for several years (hoping we would react?). First of all, Plimer is trying to put himself in a win-win situation. If we were to try to ban this book legally as being libellous, etc., then of course, he can say that he predicted it. And if the warning causes us to refrain, so much the better—his smear campaign can go on unchecked.

P. 12

Plimer claims that we say that science is 'the dogmatic humanistic religion of evolutionism', when in fact we only say this about the religious aspects of evolution (origins science), not science (empirical, in-the-present operations science) as such. Another area in which Plimer misleads is by saying that creationists 'claim that they are indulging in science and not religion'. He would know from CSF's own writings that we do not hide our Christian motivation, and in fact later on he uses this against us—by quoting from our Statement

of Faith how important and integral the Gospel is in everything we do (p. 138). Clearly he hopes his earlier statements contradicting this will be forgotten by the average reader by the time he or she reaches p. 138.

P. 14

We have never been 'demanding, as a democratic right, that creation "science" be given equal time' in schools. This is the language of caricature, not what the *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine editorial he quotes actually says ('co-exist, we believe, and compete'). Some creationists in the USA may have been demanding this—but not, we believe, ICR in the USA, or CSF here (the main targets of his attack).

Plimer says that creationists 'fabricate imaginary facts'. Since his major attack is against CSF/ICR, he needs to demonstrate that either of these organizations has ever done this. This he fails to do and hence the charge itself fails, especially where there is documentation that the opposite is true. Plimer of course provides his 'own' alleged documentation—the reader may judge its reliability as we move on.

P. 15

Here, we see the beginning of an all-too-familiar tactic when he says that, 'many creationists' would like 'the reinstatement of Old Testament law.' Of course, this conjures up images of being stoned to death for adultery and so forth. This is a common smear technique. We could find people who believe in evolution and also believe in alien abductions by UFOs. We could then say, 'Many evolutionists believe in alien abductions.' Plimer's smear is simple and effective, but to our knowledge has nothing to do with anyone in the mainstream creation movement. In fact, most mainstream creationists are traditional evangelical Christians who believe that the Old Testament law has been fulfilled in Christ.

P. 16

Plimer says that the tablets of stone with the 10 Commandments on them were just hieroglyphic-like mineral intergrowths in a rock. He thus is explaining away a key Scripture passage and implying that much of the Old Testament is just embellished stories and perceptions of natural phenomena that those unscientific people didn't really understand. This is not the historic orthodox Christian position, for example, with respect to the 10 Commandments, which Jesus referred to as literal and real.

PP. 17-18

Plimer claims that 'much of the Old Testament is contradictory.' He caricatures believers in inerrancy by implying that they state that there 'can only be a literal interpretation of the Old Testament'. Proper biblical scholarship, as practised by many scholars who believe in inerrancy, does take into account the nature of the text and the intentions of the author, figures of speech, language of appearance, etc.

Plimer's attack, of course, is against the Bible and inerrancy in general, so he doesn't fail to tell us about the common (but false) claim that the Bible says that pi 'is exactly 3' (repeated on p. 18). The Bible, of course, does not say or teach this, as shown in *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 24-25. Plimer invokes some anonymous liberal theologians who argue that when creationists say the Bible is true and without error, they 'mock the Bible, and by so mocking the Bible, they are anti-Christian'. But who is mocking the Bible as full of errors? Without a trustworthy Bible there is no solid basis to Christianity; undermining the Bible's trustworthiness is, of course, one of Plimer's not-so-subtle objectives.

PP. 19-20

Plimer ignores the clear-cut arguments (published in our literature) showing that flat-earthism was never biblical, nor was it widely held by Church fathers. (See 'Who invented the flat earth?', *Creation Ex Nihilo*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 48-49; also 'Flat earth heyday came with Darwin', *Creation Ex Nihilo*, vol. 14, no. 4, p. 21.) Furthermore, his statements concerning the 'geometry' of the Genesis story are based on his obvious lack of knowledge of what the Hebrew actually says. For example, the word translated in the King James

Version as 'firmament' can mean 'expanse' or 'stretched-outness' and does not in any way require that this 'expanse' be solid.

P. 21

We cannot remember, as implied here, ever personally receiving any challenge from Plimer to show him the chapter and verse teaching the recent creation of the earth. However, if he did, he would have been told (as he undoubtedly knows) that there is no single chapter and verse, but that it is easily deducible from clear statements made in the Bible. For example, one of the world's leading Hebrew scholars, Professor James Barr, says that the figures contained in the genealogies in Genesis provide a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later events. Barr is a liberal who does not support our view of the historical, actual truth of Genesis, yet he admits that this is what the Hebrew language used means.

P. 22

The representation of J. Osgood's biblical chronology article is also quite inappropriate and shows that Plimer has not understood Osgood's paper. Readers should check it for themselves. Osgood does not contradict himself, nor the Bible, but provides a coherent, logical scheme for reconciling the faulty secular chronology and evolutionary interpretation of history with the biblical record.

P. 23

Readers confused by Plimer's subtle obscuring of the meaning of the Hebrew word for 'day' should consult the careful exegesis in *The Genesis Record* by Dr Henry Morris.

P. 24

Having talked about the calculations of Archbishop Ussher and Dr Lightfoot on p. 23, Plimer takes an incredible leap and states that creationists 'glibly state the time, date and year of a special creation'. He should know full well that none of the mainstream creation organizations has ever done anything of the sort. If they had, then Plimer should have substantiated this ridiculous claim by a quote and reference from the creationist literature.

P. 25

His little blurb here leads those readers unfamiliar with CSF work to believe that creationists deny the normal laws of physics when they cast doubt on the results of 'radioactive [sic] dating'. This is simply untrue. We never deny the physics involved, just question the underlying assumptions that cannot be proved, even by Plimer (who ignores them).

P. 26

Plimer says that creationists select only the 'rare mismeasurement of ages', and not the 'millions of successful age dates'. This begs the question of how one knows that a particular date of say 'x' million years is 'successful' without a preconceived concept of what the age is supposed to be. It is perfectly legitimate for creationists to point to situations in which rocks of known age are given dates in the thousands of millions of years, when they are in actuality only hundreds of years old, because there is no ground for confidence that the same sorts of errors are not systematic ones which will apply to rocks of unknown age as well. What Plimer does not tell you is that we are on record as not disputing the accuracy of the measurement techniques (isotopic analyses), but rather the age interpretations of those analyses. (See also nuclear scientist Ian Hore-Lacy's comments about Plimer's display of ignorance of nuclear physics on p. 25 and on p. 36—quoted on p. 13 of these notes.)

P. 27

Here Plimer implies that the large ages assigned to rocks must be correct or else oil companies would not find oil. We know of several creationists (such as Slusher, Austin) who have been involved in petroleum exploration and who testify that there is no necessity to believe in these vast ages to find petroleum. We do not dispute that the 'ages' of sediments given by radioactive dating are generally informative in a relative sense and therefore are useful for stratigraphic correlation, which in reality is the primary reason why oil companies spend large sums 'dating' the rocks in their drill-holes.

PP. 27-28

Plimer tries to imply that creationists 'abuse' carbon dating by not understanding that its limits are around 30,000 years. Firstly, it seems that he has misunderstood (or misrepresented) the creationist argument that C-14 buildup puts an upper limit of 30,000 years on the atmosphere. This has nothing to do with the limits of sensitivity of the equipment, which incidentally nowadays is more like an alleged 50,000 years (sometimes claimed to be as much as 100,000 years when accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) is used). Secondly, we have never suggested the C-14 technique can be used directly to 'date' the age of the earth, as Plimer insinuates.

PP. 28-29

To suggest that doubting the results of the interpretations, based on the assumptions on which radioactive dating depends, means that one doubts the sort of physics by which nuclear bombs and the sun work confuses two separate issues. This distortion seems calculated to smear. Once again Plimer throws in the red herring of the hypothesis of a slowing speed of light. Plimer knows that for good scientific reasons most creation scientists have abandoned this hypothesis (all this is on public record in the creationist literature which Plimer claims to read). However, it still needs to be said that the theory is grossly caricatured by Plimer. Even those creationist physicists strongly opposed to the concept that light has slowed down (i.e. in history, not currently) would agree that Plimer's imagined idea of television programs and telephone calls finishing before they had started is nonsense.

P. 29

On p. 29 Plimer quotes Wieland in a misleading context, as if Wieland's reference was to all radiometric dating when Wieland was specifically referring to radiocarbon dating. Also, Plimer's mention of amino acid dating completely ignores the well-recognized problems of the method, such as its temperature dependence.

Actually, Plimer has misrepresented the technique of amino acid racemisation dating, in an embarrassingly ignorant way. The situation is in fact the reverse of what he describes. Living organisms do not contain 'coil-like amino acid structures' in 'constant balance between the number of left-handed and right-handed coils'. In living things, the amino acids (of which proteins are made up) are only ever the left-handed forms. (There are two chemical possibilities, which are mirror images of each other, and have nothing to do with any 'coils'.)

Left-handed and right-handed forms have a tendency to change to the opposite form, and so after the organism dies, the 'left-handed only' composition begins to head towards a 'natural' situation, in which there is eventually, long after death, the 50-50 'balance' between left-handed and right-handed forms which Plimer erroneously claims exists in life! (For a good description, see *Geoscience Canada Reprint Series 2* (ed N.W. Rutter): March 1985 Dating Methods of Pleistocene Deposits and their Problems, pp. 23-30. The authors deal candidly with the many major problems of the method, and counsel caution.)

P. 30

It needs to be said at this point that creationists of repute have not hidden the fact that there are unsolved problems in creationist science (just as there are unsolved problems in evolutionary science). The purpose

of these notes is not to deal with every such problem which Plimer raises (because for one thing, each answer would require copious pages). It is simply to show that the way in which he blasts his version of our statements as fraud is intemperate and abusive of the facts. However, many of the issues he mentions, such as the assumption that rates of sand formation prove that thick sediments take millions of years to accumulate, are overwhelmingly easy to challenge. Plimer has clearly ignored the published original research in our own *Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, (vol. 3, pp. 25-29. Berthault, G., 1988, 'Experiments on lamination of sediments'; 1990, 'Sedimentation of a Heterogranular Mixture: Experimental lamination in still and running water', *Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, vol. 4, pp. 95-102; Berthault, G., and Julien, P., 1994, 'Experiments on stratification of heterogeneous sand mixtures, *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 37-50), in which experiments have shown that varved rock formation (the example he mentions involving the glacial lakes in Scandinavia) can be imitated in the laboratory as a consequence of the different settling characteristics of grains of sand and mud during contemporaneous rapid deposition, not vast timespans. Repeatedly Plimer ignores the fact that all the 'dating' methods he extols are based on the unproven (and unprovable) assumption that geological processes have always occurred at generally the same rate at which they do today. This is the fatal flaw in Plimer's geology.

P. 31

Plimer indicates that 'the solubility of calcium carbonate in groundwater can be determined in a test-tube'. So what? He completely ignores such critical factors as the presence of cracks and fissures in limestone, and the acidity and temperature of the groundwater (especially the presence of humic acid, associated with the decay of organic material, and carbonic acid from dissolved atmospheric carbon dioxide in rainwater). Also, the quantity of calcium carbonate dissolved will obviously be greater if a large volume of water is involved. Once this is realized, any intelligent school student can understand (to put it simplistically) that if a little drop of acidic groundwater can rapidly dissolve a little amount of calcium carbonate, then a huge amount of acidic groundwater (as a result of catastrophic flooding) can rapidly dissolve a huge amount of limestone. Plimer 'snows' the unsophisticated reader.

Plimer discusses the reversals of the earth's magnetic field, but fails to mention the published papers (to which attention has been drawn several times in our *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine—in *Nature*, one of the world's leading science journals, and *Earth* and *Planetary Science Letters*) showing that field evidence indicates that these reversals must have taken place in weeks, not in many thousands of years, as the standard view holds. Is Plimer ignorant of the repeated field studies done by world-recognized palaeomagnetism experts Coe and Prévot proving this? Indeed, it was creationist Dr Russell Humphreys who predicted, based on his creationist research, that this field evidence would be found—and it has been. Plimer cannot admit this as it would destroy his melodramatic straw-man caricature of creationists.

P. 32

Plimer implies dishonesty on our part by saying that we do not tell our readers that 'continental drift relies on evolution, radioactive dating and palaeomagnetic dating'. Fact: One can hold to the concept of continental drift without holding to any of those concepts, and Plimer would, or should, know this (for example, matching rock types and strata from continent to continent, and matching coastlines). Alfred Wegener proposed continental drift, without any mention of evolution, before radioactive or palaeomagnetic dating had arrived on the scene. However, it was creationist Antonio Snider-Pellegrini in 1858 who proposed the original assembly of continents that then drifted, some 54 years before Wegener.

On p. 32, Plimer demonstrates his ignorance of elementary terrestrial magnetic observations. He denies that the earth's magnetic field is decaying! This has been known and measured as a worldwide effect for over 150 years, as published in the US Department of Commerce ESSA Technical Report IER 46-IES 1 produced by the Institute for Earth Sciences, Boulder, Colorado and available from the US Government Printing Office in Washington DC. Plimer says that if the magnetic field was decaying, 'the liquid outer core would be freezing'. Where on earth does Plimer get such an idea? He provides no justification whatsoever, perhaps thinking he can fool readers by dazzling them with his supposed scientific knowledge. In fact, if the earth's magnetic field is caused by circulating electric currents, then those currents would naturally

decrease as a result of impedance and thermal effects, so one would expect that magnetic field to decay, just as creation scientists have been at pains to point out. Presumably, Plimer confuses the difference between assumption and reality. Evolutionists must assume that there is a dynamo effect in the liquid outer core to keep the field from decaying to zero over billions of years. However, it is generally acknowledged that there is as yet no satisfactory model of such a dynamo (e.g. *Geophysical and Astrophysical Fluid Dynamics*, vol. 15 (1980), pp. 149-160 and *Reviews of Modern Physics*, vol. 53 (1981), pp. 481-496).

Plimer then builds a tower of hypothesis upon hypothesis on his incorrect assumption of a 'freezing outer core', implying that if creationists were right there would be no 'catastrophic [sic] earthquakes' etc. He implies that the driving mechanism for continental drift is the liquid outer core, yet all geophysicists agree that it is convection currents in the mantle. Is Plimer twisting the evidence to suit his erroneous straw-man hypothesis? Dr Tom Barnes, pioneer of the freely decaying electric currents model, is Emeritus Professor of Physics, University of Texas at El Paso. Plimer's caricature is 'way off'.

Why on earth does Plimer think that the earth's magnetic field is 'dreadfully inconvenient' to creationists, such that we would try to make it 'go away'? This is an invention from nowhere, useful only for propaganda.

P. 33

Plimer here has another slash at the decreasing-speed-of-light theory, but he again appears to misrepresent it by seeming to imply that creationists teach that the speed of light is still changing, rather than that it has changed previously, historically. If it had done so, which as we have indicated is no longer widely held for other good scientific reasons, then the caricature Plimer puts forward still would not apply. Does he misunderstand the special relativistic implications of a change in the value of c with time (which is not necessarily the same as an object travelling faster than c) or is he misrepresenting them purposely? Other authorities (Dirac, Troitskii) have toyed with the idea of constants changing with time—this is not fundamentally forbidden, as Plimer leads the reader to think. In fact, what CSF did with this hypothesis was to present it positively in our literature, but as soon as arguments against it came up, we presented pro and con arguments conscientiously and have now personally abandoned it.

P. 34

It is also not correct for Plimer to suggest, as he does here, that the mathematics used 'does not even get past first base'. Norman, Setterfield's collaborator, is a university professional in the field of mathematics. This is so, regardless of the subsequent fate of this (once very interesting) hypothesis. Furthermore, Plimer is absolutely wrong when he says 'creationists do not actually do the experiments on the speed of light themselves'. Plimer's Bibliography shows he has regularly consulted the *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* (which he discusses on pp. 169-170), yet he ignores the experimental measurements of c by Dr Jay Wile published in vol. 7 (1993), pp. 88-92.

P. 35-37

Concerning the problem of the light from distant stars, Plimer once again misrepresents the alleged 'creationist answer'. Nowhere has the same person or institution ever argued that light slowed down and was created 'only to appear to derive from a distant source'. Those who believed the latter explanation were opposed to the light-slowng-down theory, and vice versa. Furthermore, of the various problems noted with the light-slowng-down theory by creationist scientists, and for which they eventually criticized Setterfield, the one about high energy (e.g. Adam and Eve's procreation of children) had apparently been answered well by Setterfield in his monographs, but Plimer takes no notice of this because it makes such great caricature. (From all accounts he has university audiences in fits of laughter at the idea that every time Adam and Eve procreated children there would be the equivalent of an explosion of 500 tons of TNT. Hilarious, but not appropriate, since it suggests that such an elementary objection had not been considered. If the argument by Setterfield which answered the energy objection was wrong, Plimer has not taken the opportunity to show why.)

Creationists are not a unified force, in spite of the Plimer caricature. They are a handful of poorly funded individuals, mostly working in secular jobs and carrying out research out of hours. We believe that it was a mistake for the original speed-of-light hypothesis to be published in an unrefereed way, rather than in a refereed creationist scientific journal. It was also probably inappropriate to promote it so vigorously before it had passed such peer-review. However, all these self-correcting procedures have taken place, so this ridicule by Plimer is quite absurd and off-target.

However, considering what has actually happened to it, which is just as appropriate as what evolutionists have done with many of their own theories which have now been retired, it is outrageous for Plimer to say that creationists 'pull every trick in the book' (p. 37) in the context of changing c . It is also nonsense to suggest that it is presented by creationists 'as the strongest anti-evolution argument'. We have no idea where he gets that understanding from. It has barely been mentioned, if at all, in the talks of CSF's main speakers for years, and was never presented as our strongest argument. We conclude that once again, Plimer is playing fast and loose with reality. Incidentally, in an article printed in both the *Anglican Church Scene* (February 10, 1995, pp. 5-6), and *Anglican News* (May 1995, p. 9) nuclear scientist Ian Hore-Lacy, no friend of CSF, refers to Plimer's pp. 25 and 36 and says Plimer 'displays a surprising ignorance of nuclear physics'.

P. 38

Plimer says that creationists believe that 'all fossils and sedimentary rocks' formed in the Flood. We do not say this. We say that most of the fossils were formed by the Flood, with some being formed since then, some possibly before.

P. 39

Plimer criticizes creationism by saying that 'the creationist model for our planet has yielded nothing'. Firstly, mining companies generally have yet to experiment, as some creationist geologists and geophysicists have proposed, to see whether their rate of success in oil and mineral exploration would be increased using a creation/Flood model. In one instance a company in Canada did, and oil was found where the evolutionary geology model had failed. Secondly, it could be argued strongly that the evolution model for our planet has yielded nothing. None of the practical discoveries depend upon the model of long ages. Stratigraphic correlation to find oil and mineral deposits more easily, etc. certainly utilizes the existence of particular suites of fossils as a characteristic of certain rock layers, but the (relative) success, of itself, makes no comment as to whether those fossils are there because of ecological factors, hydrodynamic factors, or whether they are separated from each other by alleged millions of years.

PP. 39-41

Here he has another major 'go' at the decreasing-speed-of-light hypothesis. It is manifestly not correct to say that Setterfield's physics was incorrect because 'the speed of light is a constant'—even if it is now clear that c has not changed. The great physicist Dirac explored the idea as to whether the fundamental constants may not have been gradually changing their value. Dirac would also have denied Plimer's comments that such change would necessarily mean that no physics, electronics, etc. would work. By definition, a proposal that what was previously thought to be a constant may have changed its value might be a radical proposal, but to say that it can't be so because 'x is a constant' is the logical fallacy known as 'begging the question'.

Plimer's point 3 is nonsense. His point 4 ignores the fact that Setterfield at least tried to show that special relativity depended only on the speed of light being constant at any given time throughout the universe, not necessarily that its value has been the same throughout all of history. Since creationists have largely abandoned the Setterfield theory, one need not go through all of the misrepresentations in the Plimer 'list'; a very few of his points are, in fact, at least partially applicable. To give an example of either Plimer's lack of knowledge of physics, or misrepresentation, one needs only to look at his point 10 in which he implies there is a fundamental contradiction between two statements of Setterfield. He says that in one place

Setterfield says the redshift is due to a change in c , and in some other place Setterfield says it is due to a change in frequency with a constant wavelength. However, since every high school physics student should know that $c = \text{wavelength} \times \text{frequency}$, if the wavelength is constant and the frequency changes, then so does c . So Setterfield has said the same thing, in two different ways. Is the contradiction only in Plimer's mind, or is he deliberately misleading readers?

PP. 41-42

Plimer criticizes the editors of *Ex Nihilo* for not having picked up a misquote by Setterfield. Again, this is not quite what it seems. Plimer is careful to omit the last part of the Setterfield quote, which reads 'and so are relegated to being of mere "historical interest"'. Setterfield is actually quoting (though sloppily) from Cadusch (as shown by the quote marks); the rest, as becomes obvious once Setterfield's full sentence is given, is his commentary/interpretation on Cadusch's comments.

The fact that this extensive critique by Cadusch of the theory was published in our magazine incidentally refutes Plimer's caricature that we never publish contrary opinions.

P. 43

Plimer states that Trevor Norman was a 'junior programmer' at Flinders University, and that he was 'one of the service staff masquerading as a scientist'. Fact: Norman lectured in statistics and data analysis in the School of Information Science and Technology at Flinders University. He was also manager for all the computer systems in that same university department.

P. 44

Plimer tries to make Dr Snelling look dishonest, and as if he had 'another agenda' for citing the Setterfield/Norman monograph as a 'technical monograph'. There is no doubt that this is an apt description of the document because that is exactly what it is. While such a description does not of itself verify the quality of its contents and the accuracy of its conclusions, it was an honest, accurate description to call it that. It was also correct for Snelling to attribute its co-authorship 'to a member of the staff of Flinders University', because Norman was, and is, a member of the staff at Flinders University. As indicated above, Norman is NOT a junior member of the service staff as claimed by Plimer, but the manager for all computer systems in a department that majors on computers and computing. Hardly a junior responsibility.

P. 45

Plimer implies dishonesty by Setterfield—was Malcolm a 'very junior programmer servicing those who undertook research' as Plimer says, or was he a 'lecturer in computing', which Plimer denies? Remember that the reference that Setterfield was making was to back up the validity of an independent analysis done 'at Newcastle University', not 'by' the university. It turns out that Plimer has dealt in part-truth, to put a particular bias on the story. Malcolm states that around that time he was in fact paid to do (additional to his main job) some formal lecturing in computing at the University of Newcastle. It is at the least hair-splitting, at the worst dishonest, to imply that somehow he was presented as having bogus qualifications unsuitable to back up his competence to do the computer analysis in question (Malcolm has a Master of Engineering degree). Further, although he was employed as a programmer, Malcolm states that it was totally misleading to refer to him at that time as a 'very junior' programmer. His 1989 official designation, for example, was 'Senior Applications Programmer'.

PP. 45-46

Here, Plimer shows clearly that the creationist community itself has critiqued Setterfield's theory and that critiques were published in the creationist literature. However, by now Plimer may be hoping that the average reader has forgotten he 'set up' the speed-of-light straw-man as the major creationist plank. It is also very inappropriate to suggest that ICR's astrophysicist has had 'no results' after five years. The rejection of Setterfield's theory by creationists generally made further work totally unnecessary. (Incidentally, any

suggestion that the raw data gave no hint of a decay trend is inappropriate. Scientists debated this issue in leading journals such as *Nature* in the 1930s and 1940s.)

PP. 47-49

Plimer cunningly introduces another twist—he uses the fact that creationists have discredited the speed-of-light theory to make it look as if Dr Snelling is dishonest for having supported it. However, not only did Snelling not say it was definitely accurate, but his comments were made in 1988, whereas much of the progressive discrediting happened later. Further, every scientist has a right to change his mind as evidence accumulates against or for a particular theory. Clearly, Snelling had the right to remain unconvinced by the critique of Setterfield's concept published in 1986 'in a journal he edited'. Plimer suggests that Snelling 'must have known' that the theory was 'discredited pseudoscientific bunkum'. However, the mere fact of the publication of one critique does not make something 'discredited pseudoscientific bunkum', nor does it provide evidence that Snelling wrote his statements in anything other than good faith and fair scientific dealing in the light of all the then available data. Plimer's snide suggestion of some sort of a conspiracy to mislead is most inappropriate.

What about the statements by Professor Keay and Dr Abalakin, and the alleged absence of the actual data? Of passing interest, Plimer did not reproduce the letter by Dr Abalakin (as it was printed in *The Skeptic*) exactly—there were minor mistakes, although for no apparent reason apart from sloppiness. However, one has good reason to maintain a high index of suspicion about this whole matter, as we will see. (It is quite difficult for us to get to the bottom of this matter, what with the chaos in the former USSR, as well as our current inability to check with Setterfield. It is worth bearing in mind in what follows that Colin Keay is a vociferous anti-creationist and colleague of Plimer's in Australian Skeptics activity.)

As Plimer and Keay would know (presumably having read the Setterfield/Norman monograph), Setterfield references the Pulkovo data from one Kulikov, K.A, in a work called *Fundamental Constants of Astronomy*, pp. 81-96, 191-195, 'Translated from Russian and published for NASA by the Israel Program for Scientific Translations, Jerusalem. Original dated Moscow, 1955.' Not only that, he carefully tabulates all the Pulkovo observations and graphs them, by using the Russian name of each astronomer responsible for each measurement. It is highly unlikely that all of this is some wishful thinking by Setterfield, nor is it at all unreasonable for Snelling to rely on this information, published and referenced in the monograph as it was.

What makes the whole thing even more interesting is that Setterfield makes it clear that these are measurements deduced from the aberration of distant starlight. Whether the astronomers were trying to determine the velocity of light thereby is hardly relevant. Notice how the convoluted sentence in the letter by the Russian Abalakin refers indirectly to this, then concedes that Pulkovo astronomers were interested in the starlight aberration. However, rather than going on to discuss what those aberration values (which can be used to indirectly determine the speed of light) were, he stops short. Not only that, his next sentence is a complete non sequitur which, even though it starts with the word 'So', draws a conclusion which does not follow from anything he has said before! One cannot help wondering whether the last sentence was not written 'on request' to make sure that his letter puts down this creationist theory—because the letter as it stands looks to the unsophisticated reader as if the last sentence follows from the technical talk earlier on. It most certainly does not, as a little thought shows.

Plimer hammers home the alleged deception, but the reader is almost certainly being led by the nose, as we have shown.

By the way, the 'sic' on p. 48, bottom line, makes it look as if Snelling made an ignorant spelling mistake by writing Pulkova (as opposed to Pulkovo). Russian has a different alphabet, and when proper nouns are translated they are transliterated. Thus the Russian letter that looks identical to 'c' becomes 's' in English, because that is how it sounds. This observatory would have ended in an 'o' in the Cyrillic alphabet in all probability, but in Russian the 'o' on an ending is often colloquially pronounced like 'a', as in 'thank you', which is sometimes written 'spasibo' but is pronounced more like 'spasiba' by many. Thus, Pulkova is a legitimate transliteration.

It seems likely that the Pulkovo astronomers made aberration measurements, which can therefore be used to derive a value for c . Even if this were not so, there is no hint that the Pulkovo measurements were not received by Setterfield in good faith from his referenced sources and passed on by Snelling in equal good faith. Any supposed incorrectness therefore rests squarely with the Russian scientists and those who reported their work, NOT with either Setterfield or Snelling. All scientists regularly accept and use data published in the scientific literature every day in good faith without personally checking every datum with those responsible. Plimer's tactics are totally illegitimate and an unfounded smear.

P. 49

Plimer makes a great effort to make it look as if Snelling deliberately quoted an obscure source. In fact, Snelling 'nailed his colours to the mast' by writing the article to readers of *The Australian Geologist*, who would have largely been hostile to his position, knowing that many of them had the ability to correspond with observatories, travel to Russia, and so forth. If Snelling thought that the information was incorrect, it would have been a most foolish and professionally dangerous thing for him to do. Once again, Plimer is trying to paint Snelling's bona fide action in a way that implies deceptive tactics. In fact, we would be surprised if the Pulkovo observations were not bona fide, since to our knowledge they were sent to Setterfield unsolicited from a source that had nothing to gain from their invention. Setterfield may not even have known there was such an observatory in Russia, and the Pulkovo observations came to hand long after he first published his theory. Indeed, in his letter to Professor Keay, Dr Abalakin does admit that there were 'aberration constant determinations' made at the Pulkovo Observatory, which he admits can be used indirectly to obtain velocity of light determinations. So why the fuss by Plimer and Keay? Is it simply to manipulate the reader's opinion of creationists?

P. 49-52

Re the Van Flandern quote—Plimer either deliberately misrepresents or unintentionally misunderstands the issue. Van Flandern's comments are quite reasonable, and in agreement with what Snelling wrote about Van Flandern's work. Van Flandern was using his observations to suggest (and Setterfield said nothing else) that the gravitational constant might decrease. Setterfield simply used the observations to show that an alternative interpretation of them might be that the speed of light had varied. Since the variation was small, since it was dealing with current observations, and since, according to the Setterfield hypothesis, the difference would only be expected to be small, it should be obvious to Plimer (as a trained scientist) that Van Flandern's argument that a small variation was not relevant is a total red herring. Snelling was totally justified in referring to Van Flandern's work as relevant to, and as a possible confirmation of, Setterfield's hypothesis.

The unsophisticated reader would also miss the point in Plimer's attack on Snelling for quoting the Troitskii paper. Snelling was highlighting astrophysicist Troitskii's argument that there could feasibly have been a change to the speed of light. Such an admission by a physicist is highly damaging to Plimer's claims that this would mean 'denying all physics'. Snelling did not say that such a change as proposed by Troitskii would change the use of radioactivity to date the earth. Snelling said that Troitskii 'argues on theoretical grounds for a model of Universe evolution based on a decrease of c from an initially infinite value. With sophisticated mathematics, he shows how this would be consistent with recognised physical principles.' Anyone who reads the Troitskii paper would agree that this is a fair summary, Plimer's pontificating red herrings notwithstanding. (The reader wishing to have a really eye-opening dose of documentation showing Plimer's incredible tactics should read Snelling's paper in reply to the two previous ones by Plimer, in *The Australian Geologist* of September 20, 1988.)

The purpose of Snelling's introduction of the Troitskii comment was clearly to show that the sorts of facile caricatures alleging the absolute impossibility of a change in c , which Plimer had put forward previously, were completely off the mark. Once again, Plimer presumably is hoping that his less astute readership will have missed this obvious point, that pages and pages of his previous waffle on the impossibility of the speed of light changing on theoretical grounds are seriously challenged by the existence of the Troitskii paper.

Plimer implies that because he telephoned a few university academics, presumably in Australia, who did not support the Setterfield hypothesis, therefore Snelling lies and (on p. 52) has 'created "facts" ex nihilo'. Did Plimer check every university in the world? Hardly! Snelling's statements were made in good faith, based upon information received which is still to the best of our knowledge correct, mostly concerning overseas people. As far as Australia is concerned, there was a practising physicist at the University of New South Wales at that time, Stephen Bewlay, who openly supported the Setterfield hypothesis, and therefore Plimer's statement that 'not one' did so, could be regarded as (in his terms) 'mischievous'. As Plimer has already quoted from Setterfield's 1983 monograph, wherein he could read the endorsements of Bewlay and others, we conclude that it is Plimer who is ignoring the facts.

P. 52

Carl Wieland says:

'I stand by my quote of 1988 that there were "many ill-informed and even unfair attacks", on Setterfield's monograph, and it is not correct to say that I knew that the work had been "discredited". I knew that it had been attacked and I had satisfied myself that at that stage there were sound answers to the critiques. My subsequent abandonment of the theory has to do with subsequent criticisms of which I became aware. That is normal and appropriate.'

P. 54

Here one is amazed at what seems to be Plimer's ignorance of the biological sciences. For him to write, 'if evolution did not exist, then blood types could not be measured, diseases could not be detected and parentage could not be determined', is bizarre, to put it kindly. See the opinion (concerning evolution) of one of the world's leading experts on the blood disease sickle-cell anaemia (*Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 40-41).

Plimer accuses creationists of misrepresenting palaeontology, but he fails to mention that it is evolutionist palaeontologists themselves who have indicated that the incompleteness of the fossil record (which Plimer uses as an argument) is (because of the extent to which it has now been investigated) no longer an excuse for the systematic shortage of the required transitional forms.

P. 55

Plimer says we ignore invertebrate palaeontology. However, he should be well aware that Kurt Wise, an invertebrate palaeontologist with a Ph.D. from Harvard University, was a guest speaker at our 1991 Sydney conference. Dr Wise is a creationist, even though he studied under evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould.

Once again, Plimer is pulling the wool over people's eyes by suggesting that somehow, because oil companies use the presence of invertebrate fossils to correlate geological layers, then any denial that these invertebrate fossils were related in some evolutionary sequence means that the oil would not have been discovered. Amazing nonsense!

On the same page Wieland is accused of dismissing 'the whole fossil record' just because he wrote that Archaeopteryx has none of the crucial transitional structures, like scale-to-feather or limb-to-wing 'in-betweens'. Wieland certainly does not dismiss the whole fossil record—he merely points out the lack of transitional forms between the major body forms in the fossil record, which even evolutionary palaeontologists admit is a problem for evolutionary theory. In fact, the paucity of transitional forms in the fossil record is the main reason for the saltation (jumps) theory put forward by Stephen Jay Gould.

Table of Contents

[Introduction—p.52](#)

[PP. 54–100](#)

[PP. 101–149](#)

[PP. 150–200](#)

[PP. 200–249](#)

[PP. 250–Conclusion](#)

P. 56

One would like to see Gish speak for himself, as one cannot simply assume that the information given in Plimer's book is reliable. On the basis of documented evidence of the sorts of antics gotten up to by the skeptics, this is always something which must be seriously questioned. This evidence was documented in the video quoted by Plimer called 'Ethics Abused'.

That being said, it should also be noted that it is only an evolutionary interpretation that *Monoclonius* was a transitional ancestor to *Triceratops*, as is the supposed 15 million years. Evolutionists such as Plimer and Miller state such relationships as if they were proven fact, but they definitely are not—they are interpretations based on a priori evolutionary presuppositions (beliefs). But what is the 'big deal' anyway about varieties of horned dinosaurs? The real question is how did a non-dinosaur become a dinosaur? Plimer has no answer, just cynical abuse of Dr Gish.

P. 57

The same applies to the comments of Lord Zuckerman re Lucy's kind—which Gish is alleged to have used in debates. What Plimer neglects to tell his readers is that other evolutionists making the same claims as Zuckerman on australopithecines, such as Charles Oxnard at the University of Western Australia, published their work after Lucy was discovered. Furthermore, even the alleged comment by Gish which Plimer features makes the point that Zuckerman studied fossils which were, in evolutionary terms, 'younger' than Lucy. If these creatures did not walk upright in the human manner, and yet were the forms in-between Lucy and modern humans, how could Lucy be claimed (by evolutionists who say she is ancestral to us) to have walked upright? The point is that Zuckerman concluded that this whole group of creatures did not walk upright.

Concerning the issue of the Wadjak skulls and Dubois, Plimer should blame some of the evolutionist literature, as there has been much misrepresentation of both the Wadjak skulls and also Dubois' alleged change of mind on *Homo erectus*. Again, we cannot speak for Gish, nor vouch for the accuracy of Plimer's allegations. If, in fact, it turns out that any creationist has failed to modify his presentation or to check out criticisms, then this is deplorable but has nothing to do with the validity of the entire creation model. One can find many examples of slipshod practice by evolution's disciples, but evolutionists do not for that reason dismiss evolution. History surely knows of good scientists who stubbornly kept repeating certain already-refuted ideas and concepts relating to one area of their work, or who simply were too busy charging along a particular line of work. This is not an excuse (if one is needed—the reader of these notes will see that there is good reason for a priori skepticism of any Plimer claim), but it does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that there was a deliberate intent to deceive.

PP. 58-60

The confusion about whether Gish wrote the booklet or didn't write the booklet is easy to understand. Gish didn't actually write it—but it was based upon a lecture he gave and clearly he approved it. Therefore both statements are technically true, but Plimer exploits this to make it look as if Gish is being dishonest.

Regarding the earth's crust being void of fossils, Plimer knows that the reader will probably not have the opportunity to see the booklet for himself. The booklet doesn't actually teach this! If you check the diagram (see Appendix 1) it is clear that Gish is saying to the reader that the bottom part of the earth's crust is void of fossils. By not showing the diagram, Plimer is able to exploit this and to quote the label on that part of the diagram verbatim in order to make it look as if this was intended deception or woeful ignorance.

Re the issue of lack of Precambrian fossils—Gish was at that time acting in perfectly good faith by quoting (and relying upon) a major geological authority (Preston Cloud) who had said that there were no unequivocal multi-cellular Precambrian fossils. Cloud, of course, was aware of the Ediacaran Precambrian fauna, so his statement was at that time therefore very potent. So, regardless of which other works on Precambrian life Cloud had published before he made that statement, they clearly were not adamant about Precambrian multi-cellular life, which was the point at issue! Hence it is incorrect to say that Gish

‘misrepresented and misquoted’. Preston Cloud clearly did not believe at that time that the Ediacaran fossils genuinely belonged in the Precambrian.

However, it is correct that the booklet needed to be corrected or withdrawn from sale (which it was—see later). It is also unfortunate that it doesn’t use the word ‘multi-cellular’ as Gish did at that time in his lectures and his book, and that this was not picked up in proofreading since abbreviations for brevity or simplicity can end up being misunderstood. The main point of the booklet is, however, unaffected—that is that the ‘explosion’ of Cambrian fauna is not preceded by any fossils which evolutionists regard as ancestral to those creatures.

Gish said that the booklet was no longer being sold, and Plimer says that therefore ‘he is a liar’ because the booklet was on sale in the foyer at the debate where Gish was when he made the comment. However, this allegation of lying turns out to be untrue. Gish was visiting Australia from the United States of America, and could not have known whether people were still selling it in a foreign country. The issue was whether it had been withdrawn from sale at its main (original) source, which is what, to the best of Gish’s knowledge, took place in the USA. In fact, we at CSF in Australia had decided not to stock it sometime before, because of this need for upgrading. So how did the booklet appear for sale? The debate was not organized by the mainstream creationist movement, and somehow the booklet appeared for sale by someone, presumably from some old stock of which Gish had no knowledge. (This presumes that Plimer did actually buy it that night, as he claims.)

P. 60

In spite of the demonstration (in reference to p. 59) that there was no lying concerning the Cloud issue, all the emphatic repeated statements about ‘lying’ have their propaganda effect. Gish honestly believed that the booklet had been withdrawn, since his own organization and CSF had done so.

P. 61

Once again Plimer makes gleeful havoc with Gish’s omission of the word ‘multi-cellular’ in reference to the earliest fossils, which is why we withdrew the comic book years before. Actually it would have been not so much Gish’s omission, but that of the writer of the booklet—however, Gish should have checked. We have always heard Gish say ‘multi-cellular’, making it clear what he meant, even in many of his lectures years ago.

P. 62

Plimer again, based upon the misleading information already discussed, hammers home his intent to imply that Gish was deliberately lying. Readers may judge such tactics for themselves. (See our comments regarding Plimer’s p. 60 also.)

Concerning Gish’s claim that the debate with Plimer was ‘the most disgusting performance he had ever experienced’—this had nothing to do with Plimer’s alleged ‘exposure’ of Gish. We were informed that many people, including some evolutionists, stated that they were also disgusted at what was almost universally regarded as rude, abusive behaviour by Plimer on the night. Even a sympathetic news report in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (June 25, 1988, p. 74) talked about the fact that Plimer’s talk was ‘blistering’, that he ‘mocked’ and ‘ridiculed’, that he was ‘aiming for his opponent’s kneecaps’ and that ‘much of what he said in the Gish debate cannot be repeated for legal reasons’.

Re the last paragraph on p. 65—it was not the ‘mauling’ in the sense in which Plimer portrays it that has led to any refusal to debate. It was a long litany of ethical abuses, such as the circular-type letter concerning Gish which Plimer wrote on University of Newcastle letterhead (where he was professor at the time) and sent (and of which we have a signed copy). Apart from outrageous claims of money-laundering, etc., the letter stated:

‘Furthermore, if you were at the debates in Sydney (18.3.88) or Brisbane (30.3.88), you would surely have noticed an entourage of young people (principally boys) accompanying Gish and who continually touched him. This is commensurate with testimony from elsewhere which throws enlightenment on Gish’s personal life and which makes Jimmy Swaggart look like a moral guardian of the Faith.’

[Signed] I.R. Plimer

The facts are that Dr Gish was at all times accompanied by his wife and/or his Australian hosts, who can all testify that Plimer’s sickening allegations are untrue. Carl Wieland debated the issue of origins at the Tenth Annual Convention of the Australian Skeptics in Melbourne on June 9, 1990, at their invitation. In front of this audience, he documented a number of ethical outrages, including this horrific fabrication about Gish, and then stated that until the Skeptics dissociated themselves from this sort of tactic, no debates with anyone associated with them would take place. No such repudiation (despite repeated invitations to do so) has ever been received, even though the Skeptics have never denied or questioned the validity or existence of that disgusting Plimer letter or the other matters raised, such as Plimer’s public allegations on the ABC (for which the ABC apologized) about our financial returns, as shown below.

Following is the transcript of Plimer’s comments in an interview on Robyn Williams’ Ockham’s Razor program of Sunday, January 8, 1989, at 8.45am (Eastern Summer Time) on Sydney ABC Radio Station 2FC and on Melbourne Radio Station 3AR.

‘In Australia, there’s a Queensland company called the Creation Science Foundation Ltd. It comprises only seven members, who are also the directors of the company. This company submitted no annual report for 1988, no annual report for 1987 and no annual report for 1986. The 1985 annual report to the Corporate Affairs Commission showed that almost \$100,000 just disappeared. The auditors resigned a few days before this report was due to be submitted to the Corporate Affairs Commission. Here we have the creation of something into nothing.’

Appendix 2 reproduces a letter from the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs showing that we had, in fact, submitted each return on time.

On Sunday, June 4, 1989, the Australian Broadcasting Commission issued an on-air apology for this false information which had been broadcast by Professor Ian Plimer on the above national radio broadcast, as follows:

‘In this program on the eighth of January 1989, we talked about Creation Science and said that the 1985 annual return of a Queensland company, Creation Science Foundation Limited, showed that almost \$100,000 had just disappeared. We should point out that this money was in fact shown partly in the 1984 return and partly in the 1985 return as losses sustained by the company. We also reported that the company had failed to lodge annual returns for 1986, 1987 and 1988. It has come to our attention, and we accept, that the annual returns for these years have in fact been lodged. We apologise for this inaccuracy and regret any harm that may have been suffered by the Creation Science Foundation or its Directors as a consequence.’

Clearly, for us to refuse to debate anyone associated with a person or organization giving their blessing to such tactics until they issue an apology and a commitment not to stoop to such levels is hardly a ‘pathetically unconvincing reason’. But Plimer cannot possibly reveal the real facts relevant to this to the readers of his book, or he would destroy his own credibility.

P. 63

Plimer naturally cannot admit to all the errors and distortions in the Price book—instead he attacks the CSF rebuttal as ‘fire-and-brimstone’ fulminations, trusting no one will read its exposé of these.

P. 64

Our understandable outrage, that such distortions could be given such wide publicity by government-funded radio without checking the facts, is stated to be our desire to censor information! Unbelievable!

PP. 64-68

Concerning the matter of the 'Boule' quote. It appears that Plimer is again trying to 'snow' his readers with a complicated series of events, perhaps hoping it will be hard for them to follow anything except for the repetition of inflammatory words.

In Duane Gish's book *Evolution: The Fossils Say No!* (Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, California, third edition, 1979), Gish discussed Peking Man on pp. 127-145, using two main sources. For his evaluation of the evolutionist viewpoint, Gish used and discussed material from *Fossil Man*, an English translation (1957) of *Les Hommes Fossiles* (1952) by Marcellin Boule and H.V. Vallois, which Gish acknowledged on p. 132 of *Evolution: The Fossils Say No!*. For his evaluation of the creationist viewpoint, Gish used and discussed material from *Science of Today and the Problems of Genesis*, Book I (1969), by Patrick O'Connell, which Gish acknowledged on p. 141 of his book.

On p. 139 of *Evolution: the Fossils Say No!* (1979), Gish presented the disputed Boule quote, introducing it with the words:

'In an article published in 1937 in *L'Anthropologie* (p. 21), Boule wrote:

To this fantastic hypothesis [of Abbe Breuil and Fr. Teilhard de Chardin], that the owners of the monkey-like skulls were the authors of the large-scale industry, I take the liberty of preferring an opinion more in conformity with the conclusions from my studies, which is that the hunter (who battered the skulls) was a real man and that the cut stones, etc., were his handiwork [the nature of this stone industry will be discussed later].'

In 1990 CSF wrote to Gish and asked him about his source for this quote. Gish replied as follows:

'The source of my quote was from Patrick O'Connell's book *Science of Today and the Problems of Genesis*. I used a secondary source.'

Gish continued:

'It will be seen that I used the quote exactly as given by O'Connell. Certainly, then, it cannot be charged that I published a doctored quotation with intent to deceive. My only error is using, in all honesty, a quotation from a secondary source without accrediting it to a secondary source. Had I done that, they would have to charge O'Connell, not me, of doctoring the quotation, because I quoted it exactly as given by O'Connell.'

Thus the sum total of the matter is that Gish in all honesty quoted Boule from a secondary source, which in the event turned out to be a rather free translation (by O'Connell). We published this reply from Gish in *A Response to Deception* (1991 Revised edition), p. 14, which means that Plimer knew the true explanation. Nevertheless Plimer hides this fact from his readers in *Telling Lies for God* and instead charges Gish with the following offences:

- 'numerous misquotations' (p. 64),
- 'a long history of multiple misquotation by Gish and his cohorts' (p. 64),
- 'Gish knowingly misquoted from misquotes' (p. 65),
- "'He (Gish) will stop at nothing, it would seem, for the cause of converting children to creationism.'"—Zindler (p. 66),

- '(to Gish) means the action of lying about your own lie in order to attempt to persuade someone that you are telling the truth' (p. 66),
- 'scientific fraud' (p. 66),
- 'Gish had plagiarised O'Connell's obscure work' (p. 67),
- 'deceit' (p. 67),
- [Gish] 'plagiarised O'Connell's work in an attempt to deceive his readership about the writings of the eminent anthropologist, Boule' (p. 67),
- 'Gish was caught lying about his own lie in order to give the appearance of telling the truth' (p. 68),
- 'Gish was caught lying many times' (p. 68),
- 'Gish plagiarised the work of others' (p. 68),
- And Plimer concludes, 'creation "science" is fraud and this fraud is knowingly committed by the movement's leaders' (p. 68).

In the course of this tirade of abuse Plimer mentions a Dr Alex Ritchie four times and says,

[he] 'undertook a magnificent piece of research to show a long history of multiple misquotation by Gish and his cohorts' (p. 64),

'the Creation Science Foundation used incomplete information which gave Dr Ritchie even more clues' (p. 65),

'The scientific fraud committed by Gish was exposed after some brilliant detective work by Dr Alex Ritchie' (p. 66), and

'This detective work by Alex Ritchie shows that Gish was caught lying many times, that Gish plagiarised the work of others and that Wieland was bending the truth' (p. 68).

All of this is rubbish!

To the best of our knowledge:

There was only ever one Boule quote in dispute.

The misquotation lay in O'Connell's free translation. Gish's only mistake was not to acknowledge it to be from a secondary source.

As soon as the Creation Science Foundation knew from Gish about it, CSF publicized the details in *A Response to Deception*, which was first published in September 1990, with the revised edition in January 1991. Ritchie's article on the subject, as referenced by Plimer, did not appear in *The Australian Biologist* until March 1991.

On p. 68 of *Telling Lies for God*, Plimer, referring to our explanation in *A Response to Deception*, Revised Edition, says,

'This time, it is claimed that Gish didn't understand French and the O'Connell version was the only English version of Boule that Gish had available. Gish should not have used Boule if he did not understand French, and to claim that the O'Connell version was the only English version that Gish had available was clearly a lie. The 1957 English version of Boule is freely available and was on the shelves years before Gish wrote his book. Gish was caught lying about his own lie in order to give the appearance of telling the truth.'

What are the facts? Well, the first fact is that it is quite OK to quote a translation without being able to speak the original language—people do it every day when they quote the Bible! The second fact is that when we said that Gish reproduced 'the only English translation available to him', we were referring to the disputed quote and not to the whole of Boule's article. Our statement is correct, as will be shown, since the Boule quote used by Gish does not appear as such in the English translation *Fossil Men*.

The section on Peking Man on pp. 130-146 of *Fossil Men* by Boule and Vallois is not an exact translation of Boule's 22 page article in *L'Anthropologie*, but is a revised version. *Fossil Men* was published in England by Thames and Hudson of London in 1957, and bears the names of Marcellin Boule and Henri V. Vallois on the title page. However, the book also states that it was 'translated by Michael Bullock from the revised and enlarged fourth edition of *Les Hommes Fossiles* with additional information supplied by Professor Vallois'. This fourth edition of *Les Hommes Fossiles* was published in Paris in 1952, which is 10 years after the death of Boule, during World War II, in 1942. From this it is safe to assume that Boule was not consulted about, nor did he approve, the changes made by Vallois to what he (Boule) had written. What changes? Well, the 'Boule quote' in particular. Boule originally wrote in French and the Boule quote in *L'Anthropologie*, p. 22 begins:

'A cette hypothèse, aussi fantaisiste qu'ingé nieuse, je me permets de préférer celle-ci, qui me paraît aussi satisfaisante...'

Gish's critic, Zindler, translated this as follows:

'To this hypothesis, as fantastic as it is ingenious, I may be permitted to prefer one which seems to me to be just as satisfactory...' (source: *American Atheist*, March 1985, p. 23, emphasis added).

It seems that Vallois changed this from the first person, as Boule had written it, to his own version in the third person, so that the translation by Michael Bullock which appeared in *Fossil Men*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1952, p. 145, read:

'To this hypothesis, other writers preferred the following...' (emphasis added).

The discerning reader may wish to ponder the fact that changing a quote is what Gish has been erroneously (and mischievously) accused of, but in this matter it is the evolutionist Vallois who has done the quote-changing. Will Plimer now accuse Vallois of lying, deceit, etc? Gish did in fact give the *Fossil Men* Vallois version in full, on p. 139 of *Evolution: The Fossils Say No!* (1979 edition), as follows:

'To this hypothesis, other writers preferred the following, which seemed to them more in conformity with our whole body of knowledge: the hunter was a true Man, whose stone industry has been found and who preyed upon *Sinanthropus*.' (*Fossil Men*, p. 145)

However, this is not the way Boule wrote it, so Gish was perfectly justified and totally honest in then adding the Boule quote, on p. 139 of the same edition of *Evolution: The Fossils Say No!*, using the only translation with which he was familiar, from O'Connell's book *Science of Today and the Problems of Genesis*, which translation Gish introduced as follows:

'In an article published in 1937 in *L'Anthropologie* (p. 21) Boule wrote: "To this fantastic hypothesis...I take the liberty of preferring an opinion..."'

As we have already mentioned, Gish's one error was in not referencing this translation to O'Connell as a secondary source. However, as Gish did not have the original French article, he was perfectly justified and totally honest in using the only translation he knew of and available to him at the time. Note: We do not dispute that O'Connell's version is a very free translation of Boule's French and incorporates some information from other parts of Boule's article in *L'Anthropologie*—we acknowledged this in our A Response to Deception, p. 26. However this in no way negates the fact that the only place we know of (and that Gish knew of in the 1970s) where the disputed Boule quote, in the first person as used by Boule, was extant at the time Gish wrote, was, in fact, in O'Connell's book.

It is abundantly clear, therefore, that Plimer's allegation (p. 68) that 'to claim that the O'Connell version was the only English version that Gish had available was clearly a lie' is a canard (cf. Oxford English Dictionary: literally 'duck', meaning an extravagant or absurd story calculated as a hoax; a false report). And of Plimer's further allegation that 'Gish was caught lying about his own lie in order to give the appearance of telling the truth'—does not this come close to describing what Plimer himself has done? As he himself says on p. 66 of *Telling Lies for God*, 'There is no word in the English language to describe someone who lies about their own lie in order to attempt to persuade an audience that they are telling the truth.'

On p. 68 of *Telling Lies for God*, Plimer alleges that: 'In the new revised *Response to Deception*, the Creation Science Foundation publish that it is O'Connell who is guilty of fabrication ...'

This is NOT true! We wrote, 'Readers who speak French will see that Price/Zindler's translation is quite literal, while Gish/O'Connell's is rather more free, but in the spirit of the rest of Boule's article.'—A *Response to Deception* (revised), p. 12. And on p. 26 we wrote, 'It will be readily seen that this next paragraph [i.e. the Boule quote] is a very free translation of Boule's French, and that it incorporates information from other parts of the *L'Anthropologie* article, e.g. the reference to "monkey-like skulls" was based on Boule's comments on pages 9 and 10 of his *L'Anthropologie* article (see our translation of these earlier on pages 12 and 13 of this booklet).'

It is therefore totally untrue for Plimer to allege that we said O'Connell was guilty of fabrication. It is further untrue for Plimer to say (p. 66) that 'There is no mention of monkeys anywhere in the Boule article [in *L'Anthropologie*].' (Without hairsplitting about whether the word 'singe' should be translated 'apes' or 'monkeys'.)

Furthermore Plimer's accusation (p. 66) that Gish used 'an amended quote from O'Connell which Gish attributed to Boule' is absolutely misleading. Gish attributed it to Boule because O'Connell attributed it to Boule.

Also, Plimer says (p. 66) that Boule claimed that Peking Man was a true man, cleverly diverting attention from the Zindler version of the Boule quote, which indicates Boule's belief that true man was in fact the hunter of Peking Man. Zindler's translation reads, 'the hunter was a true man...who made *Sinanthropus* [i.e. Peking man] his victim!' Who is really twisting the truth here?

What about Plimer's claim that Carl Wieland was 'bending the truth'? He is referring to a *New Scientist* Letter to the Editor (published 23 March, 1991) in which Wieland wrote the following: 'Price states that the Creation Science Foundation claimed that the original Boule quote "proved Gish had quoted word-for-word from Boule". In fact we wrote that it proved he quoted O'Connell verbatim, not Boule.' Plimer correctly quotes CSF from our *A Response to Deception*, that (referring to the O'Connell quote) 'it is a word-for-word match of Gish's quote of Boule' but he is not correct when he says that Wieland's letter to *New Scientist* denied that we had said this. A careful comparison with what Wieland wrote (reproduced above) shows that there is a very significant difference. Wieland was denying Price's accusation that we had admitted that Gish had quoted from Boule, whereas what we were saying was that the O'Connell quote was a word-for-word match of Gish's quote of Boule! In other words, Wieland did not deny what Plimer says he denied, but something which was subtly close, but substantially different. Notice how he is careful to refer readers to check the quote from *A Response to Deception*, but not to check what Wieland actually wrote in the *New Scientist* letter in question.

P. 69

While it is true that the geological column (the rock and fossil sequence) had been established before Darwin published his treatise, it is also true that evolution and evolutionary ideas were circulating before Darwin (Darwin's grandfather wrote on the subject). It is also true that the time scale assigned to the rocks and fossils has been greatly modified since the column was first proposed. Leading creationist geologists of today accept the geologic column, but not the time scale associated with it. Plimer refers to the geological time scale and the sequence of rocks and fossils (the geologic column) as if the two are synonymous. They are NOT. While they go together, the time scale has been imposed on the column according to evolutionary/uniformitarian assumptions. Geologists who believed in creation and the Flood helped construct the geological column, but it was those with an evolutionary/uniformitarian bias who interpreted the column as representing millions of years (the time scale). Plimer fudges the issues—geological time today is based on the assumption of evolution; where radiometric dating contradicts the 'evolution-time' based on fossils, it is the radiometric date which is assumed to be wrong, and ignored.

P. 70

Gish was incorrect in saying that a mixture of hydroquinone and peroxide is explosive. However, the accusation against Gish of 'lying' is outrageous because it is demonstrably wrong. CSF wrote to Plimer in August 1988, pointing out the unfairness of his statements at that time about Gish, and documenting that Gish had corrected his account of the bombardier beetle. Plimer has taken no notice of the documentation supplied and repeats his erroneous charges in this book published six years later.

Dr Robert Kofahl responded to the article by Christopher Weber upon which Plimer (p. 71) bases his accusations, in *Creation/Evolution* V.12-14, 15, 16; X.2; XVII.3. This is the same year as Weber's anti-Gish article. Dr Kofahl acknowledged that he was the source of the error over the spontaneous explosiveness of a mixture of hydroquinone and peroxide. Kofahl read the original paper in German, but his translation provided to Gish had not been thorough and the error had arisen. Plimer was sent a copy of Kofahl's article acknowledging this by Wieland in August 1988, but Plimer does not acknowledge Kofahl's article, presumably because it would inhibit him from calling Gish a liar.

Plimer makes much of the difference between *instabil*, which he says is the German word for 'unstable' which would have been used in the original paper, Plimer indicates, and *explosiv*, German for 'explosive'. Gish studied German during his undergraduate years (40 years before!) and would have known the difference, says Plimer, and therefore Gish lied about the mistranslation. But with Kofahl admitting that he was the source of the information in his own translation, it is clear that Gish did not attempt to use his undergraduate German to try to read this technical paper.

Plimer implies that Gish knew that the mixture of hydroquinone and peroxide was not explosive and made up the story to make it sound good to uninformed audiences! What good Gish supposedly would hope to achieve by this is not at all clear, considering the numerous other excellent examples of functions in living things impossible to explain by any evolutionary process! Indeed, the bombardier beetle itself, without the error, is still a problem for evolution, as pointed out by Kofahl.

Plimer gives his reader the impression that he himself has made a detailed study of the original German paper (p. 71). He claims that Gish could not have confused the German words for unstable and explosive. However, three native German-speakers plus two German dictionaries we have consulted indicate that there is no such word in written German as *instabil*, as Plimer claims. Germans sometimes use *unstabil* but never *instabil*. Perhaps it was a 'typo' and he typed *instabil* instead of *unstabil*? No, this does not help Plimer because the original paper by Schildknecht et al used neither *unstabil* or *instabil*. Furthermore, the word *explosiv* was not in the papers either. Various German conjugations of words relating to instability and explosiveness are used in the article, but not *unstabil/instabil* or *explosiv*. We conclude that Plimer, contrary to appearances, has never read the original papers himself, and on the basis of speculation accuses Gish of lying!

P. 71

Plimer's charge that 'With such public exposure, one would expect that Gish's 1977 book would be immediately withdrawn and pulped', is ridiculous. The error occurred in a very small part of a book on dinosaurs, in a small part of the account of the bombardier beetle, and did not significantly change the thrust of the point that the beetle is an embarrassment to evolution. Will Professor Plimer immediately withdraw and pulp his book *Telling Lies for God* now we have shown it to be full of errors?

Plimer makes a non sequitur which would mislead most readers. By saying that 'Gish knew better' he makes it appear as if Gish believed that the bombardier beetle's mechanism could not be used to show the impossibility of evolution. To say that Gish was 'still perfectly content to promote information which he knew was incorrect' would only be so if Gish had failed to correct in his lectures the details of how the beetle generates the bursts of hot noxious gases.

To say, 'Gish is clearly aware of the weakness of his bombardier beetle argument' is incredibly misleading. Gish does not believe, as Plimer implies, that the Weber article 'demolishes' the argument. Kofahl's

response to Weber indicated that the argument against evolution remained sound—with the error corrected. Plimer fudges the reality of the complexity of the beetle's defence mechanism. Herewith follows an actual quote from Gish's children's book, 1977 edition.

'The bombardier beetle mixes up two kinds of chemicals—hydrogen peroxide and hydroquinone.

'Now the marvelous thing about this is, if you or I went into a chemistry laboratory and mixed up those two chemicals we would soon have a mess! Those chemicals react with each other to produce a dark-colored, dirty-looking liquid—a real mess.

'But not so with the bombardier beetle. He's a smart chemist. When he mixes up these two chemicals he makes sure that he adds another kind of chemical, called an inhibitor. The inhibitor somehow prevents the other two chemicals from reacting together, and the mixture of these two chemicals remain as clear as water. The bombardier beetle stores this liquid mixture in two storage chambers, ready to be used when needed.

'When a mean ole beetle-eater (Mr. B.E.) tries to sneak up behind the bombardier beetle (Mr. B.B.), Mr. B.B. squirts the chemical liquid (containing the hydroquinone and hydrogen peroxide) into two combustion tubes (firing tubes) that he has in his tail, while aiming at Mr. B.E. Then just as Mr. B.E. opens his mouth and is ready to snap up Mr. B.B., BOOM! He is frizzled by the explosion, which pours hot, irritating, and bad-smelling gases right into his face. Ugh! Even if Mr. B.E. weren't hurt very badly, he surely wouldn't want to eat anything like that for dinner!

'How does Mr. B.B. make the chemical solution explode just at the right time, in spite of the fact that the solution contains an inhibitor which ordinarily keeps the hydrogen peroxide from reacting with the hydroquinone? Dr. Schildknecht found out that when the bombardier beetle squirts the solution into the combustion tubes, there are two chemicals in the combustion tubes which neutralize (knock out) the inhibitor. These two chemicals are enzymes called catalase and peroxidase (enzymes are chemicals that make chemical reactions go millions of times faster). When hydroquinone and hydrogen peroxide are mixed together with these two enzymes in the combustion tube, they react violently together and Boom!—they explode.'

The onus is on Plimer to demonstrate that this is incorrect and that Plimer has not omitted important facts from his story—readers can judge for themselves.

P. 73

Credible Christian scholars have long since answered the liberal critics who claim that there are two different creation and two different Flood stories—there are not. Plimer, however, muddies the waters further. He says that the Bible should not be interpreted literally, and then says that the Bible, if interpreted literally, does not tell us the age of the earth. However, if interpreted literally, it most certainly does give an order of magnitude as to the age of the earth. It's difficult to see why Plimer should want it both ways.

Concerning the succeeding pages in which Plimer raises loads of problems against the concept of a Flood: our aim in writing this critique is mostly to show that his attacks on the credibility and integrity of creationists are themselves grossly lacking credibility and integrity. This is not to suggest that there are no problems in creationist models requiring further research. However, Plimer's barrage of ridicule is scarcely a serious scientific attempt to critique/grapple with such problems.

PP. 74-75

Plimer asks why civilizations which existed 4,000 years ago did not record a 'Great Flood'. He then tries to make it sound as if only 'some cultures' have Flood myths. In fact, the overwhelming majority do have Flood myths, including some on Pacific islands, which he implies is not the case. And, of course, his implication that no civilization existing around 4,000 years ago recorded a 'Great Flood' is incorrect. The most detailed accounts outside the Bible are, in fact, from such civilizations—Mesopotamia, etc. Plimer

also fails to tell his readership that rivers flooding could not account for such parallels with Genesis as the sending out of bird or animal scouts, the vessel landing on a mountain, the sacrifices after the event, the rainbow, etc., as are found in many of these stories.

PP. 75-76

To give an example of some of Plimer's illogical reasoning, he uses the uniformitarian assumptions of orthodox geology to state that there have been 'thousands of climate changes' in the past. So therefore, these thousands of changes had to have happened in only 4,000 years! This is, of course, simply a way of generating ridicule—the point at issue is whether the uniformitarian interpretation of the rock record demonstrating these alleged climate changes is correct. If it is, then there was no great catastrophe 4,000 or so years ago. If it is not, then there are no 'thousands' of climate changes to squeeze into the time period since the Flood. So either way, this is a completely phony problem based once again on 'begging the question'.

This issue of interpreting the evidence in the geological record is the crux of the controversy, but Plimer blithely calls facts what are only interpretations based on his uniformitarian beliefs (faith). To give an example of the way in which things can be interpreted differently, one has only to look at the evidence of so-called 'evaporites'. These have in the past been alleged to be huge deposits of, for example, salt beds formed by gradual accumulation as seawaters evaporated within isolated basins. However, consideration of such things as the incredible purity of the deposits, etc. has led some geologists to conclude that they are the result of rapid precipitation from hot brines released catastrophically from deep within the crust (today's hot springs on the ocean floor being a puny analogy). That is, we have the same facts, but a totally different understanding of the processes (including climate changes, etc.) associated with them.

Another relevant example (not in Plimer's book) of such misinterpretation can be seen with respect to the Coconino sandstone in the Grand Canyon area. We are told by uniformitarian geologists like Plimer that these were desert sands, but more detailed work and careful investigations have since shown that they had to have been deposited under water. See Plimer's comments on desert sands on p. 76, then see 'Startling evidence for Noah's Flood!' *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine, vol. 15 no. 1, 1993, pp. 46-50.

Many of the comments on pages 76 and 77 repeatedly beg the question of whether the interpretations are correct. Why could not folding of rock strata have taken place quickly while sediment layers were still soft and plastic before cementation and hardening took place? Some creationist geologists have put forward evidence from such intensely folded rocks to argue that the rock fabric and microstructures in the layers at the point of folding show that folding did not take place after the rock had hardened (lithified). (Ref: *The Young Earth* by Dr John Morris, and his paper with Dr Steve Austin presented at the First International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, 1986.) Furthermore, the reader is referred to Dr Snelling's work on regional metamorphism to show that the whole idea that sedimentary rocks deposited at the earth's surface had to then be pushed down to great depths to there be subjected to elevated temperatures and pressures for millions of years 'ain't necessarily so' (see *Creation Ex Nihilo* Technical Journal, vol. 8, part 1, 1994, pp. 51-77 and paper in the Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, July 1994).

Creationists have pointed out that there is strong evidence in some modern glacial lakes that more than one varve may form in a season. What about the varved rocks such as the Green River beds? The pyroclastic flows at Mount St Helens showed that, to the surprise of traditional geological thinking, such thin laminated couplets can form, and have formed, by rapid (and catastrophic) sedimentary processes. In addition, French sedimentologist Guy Berthault, as documented in several original research papers in our *Creation Ex Nihilo* Technical Journal, and as published by the French Academy of Sciences, has shown that such varve-like layers form by themselves simply by the settling process of sediments of mixed grain sizes deposited in a continually flowing water (or even air) current. To clinch the matter, Berthault took existing laminated rock, broke it up into its grains again, and then put it into his experimental water column, and all the 'varves' reformed just as in the original rock.

P. 78

Plimer misleads (or else is not familiar with the creationist literature he attacks) by stating that creationists believe that glaciation occurred during the Flood. We refer the reader to the monograph by meteorologist Michael Oard (M.Sc.) showing the best current creationist model of an ice age after the Flood. (See *An Ice Age Caused by the Genesis Flood*, by Michael J. Oard, ICR, 1990.)

The calculations about the speed of ice moving are just a ridiculous caricature; a misrepresentation of one's opponent's position is inexcusable. Imagine the language Plimer would use if creationists had ever done a misrepresentation like this.

Once again, he misrepresents creationists by saying that they require that 'all fossils' derive from the Flood. We know of no creationist who promotes this notion.

He also misrepresents by saying that creationists are 'unaware that scientists do not argue about whether evolution occurred or not'. If he genuinely means 'scientists' per se, then he knows that creationist scientists are arguing with evolutionist scientists about whether evolution happened. If he means (as he usually does) that the word 'scientists' is synonymous with belief in evolution, then he knows that by definition, believers in evolution do not argue about whether evolution occurred or whether it did not!

Plimer quotes a Rev. Jesse Colson, of whom we have never heard, as allegedly making some bizarre statements we would not agree with in any way. Plimer says that creationists want this 'taught to children'. This is sheer propaganda designed to anger the unsuspecting, but not a true representation of reality.

P. 79

It is simply not true to say that floating organisms such as the ammonites and nautiloids 'would not die in a flood'. A global flood would involve sediments churning around, some of them toxic; also turbidity currents (undersea avalanches acknowledged by all competent geologists as having occurred in present-day times). Dead or dying ammonites and nautiloids could easily be buried by the millions in such an event. Plimer fails to tell his readers of the nautiloids buried in the Redwall Limestone of the Grand Canyon showing a current orientation, which destroys his claim that floating organisms would not be buried by current-deposited sediment. (Ref: *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe*, edited by Dr Steve Austin, ICR, 1994.)

Leading creationist palaeontologist Dr Kurt Wise agrees that there is an order to the fossil record, but demonstrates that it is not an order which confirms the predictions of evolution. It would be of interest for creationists to have a fully refined model explaining every detail of the sequence (ecological, etc.)—some of it, of course, is due to the fact that the uppermost parts of the record would have been the result of post-Flood catastrophism. (Such a model is actively being worked on at the present.) However, creationists do not need to have this in order to show that there is no evolutionary sequence in the fossil record. Of 100 classes of organisms studied by Wise, the order of first appearance did not fit the predictions of evolution (derived independently of the fossil record, by cladistic analysis of shared and derived characters) in 95% of cases.

Notice how Plimer weaves in the beliefs of 'some creationists' (anonymous) that 'fossils are tools of the devil'. He should know that this has nothing to do with the creation science position which he is attempting to undermine. It is an old trick of those attempting to discredit their opponents. Would it be conscionable if we, for example, were to find hundreds of people (which undoubtedly there are) who believe in both evolution and astrology, and then suggest by innuendo that mainstream evolution-science takes heed of star-signs?

Furthermore, to our knowledge no creationist has ever indicated that all fish died in the Great Flood. This misrepresentation allows Plimer to later (p. 111) make the caricature of Noah having aquariums on the Ark. The Bible implies that marine life did not have to be sent on board the Ark for obvious reasons (water was already their 'home'). Many fish would have died and been buried, for example, in the turbidity currents already mentioned, but by no means all.

P. 80

Plimer again presents an idea that seems illogical—if the rocks in which the craters are recorded formed during the Flood, then why should there have been a succession of impacts continuously for 4,000 years? Would it not rather suggest that the Flood itself was a time of great catastrophic upheaval and that meteorite impacts may have had something to do with the unleashing of the Flood event?

Plimer repeats the nonsense that creationists attempt to show that ‘all science is wrong’. Notice how he refers to the Paluxy River tracks (which we abandoned use of—and said so in our own literature—many years ago after fresh evidence came in demonstrating the need for caution) by saying ‘a large body of creationists claim’. A casual reader might think it was large mainstream creationist organizations. A ‘large body’ could be only a hundred people out of the millions who believe in creation. Then of course, it is absolute twaddle to suggest that we say that ‘the complete fossil record’ is wrong or that ‘palaeontology’ is wrong. This is good propaganda, but he should know it is not correct. We do claim that certain interpretations of the fossil record and palaeontological data are open to challenge, particularly the time-spans associated with them, but not that the record itself is ‘wrong’, which is semantic nonsense—facts just exist, they are neither right nor wrong in themselves.

Incidentally, he even has the Paluxy River tracks story wrong. The creationists (like us) who have agreed that one should not claim that the tracks are human do NOT agree that they are erosion marks, and neither do competent evolutionists who have viewed them. They were regarded by many anti-creationists as erosion marks, carvings, etc., when their obviously human-like appearance was an apparent embarrassment to evolutionists. Now that it has been pointed out that some of them had dinosaurian characteristics, especially on further erosion, evolutionists willingly concede that they were footprints (albeit dinosaur footprints) all along!

P. 81

Notice that here Plimer indicates some of the dinosaurian characteristics of these footprints, when it suits his purposes to make a caricature of creationist opinion. However, how can they then be erosion marks as he stated earlier on p. 80? Furthermore, he conveniently neglects to tell his readers that one of the reasons evolutionists felt forced to use the ‘erosion marks’ and ‘carvings’ allegations was that the tracks did indeed look so human-like that there was even an evolutionist professor of geology from Wheaton College recorded on 16mm film (*Footprints in Stone, Films for Christ—now withdrawn*) as saying that they would be accepted as obviously human, had they not been in the wrong part of the geological column. However, this is all ignored by Plimer in his attempt to make people think that creationist scientists even believed that some which they knew had a claw, instep on the wrong side, etc., were possibly human!

The next paragraph on p. 81 ignores the fact that (as he would well know, since he claims to be familiar with creationist literature) a 9-kilometre-deep Flood has never been postulated. Nor has it ever been postulated that the Paluxy tracks were the result of walking on the sea floor during the Flood! Plimer frequently sets up false representations of his opponents’ position in order to discredit them. Fair scientific comment and critique are appropriate; deceptive tactics are not. In our literature we emphasize that the Andes, Rockies, Alps, Himalayas, etc., are composed of Flood-deposited strata and were pushed up to their present heights by earth movements at or after the close of the Flood.

His comments on coal seem incredibly weak when one realizes that geologist Dr Steve Austin successfully defended at the prestigious Penn State University his Ph.D. thesis on coal formation from floating log mats in a marine setting, consistent with the creationist perspective. Plimer also implies that Carl Wieland wrote that the existence of pine tree logs in coal necessarily means that coal formed rapidly. In fact, after stating that the evidence points to rapid, water-borne formation of beds of plant debris that were subsequently converted to coal (which he argues further in subsequent passages), Wieland (in the reference as given by Plimer) writes: ‘containing large numbers of logs of pine trees, of types which today don’t grow in swamps.’

That comment is a fact, pure and simple. Plimer and other evolutionists have to resort to the secondary, ad hoc assumption that these pine trees (in all other respects like the same types today—King Billy pine,

celery-top pine, etc.) did grow in swamps in the past. Presumably to make this more credible, he refers to the trees existing 'hundreds of millions of years ago' (p. 82), but in fact he should know that the Yallourn coals referred to are regarded by evolutionists as Tertiary (mainly Miocene), which is supposedly less than 25 million years old in evolutionary terms.

P. 82

Notice how he is unable to give any scientific arguments against the seam-splitting as evidence denying the slow, swamp theory of coal formation (pointed out repeatedly by creationists) but resorts to a smokescreen of abusive rhetoric.

He sidesteps the evidence of polystrate trees. The issue is not that fossil trees 'are found at a number of different sediment levels', but that by definition they are penetrating through multiple layers. These layers are usually said to have formed, according to conventional explanation, over extended time periods, sometimes eons apart. His paragraph on polystrate trees is a classic example of waffling to distract the reader. It is most encouraging to creationists to know that Plimer, an evolutionist professor of geology, has no answer to the polystrate tree argument except to say that 'such objects are of little interest to science'!

However, to say that creationists have invented the data of polystrate trees is not true. Plimer would know that these are a common occurrence. Indeed, one such occurrence was brought to our attention when one of us was in the field with a professor of coal geology (who is personally known to Plimer), and another example is featured in the internationally distributed textbook on coal geology written by the same professor. One wonders what the reader thinks, in any case, about this paragraph because Plimer actually says that they exist, and then later says that creationists 'have invented both the data and the terminology'!

In response to the next paragraph, we refer the reader to the video *Coal, Catastrophe and Floating Forests*, available from CSF, for a clear visual documentation, using field and laboratory evidence, showing that these stigmarian roots could not have grown in place. To say that 'no marine fossils are found in coal' is categorically incorrect. (For example, marine fossils are found in the partings in the Kentucky No. 12 seam of Western Kentucky.) He says 'no marine coals have ever been documented'—the reader is referred to Dr Austin's Ph.D. thesis concerning the marine origin of an important coal bed.

In the next section, Plimer fails to tell the reader that he accused our Dr Andrew Snelling, in a geological publication (*The Australian Geologist*, no. 61, December 1986), of having published about the discovery of gold chains and iron anchors in Newcastle coal seams. The reason he failed to repeat that accusation here (even though he repeats a general claim about gold chains and iron anchors) is clear, since he fabricated this totally, as shown by Snelling's subsequent reply and public challenge to Plimer to prove his accusation, to which Plimer failed to respond. The same Plimer article in *The Australian Geologist* also featured other untrue claims.

P. 83

Plimer's attacks on creationist knowledge of sedimentation are surreal in light of the existence of creationists with the same level of qualification in geology as himself, namely, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)—what he calls 'the research training degree' (p. 14). Concerning his innuendo that creationists are ignorant of the dynamics of sedimentation—the scientist who started the modern creationist revolution, Dr Henry Morris, wrote a widely used university textbook on hydraulics and hydrology—the action of moving water, etc.

Plimer dogmatically insists that millions of years are necessary to change vegetable matter to coal. Yet the piece of creationist literature he refers to in his Bibliography (p. 301) contains a reference to the formation of coal from vegetable matter in 28 days without any added pressure, an experiment done by an orthodox laboratory (see Snelling, A. and Mackay, J. 'Coal, volcanism and Noah's Flood', *Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 1, 1984, pp. 11-29; in which reference 21 is to Hayatsu, R., McBeth, R.L., Scott, R.G., Botto, R.E., and Winans, R.E., 1984. 'Artificial coalification study: preparation and characterization of synthetic macerals'; which appeared in *Organic Geochemistry*, vol. 6, 1984, pp. 463-471). And this has nothing to do with the

‘synthetic coal’ he refers to resulting from changing one type of coal to another. There is no evidence that the coal generated by the Argonne National Laboratory experiment is in any way ‘significantly chemically different from natural coal’.

PP. 83-84

Plimer talks about salt deposits being an ‘impossible nightmare for which there are no suitable creationist explanations’. Either he has not read the creationist literature which he is attacking (which references a completely different model of salt deposit formation—rapid precipitation from hot brines released catastrophically from deep within the earth’s crust, proposed even by non-creationists—see for example *The Genesis Flood*; Williams, Emmett L., 1989, ‘Origins of Bedded Salts Deposits (Nutting)’ *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, vol. 26, June 1989, pp. 15-16; Dietz, Robert S., 1988, ‘Mediterranean theory may be all wet’, *Geotimes*, vol. 33, no. 5, p. 4) or else he is trying to mislead the reader with a misrepresentation of creationist belief. The fact of the matter is that it is totally possible to explain the formation of salt deposits and so-called evaporite beds within the Flood model, especially since today’s hot springs do form minor salt deposits, as admitted by Plimer.

P. 85

Plimer says that there is no discussion in science about the Flood, but, of course, by his definition, no scientist who believes in the Flood could possibly qualify as such, no matter what his degrees. And again, we do not ‘deny’ stratigraphy, palaeontology or the fossil record. Such a claim is complete nonsense, as is his claim that ‘all stratigraphy and palaeontology would not exist without evolution ...’. Both of these sciences predate Darwin’s book. Furthermore, when Plimer says that “Flood” geology does not appear in the scientific literature’, he would presumably know that we never pretend that it appears in the orthodox (evolution-dominated) literature. Again, any attempt here, by us in defence, to refer to Flood-geological scientific papers in creationist-refereed journals, has been defined out of existence by Plimer as non-science to begin with! Plimer further misleads in two ways—firstly by saying that ‘all geologists’ are opposed to Flood-geology (when his own book concedes on p. 141 that Flood-geologist Snelling has major geological qualifications), and secondly by implying that the fact that most scientific journals deny access for Flood geology discussions is somehow withheld by creationists from lay audiences! The same logic is used in regard to the biological sciences. Elsewhere (p. 250) he points out that we do tell people that access is denied to us, yet Plimer then says that this is not the case, that is we are not denied access! This despite the fact that he says ‘There is no literature in the biological sciences on creation’!

PP. 86-87

Apart from a rhetorical link, Plimer fails to demonstrate why ‘if continental drift is accepted then all of evolution, palaeontology and age dating must be also accepted’. A recent paper released by six Ph.D. scientists (four with their Ph.D.s in earth science) on catastrophic plate tectonics clearly refutes that contention. (See ‘Catastrophic plate tectonics: a global flood model of earth history’, delivered at the Third International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, July 1994.)

Further on the same page, Plimer states that we make a particular statement ‘repeated ad nauseam’. Creationists may have made the statement on rare occasions that continental drift is believed to have commenced in association with the Flood, but we cannot recall a single instance of having stated once, let alone repeated ad nauseam, that it could not have taken place beforehand. Where on earth does he get such ideas? Another such straw-man is the claim that creationists would have to cram ‘all the geological processes over at least the last 4500 million years ... into the 4000-year post-“Great Flood” period’. This is insulting the reader’s intelligence, as even Plimer should know that we maintain most (but by no means all) of the fossils, and the strata containing them, were deposited during the Flood.

Interested readers are referred to the quality creationist literature on catastrophic plate tectonics, including computerized simulations of the crustal and mantle mechanisms, to overcome the ridiculous caricatures by Plimer of wobbling desks, bow-waves, etc. (See the earlier-mentioned article, plus Baumgardner, J., ‘3-D

finite elementary simulation of the global tectonic changes accompanying Noah's Flood', Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, 1990.)

PP. 87-88

While we do not pretend that all the problems of heat loss from plutonic rocks etc. have been solved, clearly the presence of copious amounts of water in the crust would be a significant factor. One is reminded of other dogmatic statements of anti-creationists in the past which have been shown by subsequent research to be non-tenable. See, for example, the earlier discussion of regional metamorphism, which is relevant again here with Plimer's claims that minerals in ancient rocks 'formed at high pressures and high temperatures', such as in the Yilgarn and Pilbara Blocks of Western Australia.

PP. 88-89

Here Plimer enters the field of biblical scholarship, in which he is unqualified. Not surprisingly, he takes the standard higher-critical line that the Bible story of the Flood was borrowed from the Mesopotamians, rather than the latter being a reflection of the true original preserved in Genesis. Such higher-critical views of Genesis have long ago been repudiated and demolished by conservative evangelical scholars. In passing, it is surprising that this book of Plimer's, which says that it doesn't matter whether Abraham was historical or legendary, is being promoted by some Christians and Christian leaders.

P. 90

On what basis does Plimer claim that gopher wood is 'probably cypress'? Three pages later he says, 'whatever gopher is, it can not be reconciled with any known wood or botanical classification.' He is confused!

P. 91

Re the argument of doves becoming extinct because one did not return to the Ark—perhaps Plimer hopes the reader will not think of the obvious, that its partner was able to subsequently join it. Besides, Genesis 7:3 says that seven of every kind of bird of the air went on board the Ark, so there were plenty of other candidates for the dove to mate with. Plimer obviously hasn't read Genesis properly, and/or hopes the reader is sufficiently ignorant of Genesis not to see this.

Regarding the olive branch matter—why could not a broken piece of olive branch have been buried just a few inches from the recently exposed surface (or indeed have been floating for the year of the Flood) and subsequently sprouted by asexual regeneration, which olive branches apparently do? This was explained in detail by Dr Henry Morris in the creationist classic *The Genesis Flood*. Hence Plimer is either unfamiliar with the literature he attacks, or is misleading the reader.

P. 95

Another 'straw-man'—creationists have never stated that the Egyptian civilization commenced before the Flood. Since the beginnings of Egyptian civilization are traditionally dated as a little prior to the 'tight' Flood date implied by biblical chronology, it raises the question as to whether the traditional Egyptian dating is correct (which dating has been challenged even by non-creationists for good reason). Or it might confirm the belief of some creationist scholars and conservative theologians that at least some of the Genesis chronologies were not strict father-son chronologies (thereby allowing for a longer time span). Hence, as Plimer himself indicates, creationists believe not in a world exactly 6,000 years old (unlike his earlier comments) but a range of ages—all in the thousands. Thus there is no contradiction with the Egyptian civilization beginning after the Flood (see for example 'From the Flood to the Exodus: Egypt's earliest settlers', *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, 9(1), 1995, pp. 45-68).

PP. 95-97

Finally one can agree on something with the author—there isn't much chance that a wooden boat (the 'reed' explanation comes from Plimer's imagination) would last. If it has lasted, that would only be as a result of a very unusual confluence of circumstances. Some Christians have been searching for the Ark on the basis of apparent eyewitness testimony from various people claiming to have seen its remnants on Mount Ararat. Creationists, even those searching for it on Mount Ararat, are fully aware that the Bible talks about the mountains of Ararat. The focus of many of the searches has been on Mount Ararat because of the associated folklore and alleged sightings. It should be noted that our organization has never funded any expedition to find the Ark. The area is, of course, large, but much of the 'geographic nightmare' that Plimer lists depends upon his own assumption that the Babylonian legend and the Koran, etc. are equally to be considered as giving us alternative sites for the Ark.

P. 97

Plimer makes a big point of saying that 'the presence of an ark is a prerequisite of creationism' and that 'at all costs' there must be proof or some evidence of its existence. This is like saying that the actual finding of the Cross of the Crucifixion is a prerequisite in order to demonstrate that Christ was really crucified. It is based on faulty logic.

P. 98

Plimer asks us to consider that if there was such a huge structure once in the area, there would be stories in the local folklore. It is precisely such stories (whether correct or not) which have stimulated the search in the Mount Ararat region, as opposed to elsewhere in the general region named in the Bible.

P. 99

Plimer's logic is itself 'a little shaky'. Why could not the lava on this mountain have erupted underwater after the sedimentary rock it now overlies was formed, with the Ark subsequently beaching on this lava? The Ark (if it landed on that particular mountain, which we do not insist) may or may not have been covered by subsequent lava flows, depending on its location relative to any such flows.

Plimer's misrepresentation, once again, of the issues in the latter part of p. 99 bears comment—what 'crystalline firmament' is alleged by creationists to be over the earth? And what a caricature of the facts to suggest that creation scientists would have expected there to be 'waters above the Earth' (actually Genesis describes waters above the firmament, but never mind) which the moonshots had to penetrate! If the waters above the firmament (Hebrew: 'expanse') in Genesis were a vapour canopy, for example, which formed the source of some of the Flood waters, then they would clearly not be there anymore.

P. 100

Plimer states that a particular site on Mount Ararat is our 'favoured site'. Such misrepresentation is hard to understand. We have sold literature by Dr John Morris and ICR which has described looking for the Ark on Ararat, listed the alleged eyewitness accounts, etc. However, we have never stated that any site, whether on the mountain or off it, contains the remnants of the Ark, nor have John Morris or ICR.

P. 100-101

Thanks to CSF's research, Plimer has all the data at his fingertips for the Akyayla site (at this point he doesn't tell his readership that CSF debunked this site) and so he should know that it is not a syncline. He contradicts himself here by describing this site as both 'a large mass flow deposit' and 11 lines later 'a syncline'. He's been to the site and so should be able to tell the difference (or else it really doesn't matter to him to describe it accurately, so long as it can be useful to him to undermine creationism).

P. 101

He repeats his nonsense about Mount Everest again, which, of course, creates a phony problem. If all the earth was flattened out, there is enough water in the oceans to cover the world to a depth of three kilometres, but not to the height of Mount Everest (8.85 kilometres high), as Plimer assumes. Of course, rather than acknowledge that we don't say that, he makes it look as if we have to believe that 'Mt Everest has been unobtrusively rising at the rate of more than two metres per year continuously for the last 4000 years'. The most common creationist models involve significant post-Flood catastrophism as tectonic adjustments took place at the close of, and immediately after, the Flood. There is no reason in the creation model why the Himalayas could not have been upthrust long before any 'ancient Indian cultures' occupied this area.

The nonsense about the air being 'unbreathable as it would have been 99.9 per cent water vapour' ignores the fact that the Bible makes it clear that most of the water came from below the ground. It is not a question of either or but both and as far as the text is concerned.

P. 102

Plimer provides no evidence to support his assertion that a certain porosity of the earth's crust was required to supply the Flood water, except of course his highly inflated figure for the volume of water required. This would appear to be nonsense. The Bible says the fountains of the great deep were 'broken up' (Genesis 7:11), and so hot water came out from inside the earth in the same way it does in today's hot springs and volcanic eruptions. Since Plimer has no way of knowing how deep down this water would have been (neither does anyone else), how can he judge what temperature the water would have been?

In a classic example of his approach, he brings up a belief of 'some creationists' concerning all the Flood waters deriving from the impact of a comet! We have never heard of this belief being put forward by any significant creationist organization. Yet, of course, his main targets in this campaign are smeared by means of an obvious absurdity.

P. 103

Plimer maintains that the Ark 'carried all species which exist on Earth today'. He should know that the overwhelming majority of species alive on earth are marine and that the Ark would not have had to carry them. Furthermore, he should know that creationists do accept breakup of ancestral populations under selection pressure (by mechanisms still observed today), such as an ancestral dog-kind into wolves, coyotes, dogs, dingoes, etc. (The Bible talks of kinds, not species.) This would dramatically reduce the number of land animals that the Ark had to carry. However, in the past Plimer has then ridiculed this as implying 'evolution rates' much faster than evolution requires. He ignores the fact that creationists, by postulating this, do not postulate evolutionary change in the sense required to turn molecules into man, since there is no addition of any information, but rather it is within the limits of the existing genetic information. To say that small changes which some call 'microevolution' (and which are in the opposite direction, thinning genetic information, rather than adding it), cannot be talked about 'without accepting macroevolution' is arrant nonsense. 'Microevolution' utilizes existing genetic information; 'macroevolution' would require the addition of vast amounts of new genetic information, for which there is no mechanism.

Plimer's desire to ridicule ignores the fact that the Bible nowhere states that Noah was restricted to using his own family as labourers. Noah may have been a wealthy man with the capacity to hire labourers. And, of course, since the building of the Ark was on the basis of divine instruction, and since the 'some warning' Plimer offhandedly refers to allowed a very long period of time, it certainly would have been a great achievement, but not the absurd impossibility he makes it out to be.

Table of Contents

[Introduction-p.52](#)

[PP. 54-100](#)

[PP. 101-149](#)

[PP. 150-200](#)

[PP. 200-249](#)

[PP. 250-Conclusion](#)

P. 105

An example of a common circularity of reasoning in Plimer's arguments is where he states 'it is fairly safe to assume that Noah had never seen a kangaroo'. This could only be so on the basis of first assuming that the distribution of kangaroos in Noah's day was the same as it is today, and the creationist/Flood geology model is wrong. If the model is right (and, of course, the whole context of this discussion of Plimer's is on the assumption that there was a global Flood of Noah), then Plimer has no way of knowing what the distribution of creatures was before the Flood, and Noah may have had kangaroos grazing within a few metres of where he was building the Ark.

P. 106

Plimer says that no miracles in relation to the Ark are recorded in the Bible, but this is not actually true. The very fact that God commanded the animals to come on board and brought them to the Ark is miraculous in itself. Readers are referred to the classic *The Genesis Flood* for a discussion of some of the issues raised by Plimer.

P. 107

How does Plimer know that Noah was merely a 'simple farmer'? And saying that boat building skills 'did not appear until the nineteenth century' implies that Plimer knows exactly what skills were used to construct the Ark and that the civilization of Noah's time could not have had these. This seems to be begging the question, once again. Yet Genesis 4 records Noah's forebears as building cities and making metal tools and musical instruments—hardly a 'primitive' society, but a civilization requiring metal mines and smelters.

His story about asking the Sydney boat builders, Halvorsen's, to estimate how long it would take is interesting, in that he doesn't say how many years they told him. We would be interested to find out their estimate. However, some very simple mathematics can show that over the course of 100+ years, when you consider that whole towns were constructed last century in Australia by small numbers of people in a matter of a few years, a few dozen workers could have achieved marvels. Plimer is quite misleading when he says that these particular difficulties are waived with 'specially created miracles'. No creationist we know of has ever used the miraculous to explain what is actually not that difficult — many people taking many decades to build a huge structure.

[Since the above was written, one of our staff rang the firm of Halvorsen's, the big well-known Sydney boatbuilder which would appear to be the only firm to which Plimer could be referring. At least that is what any informed Sydney reader would assume, since Halvorsen is synonymous with boatbuilding in Sydney. Interestingly, this firm (which began as Lars Halvorsen Sons) was commenced by Lars Halvorsen, a committed Christian who has since died. He had five sons involved in the business, four still alive, in their seventies. Of these, the one who knows everything about building wooden boats from scratch is Magnus Halvorsen, whose son Anders is a keen Christian and creation believer. When rung, Magnus knew nothing of the Plimer enquiry. Anders had never heard of Plimer's alleged enquiry, and doubted very strongly that anyone at the firm would ever have given an answer which could lead to Plimer's implied conclusion. Trevor Gowland (the staff member at Halvorsen's we rang first, and to whom we showed the page of Plimer's book alleging these matters) also claimed that they had never heard of Plimer or his alleged 'enquiry'.]

P. 108

We agree that Noah could not caulk his craft with a substance which had not yet formed, but the Hebrew wording does not claim the Ark was covered with 'bitumen', as Plimer does on p. 90. There are alternatives for waterproofing such a structure. See 'The pitch for Noah's Ark', by T.B. Walker, B.E., Ph.D., *Creation Ex Nihilo*, 7(1), 1984, p. 20—pitch was made in Europe for centuries by processing tree resin with charcoal.

Plimer's ridicule about pumps, etc. implies that he knows the exact characteristics of gopher wood (which he has already said is not now known on earth), and what engineering techniques were used by Noah under the divine instructions. Interestingly, his comments that the Ark's structure would be highly

unseaworthy could almost be amusing if they were not so contrary to the facts. See, for example, the highly technical paper by the Korea Association of Creation Research showing the remarkable seaworthiness of just such a structure having the precise dimensions of the Ark given in the Bible. (Reproduced in our *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, **8**(1), 1994, pp. 26-36; the authors are all on the staff of the Korea Institute of Ships and Ocean Engineering, Taejon, Korea.)

Regarding *Ultrasaurus* and mating on the Ark—has Plimer considered that God (being in control of which pair went on board the Ark, according to the information given in the Bible) could have ensured that, for at least this kind, only still-immature (and therefore also small) representatives were chosen? Besides, where do creationists postulate ‘kilometre-high waves’? Plimer is engaging in pure fantasy to ensure the straw-man of his own inventing is as ridiculous as possible. This is not rational discussion.

P. 109

Neither our organization nor any other reputable one we know of has tried to define a biblical kind as fitting exactly into one of the Linnaean categories. Nor would an unvarying correspondence between a kind and a Linnaean category be likely on theoretical grounds. (See ‘Variation, information and the created kinds’, *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, **5**(1), 1991, pp. 42-47.) In any case, ‘about 30 million modern and extinct species of organisms’ is a grossly inflated estimate that is convenient for ridicule, but nothing more, particularly as the vast majority of organisms are/were marine and could have survived outside the Ark (only land-dwelling, air-breathing creatures are specifically mentioned in the Bible as going on board).

P. 110

Again, Plimer assumes that koalas came to the Ark ‘from Australia’, which we have already shown (when discussing kangaroos) is completely inappropriate within a creationist model. The pre-Flood geography was, by definition, radically different from what we have today.

Concerning Australian and other animal fossils being found where the animals went to after the Flood, all creationist geologists we know of would regard the kangaroo fossil deposits in Australia, for example, as post-Flood.

Plimer claims to be familiar with the Bible, but if he were he would know that discussions of what Noah knew or didn’t know in advance are quite irrelevant, since God not only directed the construction of the vessel, but also directed the animals to come on board. Any idea of Noah having to coax them is thus also misrepresentative.

If Plimer reads creationist literature, as he claims, then he is ignoring the answers to such problems as eucalyptus leaves for koalas. (See *The Answers Book*, pp. 204-207, ‘The koala and other specialized types’. Also the recent *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* item on ‘Cuddly Cold-Cures Counter Critics’, vol. 8, no. 2, 1994, p. 126.)

P. 111

It is clear from the biblical text that only the land animals, which would not survive a flood, were required to go on board, so the whole idea of Noah having to construct aquaria and all that this entails is a foolish parody.

Plimer states that ‘all the salt from rock salt deposits would have to be dissolved back’. As early as 1961, creationist geologists pointed out that many of the rock-salt deposits were not actually evaporated out of sea-water but were precipitated from brines ejected from the crust. This is therefore postulated by creationists to have occurred during the catastrophic upheavals associated with the Flood. For Plimer to imply that the constituents of virtually the total volume of sedimentary rock on the planet must have been suspended in the turbulent ocean waters is sheer nonsense. Has he not heard of recycling of sediments? And creationists always speak of the pre-Flood landmass with existing sedimentary rocks, etc. which were then progressively and selectively eroded and reworked during the Flood.

The above have been only a few brief rebuttals of some of Plimer's alleged 'impossibilities', which are absurd caricatures once it is known what creationist geologists have really said about the Flood.

When Dr Snelling's new book on geology and the Flood appears in due course, we think it will be seen that a positive description of the Flood model is an excellent antidote to Plimer's caricatures, misrepresentations and straw-men. Many of the 'problems' will be seen to vanish as a consequence of understanding what it is that creationist geologists are really saying. Genuine scientific problems that remain may legitimately be viewed as challenges for further research and enquiry.

P. 113

Plimer fudges the issues when he indicates that the gene pool of a pair of organisms is not large enough to give us the genetic diversity we have nowadays. (Note how here he negates, in effect, what he previously used to attack—that is, he implicitly concedes that creationism would not have the problem of space on the Ark if there is the speciation we postulate after the Flood.) For a start, he seems to be referring to organisms nowadays. Today's organisms are the result (in the creation/Flood model) of that diversification, with daughter populations carrying less information. The amount of diversity carried in today's populations is scarcely a full indication of what the parent populations could have carried. And it has yet to be demonstrated that if there was full heterozygosity at every locus, there could not have been sufficient information in the dog kind, for instance, to give rise to dingoes, wolves, coyotes, etc. And to call such speciation 'evolution' further muddies the waters, since evolution is supposed to be a process with an overall directional increase of information.

Hence the breaking up of high-information gene pools into lesser-information sub-sets, while possible to fit into an evolution model, can scarcely be called 'evolution' in the sense of being the sort of change capable of ultimately turning a protozoan into a person. One should not misrepresent one's opponent's position—no reputable creationist would claim that representatives of modern kinds (e.g. a puma or a house-cat) were just like the original 'feline kind'. It is also yet to be demonstrated (allowing the possibility of some non-functional addition to the gene pool of such things as, for example, extra diversity in MHC alleles through mutation) that it was not possible to have the genetic diversity we see nowadays from Noah's family. Plimer is claiming more knowledge of the human genome than those who are still trying to map it.

P. 114-118

Strangely, despite being those involved in the forefront of creationism for decades, we have never heard of the allegedly invented 'supergenes' Plimer refers to.

The bottom line is that if the facts of geology fit a broad Flood model, and the Bible informs us that it was a natural/supernatural event, it is surely inappropriate to 'cry foul' (based upon a materialist definition of science) when one suggests some care by God in not only the choices of animals involved (as the Bible makes clear) but also in the idea that the animals' metabolic processes were regulated (cf. hibernation). Furthermore, we know of no mainstream creationist organization which has suggested that eggs were carried on board the Ark, but there is nothing to prevent the suggestion that God chose younger/smaller rather than older/larger organisms for some kinds.

Also, there is no mention in the Bible of Noah cultivating plants from seeds on board, nor do creationists alter the literal biblical story to suit themselves, as Plimer supposes. A tremendous example of the difference between his approach and reality is the fact that he continually refers to problems caused by millions of organisms on board the Ark, when creationist writers have clearly shown that the numbers are in the thousands and that there would be plenty of room. But then, since the vast majority of creatures are marine anyway, and Plimer has the Ark loaded with marine creatures contrary to the biblical record, it's easy to keep the caricature alive as he does ad nauseam for numerous pages of sheer, contrived waffle. Besides, his biblical reference is incorrect, yet again—Genesis 4:7,23 (p. 115) says nothing about the creatures to go on board the Ark! Plimer's barrage of misrepresentations of the Bible and creationists is itself an affront to reason.

P. 119

Even though the book *The Genesis Flood* is superseded in some aspects because of its 1961 publication date, anyone reading Plimer's book should read this classic work to see just how absurd some of the Plimer contentions are. And how seriously they misrepresent the biblical picture.

P. 120

Plimer says that if God directed the migration of the animals then by definition 'creation "science" is not science'. So regardless of whether it happened or didn't, whether it is true or not, Plimer has just defined science by locking it into materialistic presuppositions rather than seeing whether the facts of the real world match a given explanatory model, regardless of whether there are some supernatural elements to that explanation. It would be like assessing the eye-witness accounts of the Resurrection by saying that since natural processes do not allow dead men to do other than stay dead, all of the evidence has to be discarded if it favours resurrection. Of course, this is precisely how skeptics of the Resurrection deny it occurred.

P. 125

Concerning the diseases in humans—refer to the *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* article on this subject to show how exaggerated these concerns appear to be. (*Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, vol. 8, part 1, 1994, pp. 16-18.) See also vol. 8, part 2, 1994, pp. 153-154 re kuru on the Ark—Plimer is simply wrong when he says that kuru is only transmitted by eating the brains. It can be transmitted by handling infected corpses, and this was probably the most common method of transmission. Furthermore, it is the result of a prion and not a virus. It appears that this is an abnormal protein (at any rate it certainly has no DNA or RNA), and such prions could easily have arisen due to mutation damaging those genes coding for the normal proteins. In fact, one such mutational defect is almost certainly responsible for the prion causing the (similar to kuru) brain degenerative disease called Creutzfeldt-Jakob. Plimer has a great laugh about the kuru issue, but he has it all wrong. None of the prion diseases had to be carried through the Flood on the Ark. Plimer attacks various creationists for writing out of their field, yet this is exactly what he does here, making blunders in the process.

P. 132

It certainly does not take millions of years for sediments to consolidate into rocks and then to weather to soil so plants can grow —there would have been an enormous amount of rapidly weathered 'soil' as a result of the erosive properties of the Flood—some (depending upon the cementing agents involved) cementing into rock and others ready for plants to grow. When Surtsey Island was newly formed out of the ocean as a result of a volcanic eruption a few decades ago, it did not take long for plants to begin to grow.

Concerning the raven—is it not feasible that the first raven didn't return because, being an eater of carrion, it was quite happily surviving outside the Ark, only to be joined subsequently by its mate? Plimer tries to pit the release of a raven and a dove against each other —in fact, they are logically complementary aspects of the same account. The raven, being a flesh-eater, doesn't return, being able to survive on floating carcasses. The dove can't, so it has to return. Also, as noted already, seven of each kind of bird were on the Ark.

P. 133

Concerning the whole issue of animals after the Flood ending up in places which 'just happen to be' where their fossil ancestors are found—in every one of the cases that we know of (e.g. kangaroo fossils in Australia) creationists have always claimed that these were post-Flood fossil deposits. Plimer creates problems 'ex nihilo' by misrepresenting the creationist position.

As another example of misunderstanding/misrepresentation, he claims that 'all plants and seeds were buried to produce fossils' — but why should this be so? Undoubtedly, large numbers of plants could survive

in floating mats of tangled vegetation, in the floating carcasses of herbivores, floating by themselves, or buried close to the surface in unconsolidated sediment, ready to sprout. Interestingly, he has already conceded on p. 132 that there has been 56 days available time for many plants to sprout. The interested reader is also referred to the chapter in CSF's *The Answers Book* (pp. 197-207) on 'How did various animals get from the Ark to isolated places such as Australia?' (and related issues).

P. 134

Plimer caricatures the facts by claiming that creationists need to believe that the double-coconut 'was transported only to the Seychelles'. It may have been transported to many other places also, but survives only in that location today. In a similar way, everybody agrees that the few remaining stands of a particular palm (*Livingstonia mariae*) in Palm Valley, Central Australia (found only there) once covered much greater areas but now survive only there. Plimer should know that we have pointed this out before, but that would spoil a good diatribe.

P. 135

Of course thermodynamics is relevant to the origin of life, as the vast majority of origin-of-life theorists would willingly concede. Either Plimer does not understand thermodynamics or else he misrepresents it so that he can make another propaganda point—the 'elementary mistake' is his. See, for example, the book, *The Mystery of Life's Origin*, by Thaxton et al., published by The Philosophical Library.

P. 137

Plimer's example (in the second paragraph) of the inherent circularity of creationist science reveals his philosophical unsophistication, since exactly the same circularity and the same presuppositional commitment is inherent in naturalistic evolutionary reasoning. (See 'Science: The Rules of the Game', *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine, vol. 11, no. 1, 1989, pp. 47-50.)

P. 138

It is quite misleading for Plimer to state that Gish, etc. claim (which they do not) that 'science is a dogmatic humanistic religion' —but of course Plimer believes that science and evolution are one and the same thing. And notice how subtly Plimer distorts the quote by Snelling et al., which is talking about secular humanism, to make it look as if they are talking about science itself.

P. 139

We're glad that Plimer presents our Statement of Belief and our aims. But where do our aims clearly state that we have 'aspirations' for the public schools Plimer is clearly referring to? 'Schools' includes Christian schools. Furthermore, our Statement of Belief must by its very nature accommodate the gender of not only existing directors but all future possible directors. Hence it was very important and perfectly appropriate to refer to the organization's controlling structure as being in the hands of Christian 'men and women'. Yet Plimer somehow manages to make this look as if our brochure is telling falsehoods. Christians should take careful note of the fact that Plimer calls our points 1 and 2 'theological mumbo-jumbo'.

P. 140

We will leave it up to the reader to judge Plimer's characterization, of Carl Wieland's letter (quoted on this page) expressing concern for him, as 'bizarre'. Note that the letter makes it clear that it has followed on from a pattern of allegedly malicious conduct. It is amusing to learn that, according to Plimer, Dr Wieland was allegedly brought up in South Africa (at the time of writing, Dr Wieland has never even visited South Africa). For the reader's interest, Dr Wieland was a Christian and active creationist many years before his car accident in 1986. The reader should also contemplate why he should offer to meet Plimer and then when Plimer says he will meet him, allegedly fail to do so. Dr Wieland says:

‘While I cannot recall the fine details, I suspect that any failure on my part to meet him (I can only remember one such overture —perhaps it was not physically possible for me at that time) may have had something to do with the fact that at one stage (after my letter to Plimer of 4 July, 1988) I documented at the 10th Annual Convention of the Australian Skeptics in Melbourne a host of ethical transgressions undertaken by members of the Australian Skeptics, and I indicated that future refusals by CSF to debate would follow unless they dissociated themselves from such behaviour (the sorts of things that the American anti-creationist Skeptic Jim Lippard has documented concerning Plimer et al.). It is clear from the nature of his behaviour at the time of the Gish debate that he has no interest in normal, gentlemanly discussions with his philosophical opponents.’

P. 142

Plimer is simply not telling the truth when he says that ‘Snelling has never published a scientific paper on the science of creationism’. Of course, when challenged on this, doubtless Plimer will respond by saying that any paper on creationism is by definition not scientific, or if it is published in a creationist journal, likewise. In any case, when Plimer is berating Snelling for supposedly writing ‘scientific papers wherein he concentrates on uranium ore deposits that are thousands of millions of years old’ etc., he conveniently forgets the paper in *Ex Nihilo*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 44-57 (which Plimer lists in his book’s bibliography) which Snelling wrote challenging the thousands of millions of years ‘age’ for that same uranium deposit based on the radiometric ‘dating’ that colleagues of Plimer had done!

The incident at the University of Melbourne Plimer describes is on videotape still distributed by CSF—unfortunately for Plimer’s credibility, it shows that Carl Wieland never answered any geological questions on Dr Andrew Snelling’s behalf (apart from defending Andrew’s integrity from a questioner who was attacking it, not challenging any geological point).

To suggest as Plimer does that the inadvertent slip in print, describing Dr Kouznetsov as ‘Professor Kouznetsov’ was a deliberate false promotion is utterly untrue. According to CSF’s information, Kouznetsov had in fact lectured by invitation at places like Yale (technically a visiting professor in US terms, one would presume), had three earned doctorates, and had won his country’s top two science prizes. Would it really have been necessary for CSF to invent a title to artificially inflate his position? However, Plimer conveniently omits this so that the casual reader may think that Kouznetsov was just a garden variety scientist whom CSF somehow deceptively ‘promoted’.

P. 143

Plimer continually wants to have it both ways—if the Institute for Creation Research was six times as large as it is, he would use this to demonstrate that creationism is a fraudulent multi-million dollar enterprise. Since it is a small office building, it has no academic merit! Actually, it is not as small as Plimer makes out, as it runs an active Graduate School program with on-site professors as well as adjunct faculty. Plimer also quotes Henry Morris totally out of context—clearly he was referring to the limits of Nobel Prize winners’ authority, not in any way implying that they have no authority in matters of science within their areas of expertise, for example.

Here again, by introducing a completely unknown (to us) ‘creationist’ who has made an unfortunate statement, Plimer manages to smear by association the mainstream creationist organizations. It is the same tactic as if we were to find some wacky or intemperate person who happens to believe in evolution, call him an ‘evolutionist’, then make it look as if this is characteristic of evolutionism generally.

P. 144

This is very cleverly written—he makes it appear as if Gish deliberately allowed an erroneous CV to circulate. The claim was first made by Barry Price, and in our *A Response to Deception* (1990/91) Gish responded (as would have been fully known by Plimer because elsewhere in *Telling Lies for God* (e.g. p. 63) he quotes from our book).

Gish wrote: 'This is a totally false statement. I send biographical material to the organisations or people who sponsor my meetings and debates. They utilise this in preparing promotional material. I certainly am not responsible for any inaccuracies in such promotional material. For example, the promotional material used for one of my lectures at the University of California, Berkeley, stated that I had spent 18 years at Cornell University Medical College. The statement in my biographical material says that I spent 18 years in biochemical research at Cornell University Medical College, the Virus Laboratory of the University of California, Berkeley, and at the Upjohn Company, Kalamazoo, Michigan. The promotional material simply fails to mention the last two organisations. Price and Jukes, of course, charge deliberate falsification. In Price's summary of my research (p. 58) he omits the four years I spent with the Virus Lab at Berkeley. Should I accuse him of falsifying my record?'

Gish in fact was a member of the distinguished scholastic society Phi Beta Kappa. Plimer implies that he was not, but in fact Plimer received a letter from Gish pointing out not only when he was elected, and that he still had his gold pin, but that Plimer, if he doubted it, could make a simple check on the official list. Nevertheless, Plimer still takes an underhanded swipe by saying 'there was also some confusion whether Gish was a Phi Beta Kappa'. Gish has spent many years in research and in fact did work under two Nobel Prize winners, and has had 40 published papers in standard scientific journals. (See Appendix 3 for documentation of Gish's membership in Phi Beta Kappa.)

We are not sure how the omission was made by the National Alliance of Christian Leadership, whether they in fact picked up on material circulating from the Berkeley debate or what (perhaps passed on inadvertently by us), but clearly it was not done deliberately to enhance, because the full statement in Gish's credentials is hardly less 'impressive'. Strangely, this page in Plimer's book has managed to give some readers the impression that Gish does not have the credentials claimed—clever writing!

Creationists are by no means misleading by promoting Andrew Snelling as a Ph.D. in geology—the 'geol' in brackets is simply to make people aware that his Ph.D. is in geology, and not in history or something like that, since people of Plimer's ilk make it their business to try to persuade the public that no geologist is a creationist, and vice versa. Such a citation is neither misleading nor dishonest in any way—just an accurate description of fact.

P. 145

Regarding some people who believe in creation and who buy phony degrees, no doubt some believers in evolution also commit bank robberies, but that has nothing to do with the majority movement of either side.

Once again, the word 'cult' is used to smear, but by no definition of a cult does creationism fit the bill. To make it seem sinister he says 'the membership list is secret' (it is not, incidentally), yet in other places he makes it clear that we (CSF) have no members apart from the 'members' of the company (a technical term for what would in normal commercial companies be called shareholders, since it is a public company limited by guarantee rather than shares) and makes that seem sinister too! It is a case of 'heads I win, tails they lose'. His throw-away line that a disturbingly high number of high-profile creationists have 'highly irregular and unusual qualifications' can only be said to apply to (possibly) Richard Bliss's educational doctorate. While we cannot vouch for the status of the University of Sarasota (nor for the credibility of Plimer's comment), Bliss (who is now deceased) had a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in science (zoology) from the University of Wisconsin, which Plimer conveniently omits. By another convenient omission, we are not told that Harold Slusher was at the time of writing Associate Professor of Physics at the University of Texas, El Paso, hardly a position one attains with bogus qualifications.

CSF does not defend Carl Baugh or his claims in regard to his qualifications. We do not regard Baugh as representative in any way of the mainstream creation movement.

PP. 146-147

Plimer makes certain claims in regard to Dr Clifford Wilson and the institutions granting qualifications with which he is associated. The following are the facts, which the reader should carefully compare with Plimer's claims.

Dr Wilson writes: 'The courses of Pacific College of Graduate Studies were examined [for the granting of legitimate qualifications] by the then education authorities of the National Government in Queensland. Consequently Queensland Christian University was agreed to unanimously by all the State Attorneys and the Federal Attorney-General. The Queensland Christian University Bill was prepared, and was about to be presented to Parliament. That very week the National Party (under Sir Joh) called an election, and the Bill was not presented. Registration of QCU was formalized in the United States on the expectation of Queensland accreditation, but when that did not eventuate no further processing took place in USA. Not one certificate or degree [from QCU] has ever been issued, whether in Australia, USA or elsewhere.'

Concerning the matter of creationists being blocked from publishing, fair treatment, etc., this has been extremely well documented by Yale law graduate Dr Wendell Bird in his *The Origin of Species Revisited*, Philosophical Library, New York, vol. II, 1987, pp. 403-406.

To call Dr Charles Pallaghy a 'senior citizen of the creationist movement' makes it seem as if he is a doddering old geriatric, when in fact he is an active senior lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences at a major Australian university (La Trobe), and is now 55 years old. Dr Pallaghy confirms that he witnessed a miraculous healing which, as a scientist, he is convinced of, and it was this which led to his conversion to Christianity in the first place—belief in creation followed.

P.149

Plimer inexcusably distorts creationist use of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Every major creationist commentary on the Second Law that we are aware of points out that biological systems are open and shows how the principles related to the Second Law still cause problems for evolutionary increases in order and/or complexity (in spite of Plimer's attempt to muddy the waters).

The reader is referred to a CSF audio tape (*Miracles and the Laws of Nature*) on this issue which was recorded as a lecture at CSF's Summer Institute in 1990. At the conclusion of this lecture a man rose from the audience and said that he was a lecturer in physics at Sydney University and congratulated the speaker on the presentation (which dealt with all the issues Plimer claims that we don't deal with) and acknowledged that the use of the Second Law against evolution was valid. (He wanted to retain evolution by postulating divine interference—but that's another issue.)

Plimer uses words like 'cloak' to make our system appear sinister, when in fact virtually all missionary organizations we know of do not offer voting membership to their supporters. The (deliberate?) confusion with which he surrounds the term 'members' has to do with the fact that we are purposely set up as a non-profit public company so as to increase our exposure to scrutiny, openness and honesty. And also to decrease the potential for any sort of takeover by cultic or hostile influences (which could do so simply by establishing voting blocs).

PP. 150-154

Naturally, we completely deny (and have always been able to demonstrate) that there has ever been any impropriety, fraud or misappropriation of funds or improper accounting procedures (or anything else insinuated here) by CSF.

Table of Contents

[Introduction—p.52](#)

[PP. 54–100](#)

[PP. 101–149](#)

[PP. 150–200](#)

[PP. 200–249](#)

[PP. 250–Conclusion](#)

The truth of the entire matter of the 1983/84 losses the Foundation suffered (in complete innocence, and with at the most financial naivete to answer for) is shown in the research by the American anti-creationist Skeptic Jim Lippard (whom Plimer incidentally seeks to discredit by making him seem almost neutral to creationism, when in fact he has published major anti-creationist papers in the leading US journals dedicated to that cause).

Once before, Plimer made the accusation (on ABC radio) that the money lost had gone 'missing'. Since we were able to show that this was not true, the ABC (not Plimer) issued a formal on-air apology. (See p. 23 of these notes for the ABC apology.) Plimer should know the true facts from Lippard's research, but ignores them and gives an overwhelming impression of wrongdoing.

What happened? Lippard's two papers (available from CSF, and also totally known to Plimer) give the full story between them, but in summary, CSF (and many other Christians) lost money in an investment. The purpose of the investment was never for personal financial gain, (as Plimer's innuendo might lead the reader to infer) but to get higher returns for funds to further advance the ministry. (The facts in this matter can be checked and have been thoroughly investigated by the Australian Government (see later), fully exonerating CSF.)

At that time, a professing Christian (Lindsay Bates) had a company called Goldcom, which was offering passbook security and very high returns. CSF even sought and received legal advice to make sure that what it was doing was appropriate. Bates' company was reinvesting the money in another company, ICTA, which was straddling commodities futures markets to achieve high returns with minimized risk.

The loss was in fact not a speculative loss (e.g. failed investment) per se, but occurred because of fraud and embezzlement by people in ICTA, which caused Goldcom to collapse. We understand that convictions have taken place under the law. Some of the money absconded with has been recovered, and CSF has been repaid a total of some \$11,600 as a result.

In addition to Lippard's careful documentation, the following points need to be made:

1. There was never any association between Lindsay Bates and CSF.
2. Many of the current CSF directors (including Carl Wieland, current Managing Director) were not even a part of the Board of the Foundation at that time.
3. Plimer's speculation/innuendo about transferring funds from trust accounts is an absolutely false smear. Our close supporters were written to and had the situation explained to them, and many responded with additional donations to help CSF survive this loss.
4. The contract with John Thallon (an accountant) was completely unrelated, and had nothing to do with the alleged 'difference'. Thallon personally lost heavily in Goldcom, and could no longer afford to work for CSF (as he had done to that point) for nothing. He still performed his valuable work at a sacrificial rate, but chose to do so under a contract with his family company (which was then perfectly proper), and this was paid in normal salary-type increments during the period of his work. Lippard's papers make this clear also. Plimer was sent this evidence exonerating us, but chose to manipulate the facts with crucial omissions (and worse).

Concerning the 'reshuffle' of directors, notice how Plimer tries to make it seem as if it is related to the financial loss, but in fact it happened (from his own writing) over a two-year period. Thallon's (voluntary) resignation was the only one related to the loss and was because he felt personal responsibility for the loss. Ministry (with the CSF Board's blessing) in the United States is portrayed as 'an extended trip abroad'. Bardsley was never a director so could never have been 'removed from' this position. (He served as secretary for a period.) Many companies over a two-year period undergo such innocuous restructuring, but Plimer's aim appears to be to 'hint darkly' for effect, pure and simple.

Another example of Plimerism is, in the worst traditions of tabloid-style writing, his statement about the auditor (a well-known firm) resigning. If our auditor had resigned because of wrongdoing by the Foundation

(as seems to be implied) then the auditor would have had a legal responsibility to make this plain. The auditor's report is on the public record, accessible to Plimer, and there is no hint of wrongdoing.

The misleading nature of what Plimer says at the bottom of p. 153 can be seen by noting that while it is true that the cost of CSF's audits actually went up, the reason for the change of auditors was because CSF had been officially notified that Peat, Marwick and Mitchell would have charged still more again for that year, as they had been doing the audit on a semi-charitable basis to that point. We have a letter from them stating this, and stating that there was no hint of any misdealing surrounding the resignation (as viewed and also documented by Lippard). CSF's statement is therefore 100% true and accurate.

Plimer's cynical 'questions' on p. 154 are easily answered in summary by his own comment towards the bottom of that page that we were investigated by the Queensland Police Fraud Squad in 1992. If we had done wrong in any way, whether under Tax Law, Company Law, or whatever, we would not have been exonerated. Plimer is, of course, actually not interested in the answers, but is using the questions to make it look as if CSF acted illegally. There was no concealment, no 'mythical second company', no 'creative accounting', no failure to declare any financial interests when required, no breach of the law by Thallon or anyone else, etc. The alleged 'difference' in the amounts previously noted by Plimer is only because Plimer has chosen to omit information which Lippard actually sent him a long time before his book was published—there is no discrepancy. The seemingly odd way in which the total loss is spread into two chunks of greater than \$40,000 each in two financial years is not because CSF found another \$40,000+ to reinvest, but because of the timing of the news of the likelihood that the funds were lost in relation to the end of CSF's (then) financial year—acting on the advice of our auditors, the loss was (properly and ethically) broken into both financial years.

Notice the cunning way in which Plimer is able to make defamatory innuendo simply by asking 'questions'. Having 'snowed' the average reader with all the jumbled information, the reader would think that there is something 'smelly' here, at least—when nothing could be further from the truth. What an indictment on Plimer, to choose to use distortions and unjustified allegations against a Christian ministry when the true facts (publicly available, with virtually all the above information already in Plimer's possession) are so radically different.

His question '12' is beneath contempt—we have a written exoneration from the Queensland Police Service Fraud and Corporate Crime Squad, not a 'decision not to prosecute'! What Plimer doesn't tell you (a significant omission indeed) is that it was his own 'mate', Mark Plummer (former President of the Australian Skeptics of which Plimer is a high profile associate), who wrote to the Queensland Government to generate the pressure which led to the investigation. During the investigation, the police received numerous phone calls by Plimer's other colleague Barry Price. Interestingly, within days of the police first contacting us, the news had already hit the United States that 'Creation Science Foundation is being investigated by the Fraud Squad'. The apparent tactic was to be able to use the stigma of the investigation itself as a smear. Plimer conveniently omits that CSF was given a clean bill of health. (See the two letters at the end of these notes in Appendix 4 from the Queensland Police.)

In summary, the 'dirty tricks' department of the anti-creation lobby has done its best to implicate CSF in wrongdoing, but cannot do so (except by dishonest innuendo) because none was involved.

P. 156

Plimer tries to establish CSF as 'financially non-accountable' in spite of the fact that he knows our financial returns are on the public record, as a public company! He himself has accessed them, as can any member of the public! Using words such as 'gravy train' is an unjustified smear of the motives of those running the ministry—four of the seven directors are not employees of CSF and receive no directors' fees for all their efforts (one of these is employed by an affiliated but independent group in Kentucky, USA). The three who do work as employees of the Foundation receive substantially less than they have shown themselves capable of generating through their high-quality professions (e.g. geology, medicine) in outside employment.

P. 157

It is not true to say that the seven directors/members can 'do what they like' with the funds they receive. CSF is set up by law to operate only for the benefit of the aims in our Memorandum and Articles of Association, and the Directors most certainly are not legally able to 'do what they like'—we are also compulsorily audited under law, plus have been given a totally clean bill of health from the Australian Taxation Office [a routine, but very detailed audit lasting months] a few years back, and now also from the Queensland Police (thanks to the Skeptics), demonstrating that the innuendo here is manifestly untrue. Plimer of course knows all about our structure, so these tactics appear to stem from a virulent hatred.

Furthermore, CSF does not make a habit of calling supporters 'members'. A detailed (though not exhaustive) search through CSF literature failed to reveal a single instance. How can Plimer call CSF a 'cult' when it deliberately chooses not to recruit people as members, a fact which Plimer himself tries to use against CSF elsewhere in his book?

Concerning the 'sinister implications' of the Managing Director answering letters addressed to the Chairman—it should be remembered that the Chairman was acting in a voluntary capacity, living two hours' drive away from the Foundation with no secretarial help, and the Managing Director opted to (with the Chairman's consent and at his suggestion) take the burden of reply off him, being a salaried employee. This is common procedure.

Because on one occasion Carl Wieland chose to defend his friend Andrew Snelling's integrity in public, Plimer exaggerates that into a situation of Wieland rescuing Snelling on scientific matters, which is totally unrepresentative of reality, as the videotape (still on sale by CSF) reveals.

Regarding Plimer's attempt to become 'a member' of Creation Science Foundation, it needs to be remembered that this would have effectively given a person who has shown an extremely hostile attitude to the historical evangelical Christian Faith voting rights at an Annual General Meeting of a Christian ministry, as well as 'disruption right'. There is no way in which Plimer could in any case have passed the basic test of agreeing to our Statement of Faith—he himself has called, in his book, at least two of its tenets 'theological mumbo-jumbo' (p. 139).

We are certainly delighted to agree with Plimer that we hold the funds very tightly and control their use carefully, and that becoming a director of the organization involves much more than simply being a 'benefactor'.

P. 158

Plimer is right that it was only when the Skeptics made a big noise that we issued public statements about this embarrassing loss the Foundation had suffered (in what was touted to Board members at that time as a guaranteed passbook investment, and undertaken only upon accountancy and legal advice). However, CSF did earlier on notify its financial supporters. Until then CSF had not felt the need to give its enemies a club to beat it with by writing about it in an open forum.

P. 159

Plimer makes it seem that Bridgstock and Price gave accurate information about the financial situation involved, but in fact both of these sources and Plimer's book itself have been grossly misleading. Those are the sorts of things the Foundation was clearly (and wisely) trying to avoid.

It has already been stated that our close supporters and benefactors at that time (who made up the missing funds in a way that surprises Plimer) were notified of the losses by private correspondence. Furthermore, it has already been stated exactly what sort of an organization the Creation Science Foundation Ltd is—it was deliberately set up, knowing the sort of unscrupulous hostility its uncompromising biblical stand would attract, in such a way as to make it extremely difficult to be able to smear it on financial matters. Nevertheless, Plimer and co. have managed to try to do just that by sneaky use of innuendo, half-truths

and crucial omissions of fact. There is no 'information blackout'—our financial reports each year are on the public record. Despite this, Plimer felt it necessary to state on public ABC radio on January 8, 1989 that we had not put in our annual returns for three years. When we faxed the ABC immediately showing that each of these returns had been lodged in the year of the return (and therefore that Plimer's statement was exposing them to legal risk) the ABC chose to apologize on air in a subsequent program (June 4, 1989) for Plimer's comments—not surprisingly, he did not. (See p. 23 of these notes for the ABC apology.)

Furthermore, we make no apology for the fact that we do require prayer and financial support, and it does require significant support to do what we do well and efficiently. Much more could be done if such support were to increase.

P. 160

Of course we don't say that 'all history and science is wrong'.

We haven't had a correspondence course available for at least five years.

P. 161

(Repeating the comment on p. 160) Plimer implies that if the sale of a book or video generates a return, and is factually incorrect in some area, this somehow breaches the Trade Practices Act. However, science books are continually upgraded, whether they are evolutionist or creationist. In light of the new McCarthyism which Plimer clearly seems to favour regarding beliefs that differ from his own, one would not be able to sell any Christian literature whatsoever, because the majority view would be that it was wrong and therefore according to him it would contravene the Trade Practices Act!

The Attorney-General's Department never provided a grant 'to a religious cult' and so Plimer's statement at the bottom of p. 160 is nonsensical. The Export Development Board would have been fully aware of the Creation Science Foundation's position. In view of the fact that it was a genuine export/potential export, they had no reason to be concerned within their frame of reference, whether science held a primary or secondary position or indeed what the nature of the materials was, so long as they were legal. Furthermore, it is likely (in the absence of onerous checking) that the amount Plimer mentions had nothing to do with Barry Setterfield's book—our memory of the matter is that this was a much smaller amount at a different time. The grant Bridgstock (Plimer incorrectly spells it Bridgestock) mentions was more likely for export of the magazine Creation Ex Nihilo.

Also, we never imply that you can't believe in God and evolution—we even wrote an article making it clear that it was definitely possible to be a Christian and believe in evolution (see 'Is it possible to be a Christian and an evolutionist?', Creation magazine, vol. 11, no. 4, September; November 1989, pp. 21-23). Just another smear.

P. 162

Plimer has the name of John Mackay's organization wrong, and Mackay's departure had no connection whatsoever with CSF's financial losses, which investment he himself approved as a Board member at the time.

Since Plimer has consulted the public records of the company (CSF) he should also know that Snelling was never a 'codirector' with Mackay. Furthermore, 'Wieland appeared on the scene' only after Mackay had already left. (Appeared, that is, as full-time worker/employee of CSF, since Wieland had been helping CSF on a voluntary basis from his former Adelaide home since its inception.)

Plimer links non-Christian, unorthodox groups such as the Mormons with 'creationism' even though the Mormons would be totally opposed to both our Statement of Faith and our insistence on the straightforward meaning of Genesis.

P. 163

Another wrong statement by Plimer—he claims that not once has Creation Ex Nihilo magazine published a letter from a critic. In fact, we rarely receive them for publication, but have definitely published at least four letters from skeptics alone, including a comment from one of his own associates in the Australian Skeptics some years ago (see for example Creation magazine, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 8-9 (two letters), vol. 13, no. 2, p. 7, and vol. 17, no. 1, p. 5). We have been criticized for truncating one other such letter, reproducing only a summary of its main points. However, Creation Ex Nihilo is our layman's family magazine (as opposed to our Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal, in which we have published many critical comments) and is not meant to be a forum for pro and con, and it is important to consider reader interest in the subject matter before allowing the likes of Plimer to absorb large sections of our magazine (currently only one page can be allocated to letters). Ironically, just as Plimer's book appeared, the December 1994 issue of Creation Ex Nihilo magazine had already gone to press, containing in it a critical letter (and our reply) from Michael Shermer, publisher of the major American Skeptics' magazine.

P. 164

Carl Wieland writes:

'I stand totally by the letter I wrote. It is not true that the editor of the Australian Skeptics' magazine (Barry Williams) has "never" had even a comment published in CSF literature. We reproduced the core of his comments in our magazine (vol. 12, no. 3, p. 9). Furthermore, they have never sent us a letter suggesting that they or their group had been misrepresented in any of our publications (as opposed to their beliefs about science, evolution, etc.). Hence my offer was open, clearly stated, fully intended and has always been complied with to date.'

What nonsense to suggest that creationists use the fossil orange specimen 'to disprove all evolution'.

P. 165

There are in fact many examples other than this possible fossil orange to show that fossilization can occur extremely rapidly. The article made it very clear that the orange needed to be sectioned —Plimer says 'surely such verification could have taken place', but in fact it was stated in the article that the owner was adamant that he would not allow us (or anyone) to remove it, which is what would have been required in order to have a commercial laboratory do sectioning, for example.

Furthermore, we challenge anyone to show how the general tone of the articles in Creation Ex Nihilo magazine in any way indicates 'savage religion'.

P. 166

Plimer would presumably know, as a professor of geology, that being impregnated with (or encased in) rock-hard chemicals can legitimately be described as one form of fossilization. Perhaps it is convenient to his purposes to make it look as if it was deceptive for us to refer to the hat in question as a 'fossil hat' or a 'petrified hat'. The point was simply that it doesn't take millions of years for things to become rock-hard.

Concerning the 'fossil bolt' impression—as the photographic documentation indicated, it was absolutely not a crinoid stem, but was in fact a bolt impression. It had nothing to do with rock fishermen driving bolts into rocks, since the rock had clearly formed to match the grooves in the bolt. Whether from a shipwreck or not, no one was claiming it had anything to do with the Great Flood (as the Plimer caricature which follows on p. 167 seems to imply), but merely demonstrated that processes such as rock formation/hardening/fossilization do not have to take millions of years. For interest, the bolt impression was found on a rock ledge. Plimer's claim that only two explanations were possible ignores the data recorded in the article and is simply incorrect. However, Plimer's purposes have been achieved and he is able to go on to talk about 'another agenda', 'glaring inconsistencies', and 'ludicrous implications' (p. 168).

P. 168

There was never any statement that there was some sort of ‘giant conspiracy’ among palaeoanthropologists. Once again, the reader is misled.

To suggest that we ‘have never been racially tolerant’ flies in the face of reality—we have in fact continually written anti-racist articles in our magazine—one of our most common themes.

PP. 169-170

We make no bones about the fact that we have an explicit philosophical presupposition, but as Plimer demonstrates over and over, evolutionist research also has implicit philosophical presuppositions. It is simply not true to imply that our Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal does not follow the standard editorial procedures, referees, etc. It most certainly does. Plimer says, ‘No article actually reports new experiments, new observations or new work ...’. This is demonstrably false, since there have been numerous papers presenting exactly that. It is also false to suggest that there are no critical discussions of published work in the Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal, as we have already pointed out. Not only have there been critical papers pro and con issues, but vigorous discussion in the Letters to the Editor section. Plimer’s caricature here is complete distortion. Readers should see the Journal for themselves and judge.

P. 171

One seriously doubts that Plimer believes his fantastic statement that CSF claims to have ‘proved all science wrong’. Furthermore, we reject the suggestion that our report on Dr Archbold’s attack on CSF (which involved repetition by him of some of Price’s falsehoods) was anything but true and accurate, and deny that any implication was intended to the effect that Dr Archbold was ‘either a liar or a non-Christian’. And of course we have already stated over and over again that we acknowledge that Christians can be anti-creationists. It boggles the mind to speculate how Plimer knows that we were ‘totally befuddled’ by Dr Archbold’s lack of response, when we had no contact with him and there was no way of knowing what his response was or otherwise! Incidentally, Neil Archbold was the man Carl Wieland debated at the 10th Annual Convention of the Australian Skeptics.

Regarding the article in our Prayer News about the World Council of Churches—the article did not state that the WCC ‘only represents a minority’, but that it ‘does not yet truly speak for the majority of ordinary Christians in the pews’. A subtle but significant difference.

P. 173

Plimer states that we offered laminated prayer cards for sale—this is false. They were offered free. Is there no end to the misrepresentation? We suggest that a geology professor has the capacity to read and check the articles from which he quotes.

P. 174

Concerning his cute little offer of giving his Mercedes-Benz to anyone who ‘can devise just one experiment which scientifically demonstrates creation’, he knows very well that both fiat creation and macroevolution are ultimately historical concepts incapable of proof or disproof in a simple experiment. However, there are experiments which could demonstrate aspects of the creation model and illustrate them in significant ways—e.g. rapid fossilization, etc. We could just as equally (and just as ludicrously and pointlessly) offer to give a prize to anyone who could provide just one experiment which scientifically demonstrates that reptiles are capable of turning into birds (or apes into philosophers) by spontaneous natural processes. Such an offer is good theatre, but presumably he knows it is bad scientific philosophy.

Plimer had the opportunity to attack the credentials of invited creationist speakers (or to arrange for his cronies to do so) in 1992 when seven creationists, with 17 degrees including five Ph.D.s between them

were on a platform at his own university. He was unable to do so, because their qualifications were bona fide.

Obviously, if a person has devoted himself to creationism, it is hard to maintain a 'rising star in the halls of academia', for example. However, Plimer's implication that creationist speakers have 'mediocre scientific careers' is far from representative of reality. On the occasion just mentioned, one of the speakers was Dr Russell Humphreys, who was (and is) actively engaged in research into thermonuclear fusion energy for the United States government; another speaker was Dr Charles Pallaghy, Senior Lecturer in Biology at La Trobe University. And it is simply not true that it is 'the same tired old creationists' who speak at our conferences. Many times over the years we have brought to Australia (despite our limited funds) creationist speakers who have never been here before.

P. 175

Carl Wieland writes:

'I fully stand by my comments that refusal of Plimer's attendance was because he was likely to be non-genuine on the basis of his "past performance and behaviour". It is very conveniently omitted from the Plimer book that he had exhibited very disruptive past performance and behaviour in the anti-creationist campaign, though he had not been to a CSF conference as such. For example, the debate with Duane Gish, and Plimer's outrageous abandonment of normal standards of gentlemanly behaviour. In fact, we happily accepted attendance from others who certainly did not have a dogmatic belief in creationism, and who were in fact known to be there because of being observers for the anti-creationist lobby.'

For example, Dr Alex Ritchie from the Australian Museum is a dedicated opponent of creationism, yet he was not only welcome to attend our Summer Institute but asked questions of Dr Kurt Wise from the floor, and, in fact, there was a courteous exchange between the two of them. (Wise has a Ph.D. in palaeontology from Harvard University, but that of course doesn't seem to count with Plimer.) There is no way in which any participant would be refused registration 'because they ask questions'. Plimer ensured that he put himself into a win-win situation. If we accepted his registration, he would be free to behave as disruptively as he did at the Gish debate. If we refused the registration, then he could write (as he has done) that he merely 'wanted to ask questions' and was denied this 'democratic right'.

Note how he alleges that creationists use 'a frenzy of publicity' to advertise public lectures. These are carefully chosen words to suggest fanaticism. We have on occasion hired university halls, but have far more frequently used church buildings. There has never been any 'hidden implication', and location, cost, parking, accommodation/dormitories, facilities, etc., have been the major considerations.

Regarding the fact that the bulk of people at our meetings are supposed to be elderly and teenagers—we have never noticed, on average, anything other than a random age distribution.

P. 176

Notice that Plimer acknowledges that we hold lectures at universities, but in other places (and especially in the publicity for his book) he implies that we avoid educated audiences! If we had made the comment Plimer makes concerning Asian students, presumably it would have been seized upon by him for its racial overtones. Could it be that one reason why so many Asian students attend the lectures is because Asian students at Australian universities are generally in the upper echelons, academically, of their courses and more able to think critically about their evolutionary indoctrination? Furthermore, Plimer knows full well that most of the meetings have no entrance fee, apart from major conferences with overseas speakers in which a university hall, for example, may just happen to be the hired venue. With hundreds of people filing into a lecture theatre, does Plimer know any other organization which gives receipts for a modest admission charge? However, we always give them if requested. Plimer's talk of 'bulging tables' and 'unaccountable cash' makes good propaganda, especially when linked with the comment 'one wonders

whether such cash is declared for the assessment of income tax'. However, he should know that our organization is exempt from income tax.

We have never had to remove anyone from any of our meetings, although there has on occasion been some extremely bad behaviour by the anti-creationist lobby. Neither would anyone ever be removed just for asking questions. There is a difference between orderly questions and deliberate disruption, attempting to hijack lecture time, etc.

P. 177

Interestingly, on the one hand he portrays us as having so much in the way of slick marketing techniques, etc., and then he tells the reader that we have poor quality overheads and slides—which is it?

Our comments in relation to the allegation that questions which were embarrassing to CSF have been cut out of videos will be responded to later, when Plimer makes a specific allegation on p. 247. The feedback from those who were there indicated that the question time result was overwhelmingly positive for the creationists.

Regarding the 'memorable creationist lecture' at the University of Tasmania from which he was asked to leave—this was about the Wyatt/Fasold Ark site which our organization never endorsed, and in fact debunked in 1992 (Creation Ex Nihilo magazine, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 26-38). This was not a CSF meeting, and the speaker had nothing to do with our organization, or indeed with any mainstream creationist organization, nor indeed was he presenting himself as a 'creation science' person. That person and associated organizers can defend themselves against this allegation of Plimer's, but we doubt whether Plimer gives the true picture. If the police were there, they certainly were not at all other lectures in that series (including one that some of us attended) and it may just be that previous attempts at disruption by Plimer had taken place. Indeed, just days before, Plimer had disrupted a similar meeting by the same speaker in Melbourne. We have been informed that Plimer actually registered himself at one of these meetings as trading under the name of the organization giving the lecture, then publicly claimed that all the door receipts were his! No wonder the organizers were edgy, and the State police in attendance. We see repeatedly that Plimer's recounting of such incidents cannot be relied on because of the details he leaves out—readers beware! And what Plimer doesn't tell his readers is that at that Hobart meeting he was secretly 'wired' with a microphone for TV Channel 9's A Current Affair and had the TV crew in the wings to gatecrash the meeting.

P. 178

We doubt whether the gentle Allen Roberts would have asked police or guards to remove people for 'asking questions'. It would have been for clearly disruptive behaviour. Notice the emotive use of terms such as 'stooge' to describe someone who may have taken photographs of those attempting to disrupt in order to provide evidence against any subsequent fudging of reality, and notice how the impression is given of poor open-minded scientists surrounded by threatening fundamentalists! One trusts that it is still regarded as rude and inappropriate to interrupt a public lecture, and that this is scarcely, as Plimer would have it, 'perfectly reasonable' behaviour.

We can't recall any CSF meetings in which creationist Christians in the audience behaved badly, let alone like zoo primates. On the contrary, the only time we have seen bad behaviour at such m

P. 179

Plimer once again misleads in his description of the Adam Joseph happening. Firstly, it was Adam Kliska—his real name. Adam Joseph is a convenient pseudonym, used for Skeptic activities. Secondly, as Carl Wieland recalls:

'No one scrutinized the audience, and I was at the far end of the hall from the door. However, someone had recognized this man from media reports as being an obsessional anti-creationist who had made public comments against CSF and Dr Gary Parker in the media. The reason he was asked

not to attend was because it was not a public meeting, but was advertised as a supporters' rally, and only supporters were invited, and he could hardly be regarded as a supporter!

However, notice how Plimer implies that Kliska/Joseph was not allowed to attend because he might ask some sort of intellectual question. We can't recall any of our meetings at which Plimer was surrounded by organizers, let alone 'young thought police'. Whether Plimer has been disrupting other Christian meetings or not and then links them all up with 'creationism' to smear CSF (as he does by talking in the next few sentences about 'the likes of the leaders of the Creation Science Foundation'), we cannot say. The fact is, none of us can ever remember seeing Plimer at any CSF meeting, ever!

PP. 179-181

We are baffled by what Plimer means about 'Icelandic' debating, four segments, etc. How can it be a debate if there is no 'attempt at refutation'? Furthermore, we can't recall any debate, in which we have had a part in this country, being used to push the teaching of creation science in the school science curriculum. As we have said ad nauseam, we do not want any such legislative push. Laws to compel the teaching of creationism would result in its distortion. If, through education and enlightenment, secular schools decide to allow teachers who wish to (in conscience) present evidence for and against both evolution and creation, then we would be delighted, but we are not engaged in any political lobbying efforts to achieve that.

One hardly needs to apologize for wanting a clear-cut definition of the rules and issues in debates, especially to any open-minded person viewing a video of Plimer's performance in the Gish debate. And why shouldn't one insist on permission for unrestricted use (by either side) of the resulting videotape? If the case for evolution is so strong, why would anyone not want to have their anti-creation viewpoint openly reproduced by the creationists? And it is simply not true to state that no other public debate has rigid rules, etc. Knowing the sorts of things that have happened, creationists have every reason to be very cautious in the formulation of such rules. How can this display any 'malevolent intent'? And to say that prominent creationists break the debate contract 'after a few milliseconds into the "debate"' is just plain nonsense.

P. 181

Plimer's report of what happened at the University of Melbourne 'proposed debate' is again spurious. Carl Wieland writes:

'We were asked to have a debate with each side having three participants—the evolution side was to include Plimer, as well as Graeme O'Neill, a well-known anti-creationist journalist. Plimer was formally linked with the Australian Skeptics and was, in fact, one of those involved in the reasons I documented at the Melbourne Skeptics conference as to why we would not debate with such people until and unless they retracted these outrageous slurs—such as Plimer's circular-type letter about Gish which falsely stated that Gish was travelling with an entourage of young boys continually touching him. However, in order that a debate could go ahead [the very opposite of what Plimer implies, which is that we tried to get out of it] without withdrawing from our ethical stance, we agreed to have a debate between myself and Graeme O'Neill, followed by questions to two panels, one consisting of evolutionists (which could include Plimer, since it was not a direct debate involving him) and the other a creationist panel. Graeme O'Neill agreed to this debate, as attested by the University of Melbourne Chaplain Dr Jeff Hammond, who arranged the debate. It was, in fact, O'Neill who withdrew, apparently after discussion with the other evolutionist panel participants, which may have included Plimer.'

P. 182

Yet again, the facts are 180 degrees the opposite of what Plimer implies. It is true that some of the speakers went over the time they had allocated for themselves, and as a result the whole presentation went over time. However, as the tape shows, the rowdiness of a small segment of the audience began during the presentation by the first speaker!

Concerning the questions asked at that time, we still stock that video (called Scientists Say 'No!' to Evolution) and are delighted for people to see the reality of what was said.

The claim that Dr Andrew Snelling has published on rocks thousands of millions of years old will be dealt with a little later, but suffice it to say here that, as asked by the questioner at the meeting, Snelling's 'no' answer was, and is, truthful when the context and all the facts are known. Plimer is the one being 'factually incorrect' by leaving out important details, as also in the case of the question on the geology of Victoria. Plimer's informant must have been either hard of hearing or perhaps deliberately misled him in reporting on the meeting (of which the video is freely available from CSF—note that Plimer himself quotes from this video). The questioner was asking Dr Snelling to explain how the complex geology of Victoria developed according to the creationists' views of geological history and processes. At this point the chairman interrupted the meeting to remind everyone that there were only three minutes left before the absolute deadline for clearing the hall, so the meeting would have to close. That's when Dr Snelling quipped with his so-called one-liner—'What, explain the creation of the geology of Victoria in three minutes!' Whereupon the meeting broke into laughter because everyone could see the absurdity of trying to explain such geological complexities in such a short time. This was no 'creationist tactic' to sweep aside the question and move on, as claimed by Plimer. The chairman had to close the meeting and there was insufficient time to do the question justice. Plimer, of course, is hoping such misinformation will go unnoticed by readers who are unable to readily check all the details.

With respect to the 60 Minutes accusations, Carl Wieland writes:

'I do not recall being approached by Richard Carleton (whom I have never met, spoken to or corresponded with) to partake in a debate with Plimer. 60 Minutes did ring me twice to try to get us to appear on 60 Minutes, but at no stage said that it was a debate. We declined, knowing the way in which television stations edit their material. Dr Snelling was not approached, contrary to Plimer's assertions. I found out that Plimer was going to be involved only when Adam Kliska (also known as Adam Joseph), at the supporters' meeting at which I politely asked him (a non-supporter) to leave, said he would do so if I answered two questions for him, which I did. One of them was why had I "refused to debate Plimer"?'

P. 183

Concerning the Gish vs Plimer debate. The reader should note the clear contrast between what Plimer says and the report in the American anti-creationist publication *Arizona Skeptic* (January, 1990) written by US Skeptic Jim Lippard. Refreshingly honest, it says, 'by far the worst example of skeptical failure I have come across is a description of a March 18, 1988 debate between creationist Duane Gish of the Institute for Creation Research (ICR) and Ian Plimer, associate [*sic*] professor of geology at Newcastle University. The description of this debate which appeared in an article in the Australian Skeptics' publication *The Skeptic* ... was filled with serious misrepresentations. I discovered this by viewing a videotape of the debate'. The author says, 'Plimer responded in extremely poor form', and, 'Plimer's behavior was so rude that the audience began shouting at him'. This is certainly true—we have eye-witness testimonies from those in the audience who heard shouts at Plimer like: 'Where's the science?!'

Yet Plimer says that Gish was 'defeated' and that the debate attacked Gish on 'scientific and theological grounds'. This is a mockery of reality. The skeptic author we quoted above goes on to specifically point out that in the report of the debate there were blatant 'misrepresentations' and 'gross distortions', and that even the summary was 'full of errors'. He says that the account of the debate given by the Institute for Creation Research was, in contrast, 'far more accurate than the Australian Skeptics' version, as well as being more charitable to the opposing side'.

We have no idea what Plimer means by using the word 'edited' when he says, 'we never saw the edited creationist Gish vs Plimer video'. We have a copy of the agreement signed by both parties (including Plimer) specifically stating that no edited (or partial) use was permitted without written agreement by the other party! We have a copy of the video, but we certainly were not going to promote something which was full of such disgraceful and slanderous accusations, including false accusations by Plimer of monetary fraud,

etc. He states that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation filmed the whole debate—if they did, then it is no surprise that they also, though not exactly being renowned for their pro-creationism, to say the least, saw fit not to present it. The whole ridiculous charade of Plimer presenting himself as the ‘creationist defater’ is analogous to a politician walking into Parliament House, stating that he will debate on a particular issue, then instead of debating on that issue, proceeds to make up a series of untrue accusations against various persons, not at all sticking to the topic of the debate. Then when, after an abusive performance, his invitations to further ‘debate’ are ignored, he struts around the world trumpeting that he has defeated the government!

Concerning the Plimer/Gish debate—Plimer claims to have ‘defeated’ Gish, but in fact we even know of comments by several anti-creationists expressing deep concern that he seemed to have no scientific arguments for evolution and relied instead upon vicious personal attack. Certainly we would not sell the videotape—not because of any scientific defeat, but because our whole ethos revolts against promoting such a display of shocking behaviour. In fact, it was seeing this video that prompted the anti-creationist American Skeptic Jim Lippard to seriously inquire into and question the tactics and ethics of Plimer and others in the Australian Skeptics, particularly when he saw how their report of the debate was at odds with the facts shown by the video.

PP. 184-185

Plimer misleads seriously by omission in the matter concerning our chairman writing to the Vice-Chancellor. First of all, it was very much his business as a Christian concerned about ethics to complain about Plimer’s abusive treatment of a visiting scientist who was at all times a guest of Creation Science Foundation. Second, it was triggered by the fact that Plimer had written and mailed the circular-type letter (on university letterhead) which made reprehensibly false allegations about Gish (see p. 22 of these notes).

Such an outrageous tactic sadly drew no concern from the university community, who seemed to see defeating creationism as of greater concern than ethics.

PP. 186–187

Plimer cites a report by a Bob Beale, whom Plimer calls a ‘respected science writer’, as follows:

‘For his pains, he is facing several defamation threats, is the subject of letter campaigns, and creationist leaders are pressuring Newcastle University to discipline him’

In Beale’s report, it seems as if all these problems Plimer was alleged to be facing were due to his actions in the debate. But the only things resembling these alleged ‘problems’ were an understandable warning from Dr Gish that he would take action if Plimer published the outrageous libel about ‘little boys’ in the United States. Similarly, the nearest thing to ‘pressuring Newcastle University’ was the perfectly understandable protest against their letterhead’s being used to start this vicious smear, as explained on the previous page.

All the same, Beale’s report cites Plimer’s boast that ‘you take no prisoners’, and the report tacitly admits that Plimer used dirty tactics and slander even in the debate:

His reponse has been to go in, boots and all, aiming for his opponent’s kneecaps, exemplified by the fact that much of what he said cannot be repeated for legal reasons.

It’s interesting that Beale’s report cites the following as an example of Plimer’s debating style:

‘At one point, he even donned insulating gloves, took a live electric wire and offered Gish the opportunity to electrocute himself. His point was that creationists would selectively accept that the science of electricity was based on theory, but not the science of evolution. A visibly moved Dr Gish accused him of being theatrical, abusive, mudraking and slanderous. “May I say it was the most disgusting performance I’ve ever witnessed in my life.”’

We have to wonder whether Beale saw the same debate. Far from being a great point in Plimer’s favour, this badly backfired on him. Most of the audience reacted strongly *against* Plimer at this point, well aware

that Plimer had scored an own goal (as well *not* appreciating Plimer's obvious malevolence). And one member, also not averse to a 'take no prisoners' approach, at least in the face of outright slander and deceit, yelled out, 'You *berk!* That's the whole point! Electricity is testable, while evolution isn't!' Gish also calmly passed Plimer on the way to the microphone and also pointed out the difference between real, testable, repeatable science and evolutionary just-so story-telling about the past, then dismissed Plimer's silly argument with a wave of his hand. Gish's comments that Beale's report cited were in Gish's summary, and as we said a few pages ago, many skeptics agree.

We presume that Beale was simply using information given to him by Plimer to write this report. While responsible journalism would normally be expected to provide some views from the opposing side for balance, we cannot recall Beale's asking us for our side of the story.

Plimer convinced Media Information Australia to publish an article of his in which he similarly implied that the threats to sue were a result of Gish allegedly losing the debate. When MIA saw the facts, showing that this legal threat was due to the despicable fabrication, they published an apology to Dr Gish and Creation Science Foundation in the next issue (it would be nice if Beale did the ethical thing by likewise apologizing for spreading misinformation, however inadvertently it may have been). On a subsequent radio show, Plimer belittled this ethical move as caving in to fundamentalists applying pressure. (See Media Information apology in Appendix 5.)

PP. 187–188

Notice how Plimer makes it seem as if the challenge to Barry Price was not bona fide. In fact, it was a challenge to debate his book and it was in writing, with the conditions clear and up-front, reproduced herewith from our published rebuttal to Price:

'We can totally substantiate the statements in this rebuttal, and we would be delighted to do so face-to-face with Price, as already mentioned. The debate topic is to be concerning the allegations he makes in his book about the creationist movement, and this rebuttal thereto.

'To minimize the credibility of any further excuses from Price to avoid facing up to public accountability, we suggest that such a debate take place recorded live on a video camera (we will provide the cameraman, if he wishes). The only conditions we would impose (apart from insisting that it be long enough to cover the ground adequately) are that it involve only Dr Carl Wieland and Barry Price, and that both parties be free to use the uncut tape in any way (including offering it to any radio or TV station), and that Price should sign a release to this effect (as we will also). To be a really good debate, it should include cross-examination by each party. A word of advice to readers of this rebuttal, though—don't hold your breath waiting for Price to defend his book in this way. Hiding behind the pages of a book is much easier than having to face the victims of your deceptive slander in the light of day.'

It was Price who failed to take up the challenge.

The ABC Sunday night radio program involved a totally different set of circumstances, and reproduced below is the paper we prepared explaining what really happened.

STATEMENT RE: ABC RADIO SHOW, SUNDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 1992 AT WHICH DRS CARL WIELAND AND ANDREW SNELLING LEFT THE STUDIO. BY DR CARL WIELAND.

'We certainly did not leave because we were afraid to debate, and made it plain that in fact we had agreed to shortly debate in a major forum in front of an audience of approx. 1000.

'Furthermore, we have engaged in numerous debates over the years, the latest being at the 10th Annual Convention of the Australian Skeptics, myself being the participant.

'At that time, I clearly documented the reasons why from that point onwards we would no longer take part in public forums with members or affiliates of the Australian Skeptics unless and until they

publicly repudiated their extremely unethical and ungentlemanly campaign, including totally fabricated allegations against individuals in the creation movement.

‘The enclosed documentation shows clearly what we mean. The point is that these people are not interested in truth and are merely seeking a platform with which to make abusive propagandistic points.

‘There are plenty of academics, evolutionists, antirealist theologians, etc. who are not affiliated with the Skeptics and if such media outlets were serious about a proper forum they would not have any problem with our exclusion of a small sub-set. Our policy has been well known and has been put in writing. Events over the past year or so have shown, we believe, the wisdom of that policy in frequently not granting those who would slander Christ’s name a public forum.

‘However, to get to the point of what happened on that night. A lady called Noelene Kelly from the ABC rang a while previously and asked for Andrew Snelling to take part in a forum on the theological aspects of creation/evolution. She indicated that there would be two evolutionists on the other side—she said that one would be from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the other would be someone with a science background and a theological background as well, if they could get such a one.

‘Carl replied to her that one-on-two was hardly appropriate, that Andrew would accept the invitation (it was meant to be a phone-in talk-back quasi-debate forum) if it was one-on-one; or if they still wanted to have the two opponents, they could make it two-on-two and I would be the second person. She said that she would consult with others about this and then rang back and said that our conditions were acceptable. I had already indicated that our policy was not to engage in a public forum with anyone affiliated with the Australian Skeptics and made very sure that she understood that this was the condition on which we accepted. She said that she understood perfectly and that she would tell us before the weekend who the other opponent was going to be. We heard nothing by 5.00pm Friday and of course it was then after office hours.

‘We went into the studio 15 minutes before the show was to start—we were to be in the studio in Brisbane on our own with just the technician, and the main studio session was going to happen in Sydney.

‘After our arrival, we were very concerned about the fact that every attempt we made to link up with the producer/comper before the show was ‘fobbed off’. (We were trying to find out who our opponents were). I expressed deep concern that we hadn’t yet been told and asked the Brisbane technician to tell the Sydney studios that we would definitely be sticking to the commitments we had made and hoped that they would keep to theirs.

‘To add to our concern, we heard a voice coming on to the air which was obviously not meant for our ears, i.e. they must have pressed the wrong switch for a moment. It was the voice of a prominent and well-known member of the Australian Skeptics from Canberra — even his name was mentioned—and they appeared to be doing a “level check” on his voice over the phone. In other words, it was clear that the evening had been “pre-arranged” rather than merely randomly taking audience calls. We felt that with this sort of approach, we would probably not get a particularly fair go, especially since we were in a remote studio and the comper could chop us off any time simply by flicking a switch. We quickly conferred and decided that if we found out that they had broken their word, we would insist upon the original conditions being met.

‘We were then contacted about 20 seconds before the show was due to begin and told that there were now three opponents rather than two, and that the additional one was a Mr Barry Price. Price was not only strongly affiliated with the Australian Skeptics, his book attacking Creation Science Foundation was then the subject of a lawsuit by a former director of the Foundation because of the horrendous nature of its allegations. It was clearly quite inappropriate of them to spring Price on us, not because of any great knowledge (his writings make horrendous and continual mistakes) but because of his demonstrated tendency concerning libellous and defamatory things. They knew we would not have accepted if we had known it was Price and would have insisted upon his removal, which they would have then had to do

to get us to come on. They were trying to apply blackmail/bluff pressure tactics by dropping it on us at the last minute and then saying in effect “OK, all of Australia is listening, you can’t get out of this now without looking foolish”.

‘I (CW) explained our position on air and explained exactly why, in spite of the compère’s attempts to make it difficult. When it was clear that they would not ask Price to absent himself, even going so far as to imply that our claim that we had been given such an undertaking was untrue, we left.’

On air that night Price denied that he was a member of the Australian Skeptics (yet on p. 187 Plimer says Price ‘had just joined the Australian Skeptics’), and note that if the Australian Skeptics indeed do have membership, Carl Wieland has never joined (p. 188). Notice the cynical way in which Plimer reports the ‘smears of sexual aberration against creationists’ as if it is some sort of a fantasy in Carl Wieland’s mind, so that the reader would have no way of knowing that it was in fact Plimer who made such smears, as has already been documented.

The bottom line is that there was absolutely no opportunity for a one-on-one debate with Price that night, apart from the complete absence of notice to prepare and bring documentation rebutting his book. There was no debate format; it was a two-sided discussion, no constructive/rebuttal/etc. What a sad day for logic and ethics when insisting that debates be held under the normal rules of debate is called insisting on an ‘orchestrated charade’. The only thing that was orchestrated was the way in which the ABC had at least one known Skeptic on the line, when the program was allegedly a spontaneous ring-in. (The switch was apparently accidentally thrown, allowing us to hear the tactics being discussed with this ‘Dorothy Dix’ caller before the program, when we were not supposed to!)

P. 188

The reader is led to believe that CSF orchestrates complaints to radio stations, etc. We have never done this. The ‘identical phrases and quotations’ would therefore seem to be a figment of the author’s imagination.

The only time a radio station has received any legal correspondence from CSF has not been because any ‘scientist’ has ‘exposed’ anything, but when fabricated and false defamatory statements have been made. The ABC has now twice issued a public apology for false and defamatory statements made on air by Plimer and by Price. These were not any sort of ‘muted half-apology’ (notice how Plimer is trying to wriggle out of his personal responsibility for having slandered CSF on air). We have never issued any legal threat to a broadcaster simply because it aired an anti-creationist program, and we do not recall any network saying to us, ‘see you in court’. Furthermore, we do not orchestrate any campaigns to flood journals with letters of complaint just because they publish anti-creationist articles. This whole issue is imagination on the part of Plimer. We also seriously doubt that any newspaper editors have reported this, unless they think that similar feelings on the part of lots of people implies orchestration. This is simply not so.

P. 189

Plimer makes it sound as if creationists have teams of lawyers —it is simply untrue to say, ‘Creationist lawyers are quick to threaten journals which publish anti-creationist articles.’ He can be referring to one issue only: a journal called Media Information Australia (February, 1989) published an article by Plimer which was ethically outrageous and which followed up on his homosexual-paedophile fabricated smears against Gish. In the article he cunningly made it sound as if Gish had threatened to sue him because of losing the debate! There was no ‘half-apology’, but what appeared to be a sincere and profound apology from that journal when they saw what Plimer had done. If indeed the media did treat Professor Rendle-Short’s notice with contempt, then it is a sad day for Australia. If any Christian organization had been going around doing and saying these sorts of outrageous things about another organization with which it disagreed, as Plimer/Price, etc. have been doing, the media would have certainly gone ‘sniffing after a story’ as to why somebody would abuse ethics in this way.

P. 190

Plimer would have the reader think that when a Christian organization has been harmed and defamed it has no right to approach the media outlet (which may wish to minimize its legal exposure by publishing an apology). And that if an organization does so, then that makes it 'a cult'. This is of course palpable nonsense.

PP. 190-194

We were not in any way involved with the hoax which the anti-creationist lobby played on American film producers.

P. 195

The second paragraph is amazing. Since John Morris was taken in by the hoaxer Jammal telling lies, how can that have anything to do with John Morris being a hoaxer or a liar, as Plimer seems to say was 'proved to the public'?

Two individuals, K. and L. Bacon, in 1993 were having a display in a shopping centre, at which time they raised funds for Feed the Hungry and at the same time had asked our permission to show our videos and had bought a range of materials from us for resale. At no time did we have any link to that charity, and the Bacons were doing what they were doing as independent individuals. Their motive in soliciting funds for the particular charity was, we believe, without question to raise funds to help the needy of the world. Once again the whole issue has been distorted and gives a misleading impression. Incidentally, like the Salvation Army, we are a non-profit organization; like us, they also market some products to help their ministry which is in a different area of Christian work from our own. In our case, the products are actually an integral part of our ministry—the distribution of the materials acts to help fulfil our organization's mandate as stated in our Memorandum and Articles of Association.

PP. 195-196

Gish cannot be held responsible for views presented by others at conferences not arranged by himself. And it is nonsense to suggest that the Bible teaches that the sun rotates around the earth.

P. 197

Notice how Duane Gish is again smeared by the author talking about 'Gish's military weapons', as if Gish is some sort of a warmonger simply because of his membership of a coalition on (spiritual) revival.

P. 198

Here is where Plimer tries to neutralize what he knows is a potent weapon against him. Jim Lippard, an American anti-creationist of renown, who has published in *The Arizona Skeptic*, *The Skeptic*, and the major anti-creation journal *Creation/Evolution*, was scarcely 'set up' or 'massaged' by CSF in Australia; at the time of writing we have never even met him. We did, however, answer his questions openly and honestly. His interest in the subject was aroused by watching a videotape of the 1988 Gish/Plimer debate and then reading a report by the Australian Skeptics on the same subject. The contrast between report and reality made him write an article in *The Arizona Skeptic* in which he said that this was the worst example of skeptical failure he had seen. His article was not judgmental of anyone who treats creationists as frauds, but it was extremely judgmental against those who tear up all the rule books of ethics and truth in their philosophical hatred of their opponents. Lippard's two later articles (the first in *Creation/Evolution*, the world's leading anti-creationist journal, the second responding to Barry Price's counter-claims) reveal the amazing shenanigans of this bunch. And Lippard always gave Plimer the opportunity to document where a charge against him was wrong.

Down the bottom of page 198 when Plimer refers to 'modern metal items in coal seams', it's Plimer's way of fudging around the fact that he announced in *The Australian Geologist* (no. 61, 1986, p. 6) that we had published in the CSF literature about finding gold chains and iron anchors in Australian coal. In fact, he even named the author as Dr Andrew Snelling, but gave no reference to which CSF literature supposedly contained this claim. He had previously made the same untrue claim, issuing a (totally phony) challenge to produce these finds in return for a financial reward. And the issue of what the taxation and defamation laws in the various countries are has, of course, very little to do with whether it is ethical or otherwise to fabricate smears about 'touching little boys' concerning your opponent!

Lippard, of course, was not fooled by Plimer's friends who applied pressure on him not to proceed with the line he was taking. Far from Lippard's wishing to sensationalize himself, we would suggest that Lippard risked unpopularity with the anti-creationist lobby (he is already unpopular with creationists for his well-known public stand over the years). It is, in fact, Price and Plimer who have attempted to 'sensationalize' themselves, each with a book. Lippard's two articles, one a response to Price's response, put paid to Plimer's allegations of contradictions between the information we provided to Lippard and our published annual returns. We, in fact, provided all documents which Lippard asked for, and our openness in these matters was, according to Lippard, in marked contrast to that of Plimer.

Plimer also makes Lippard out to be some sort of a strange bird who doesn't believe in either evolution or creation. In fact, Lippard spends a great deal of his time defending evolution and attacking creation! To be exposed like this by someone from within your own camp would be devastating to Plimer, if it were as widely known as his own crusading.

PP. 199-200

Since Price's book essentially used the same sorts of tactics as Plimer's, it is scarcely surprising that the many reviewers listed have been taken in, since its main intent was to give a damaging impression, based upon fabrications, concerning alleged 'deceit and trickery'. Lippard is, in fact, partial to the anti-creationist cause. Furthermore, unlike the reviewers of Price's book whom Plimer quotes, Lippard did his homework and checked the facts behind the Price/Plimer accusations.

Table of Contents

[Introduction-p.52](#)

[PP. 54-100](#)

[PP. 101-149](#)

[PP. 150-200](#)

[PP. 200-249](#)

[PP. 250-Conclusion](#)

P. 201

Notice how our comment about the book, involving a prayer campaign, could not be further removed from Lippard's criticism. Yet by now it is surely obvious that Plimer has nothing but contempt for the intelligence of his readers. Notice on p. 201 the final attempt to make Lippard irrelevant and hope the readers will not look into it for themselves.

PP. 202-204

Pages 202 to 204 are an incredible example of an attempt to 'snow' the reader with a verbal tangle which gives a misleading impression.

FACTS:

1. The student newspaper was uttering a falsehood by stating that no institution in Australia had any of these journals.
2. Plimer makes it seem as if Stephen Basser somehow found that either (a) our article did not tell the truth, or (b) that Kouznetsov's scientific credibility was not what we claimed. Notice that none of these claims is actually justified from what Plimer himself has written, but then he goes on to talk about 'lies'. The comment (pp. 203-204) by Dr Weinstein is firstly a dissociation, which again establishes neither of the two premises Plimer is clearly trying to put in the reader's mind, and secondly, there was never any suggestion that the *International Journal of Neuroscience* (which should have been obvious from its name anyway)

dealt with evolution, either generally or with regard to Dr Kouznetsov's research necessarily. The issue was Kouznetsov's reputation and qualifications, which as far as was known established him as a substantial scientist, as opposed to Plimer's caricatures. We would not have expected that journals which (as we ourselves stated) were extremely specialist journals (covering UK/Belgium/France/Germany, but not USA) would necessarily be available in Australia, and our article tried to show that the student newspaper attack, which tried to show that we had fabricated the names of two of these journals, was quite inappropriate.

Notice that we said in our article 'was almost certainly rubbish' but we did a check anyway. Clearly we chose the one with the widest international coverage, and also the one that had featured Dr Kouznetsov's research work most prominently. We did not, in fact, check the others, but felt it was sufficient to establish that the first two universities we rang had over 10 years of issues of this journal on their shelves. All of that is true and in no way misleading. Furthermore, to our knowledge, Dr Kouznetsov apparently had three earned doctorates and had won his country's top two science prizes by the age of 38. However, to Plimer he is simply our 'stooge'. We have never, ever implied, or tried to imply, in any of our writings that the mainstream science journals support creationism.

Notice also that in all of this, CSF was acting in good faith on the basis of information given to us by Dr Kouznetsov, and we had actually seen his articles in the *International Journal of Neuroscience*. Sadly, we have since issued a public dissociation from him, not because of any issues (phony as they are) raised by Plimer, but because of (a) serious ethical concerns involving financial dealings and (b) apparent fabrication of journal names in a scientific article.

P. 205

Notice how Plimer seeks to destroy Dr Gary Parker's credibility by cleverly weaving in talk of 'mail order universities', making it seem as if Dr Parker's specialty is the identification of fossil footprints, the ecology of Noah's Ark, etc. We don't know where he gets this from, but, in fact, Parker did his Master of Science degree with a thesis in amphibian endocrinology. Regarding his doctorate, Plimer says, 'The immediate response by anyone in the education system is that they have never heard of Ball State University.' What a clever put-down—if he were talking in the USA about the Australian education system, no doubt they would never have heard of more than a few of Australia's universities. In fact, Ball State is a fully accredited, well-known State University in the Indiana State system. It is named after its benefactors, the Ball family.

Parker's doctorate was in science education, not in some field like learning theory. It was in fact funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation. Parker's scholastic achievements were outstanding, and he was elected to the prestigious honorary scholastic society, Phi Beta Kappa. We have said that he was a former evolutionist professor of biology (which he was), but we rarely refer to him as 'Professor Parker', yet Plimer says, 'The creationist literature insists on using the title professor.' It is simply not true that Parker's best-known book is *Dry Bones*—this is a children's cartoon book! Plimer conveniently also doesn't tell you that Parker, in his pro-evolution days, was author or coauthor of several widely used texts on biology, including DNA, at the request of John Wiley and Sons. This major publisher would scarcely have asked someone from an unknown university with a questionable degree to undertake this task!

P. 206

Parker has never 'synthesized a fake exhibit', and this is an outrageous smear.

P. 207

We of course reject the suggestion that there is any racism, latent or otherwise, in our literature. In fact quite the opposite. We have spoken out strongly against racism, in particular the tremendous boost it received from Darwin's theory. (See for example our article 'Darwin's Bodysnatchers' which tells how Aborigines were deliberately killed to provide specimens for evolutionary research—*Creation Ex Nihilo*, vol. 14, no. 2, March 1992, pp. 16-18.)

P. 209

Readers interested in the true story behind the errors in the first *Quote Book* (which obviously were not deliberate, since this was too obvious a club to hand our enemies) should read the introduction to *The Revised Quote Book* in full.

PP. 210-211

Every care within our means was taken with *The Revised Quote Book*, and both the statement in the introduction by Dr Snelling as the editor and the statement by Carl Wieland in his letter to The Australian Baptist were made in good faith and in all honesty. Otherwise, we would have to be very foolish to make such strong statements. Notice that Dr Snelling actually predicted that ‘howls of protest will doubtless still issue forth’, because we knew that opponents like Plimer and Ken Smith (who has the dubious distinction of having been awarded the title (Co-) Skeptic of the Year by the Australian Skeptics in June 1986, because of his work as co-editor of an anti-creation book) so hate creationists and creation science that a potent weapon against evolutionary science such as *The Revised Quote Book* was, and still is, unable to be allowed to be credible. Consequently, we have here Plimer’s feeble attempt to discredit, in the hope that *The Revised Quote Book*’s sting would be neutralized. On the contrary, none of his criticisms has any substance or validity, so *The Revised Quote Book* remains a powerful witness against Plimer and his cohorts, and against the whole theory of evolution.

The revelation that the Moonies own *The Washington Times* is a complete red herring. So long as the newspaper itself had a good reputation, which it does, and is not an official publication of the Unification Church, which it isn’t, who owns the newspaper (which is usually not known to readers, and wasn’t to us) is absolutely irrelevant. Plimer’s subterfuge is akin to suggesting that if the Anglican Church of Australia purchased a controlling interest in the ownership of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, one could no longer trust anything the editor published in that newspaper as not being tainted by Anglican doctrine or thinking. This is of course nonsense.

As for quote no. 14, it is an accurate quote from both *The Washington Times* and Gale’s book (as demonstrated by Plimer), so that newspaper is not a dubious source after all. And despite Plimer’s claim, Gale’s book was not ‘readily available’ to us at the time. In any case, the fact that the previous sentence referring to ‘the problem confronting Darwin at the end of 1838’ was not included as part of the quote in *The Revised Quote Book* does not give ‘a different meaning from that written in the primary source’ as claimed by Plimer (p. 212). Indeed, even in 1859 Darwin’s theory still preceded his knowledge and he still simply did not know enough concerning the several natural history fields upon which his theory would have to be based. For example, in chapter 10 of *Origin of Species* Darwin admitted the problems of the fossil record for his theory, claiming the incompleteness of the geological record was at fault. In reality, it was his knowledge of the geological and fossil records that was limited and incomplete, exactly as the quote says. Plimer here is again manufacturing a case where there is none. The omission of the earlier sentence was definitely not a deception on our part, so there was absolutely nothing sinister in view, Plimer’s machinations notwithstanding.

P. 212

Notice how he makes it sound sinister that two quotes in the 1984 version were not reproduced in the upgrade. Presumably, when we produce the next edition at some future time, we will also be replacing some of the existing quotes with new, more recent and presumably better ones. What is wrong with that? Furthermore, his putting the word ‘corrected’ in quote marks makes it look like something shonky was done—but if a quote was wrong the first time round, then why should we not publish it correctly? And if a republished quote (he doesn’t tell us which quote) does have the opposite meaning, then he can’t have it both ways—if we are trying to twist ‘to get a particular meaning’ which supports our cause, why would we then reverse the meaning? The most likely story is that the truth has been ‘massaged’ in Plimer’s account, but we can’t judge without knowing to which quote he refers.

The masterstroke is Plimer's line when he says 'seven new misquotations, quotes out of context or errors have been added'. Think about this cleverly phrased line: to justify this, he would only have to point to one of these three categories (because he lists them as options). To find a 'quote out of context' is easy for the evolutionist lobby because anything which supports the creationist cause is by definition 'out of context' if the context of the whole article supported evolution. In fact, we have in no way tried to give the impression that these authors support creation—rather, that the factual statements they make are in the nature of admissions by hostile witnesses. Yet this clever phrase could leave the unsuspecting reader with the impression that there were lots of false quotations, which is not the case.

PP. 212-213

Plimer is again manufacturing 'evidence' when he launches into his spiel on quote no. 113. Contrary to his claim, this quote was correctly cited in *The Revised Quote Book* as coming from the 1956 issue of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The quote reads 'It cannot be denied that from a strictly philosophical standpoint geologists are here arguing in a circle. The succession of organisms has been determined by a study of their remains embedded in the rocks, and the relative ages of the rocks are determined by the remains of organisms that they contain.' Notice that Plimer does not reproduce this quote here in his book. Why? Presumably because he knows that if he had done so all of his astute readers would immediately recognize that not only was this 1929 statement still relevant and correct in 1956, but it is still relevant and absolutely correct in 1995! Even evolutionary palaeontologists such as David Raup and Niles Eldredge admitted in 1983 and 1985 respectively (quotes no. 115 and 116 in *The Revised Quote Book*) exactly what *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was quoting. So why didn't Plimer criticize those two quotes? Because he couldn't then bring in his amazing red herring about radioactive dating, which is nothing more than a smokescreen introduced by Plimer to avoid this potent fact—philosophically the fossil dating of rocks is based on circular reasoning, which is a logical fallacy that allows anything to be proved once it is initially assumed/believed to be true. It appears that Plimer is so afraid to face up to the truths revealed so powerfully by *The Revised Quote Book* that he must try to destroy its integrity by any means. Snelling did carefully check and recheck each quote and its source, and quote no. 113 is not wrong in any way, shape or form.

PP. 213-214

Plimer next tries to discredit editor Andrew Snelling's assurance that 'Often a much larger [sic] portion of an article than is necessary has been included' (p. 214). However, this remains true. The editor said 'often', not 'always'. There is no doubt that in the original full articles, the authors generally expressed their support for evolution, as in the example given. But, for example, the meaning of what Stansfield said in quote no. 97 was not 'exactly the opposite'. His opinion was, but not the meaning of what he actually wrote. His words were detailed and clear, and are a valuable admission. There is no point in our publishing support for evolution—it is clear to anyone that *The Revised Quote Book* consists of selective admissions, as stated, snipped out of writings which are otherwise favourable to evolution. So long as the admission itself has not been distorted, this is perfectly legitimate. If the cut-off mid-sentence had omitted something which meant that the normal interpretation which would be given on the writer's words was misleading, that would be cause for complaint. However, the reader is once again referred to the full quote as given by Plimer—there is no way in which the author (Stansfield) plays down or denies his previous comments, he just confirms the fact that he believes in the evolutionary/long ages viewpoint in spite of the uncertainties he documents. The uncertainties themselves are what many are not aware of, and what we aimed to highlight.

PP. 214-215

Notice that Plimer moves on to Gould's complaints of being misquoted, using them to link it to Dr Snelling's editorial responsibility for *The Revised Quote Book* (which is not what is in question with the Gould complaint) and then through a series of rhetorical questions accuses him of 'chicanery, duplicity, ...' and worse. This is sheer manipulative propaganda. As a sideline, it needs to be noted that Gould has mainly himself to blame for having been misunderstood (to the extent that this has indeed happened) if it refers to the fact that he is being quoted as believing that the fossil record includes no transitional forms. The following is from a letter from Gould's colleague, Dr Colin Patterson of the British Museum of Natural

History. It shows clearly that it was not only creationists who got the impression that that is what Gould was saying.

‘... I fully agree with your comments on the lack of direct illustration of evolutionary transitions in my book. If I knew of any, fossil or living, I would certainly have included them. You suggest that an artist should be used to visualise such transformations, but where would he get the information from? I could not, honestly, provide it, and if I were to leave it to artistic licence, would that not mislead the reader?’

‘I wrote the text of my book four years ago. If I were to write it now, I think the book would be rather different. Gradualism is a concept I believe in, not just because of Darwin’s authority, but because my understanding of genetics seems to demand it. Yet Gould and the American Museum people are hard to contradict when they say there are no transitional fossils. [emphasis added] As a palaeontologist myself, I am much occupied with the philosophical problems of identifying ancestral forms in the fossil record. You say that I should at least “show a photo of the fossil from which each type of organism was derived.” I will lay it on the line—there is not one such fossil for which one could make a watertight argument. The reason is that statements about ancestry and descent are not applicable in the fossil record. Is Archaeopteryx the ancestor of all birds? Perhaps yes, perhaps no: there is no way of answering the question. It is easy enough to make up stories of how one form gave rise to another, and to find reasons why the stages should be favoured by natural selection. But such stories are not part of science, for there is no way of putting them to the test.

‘So, much as I should like to oblige you by jumping to the defence of gradualism, and fleshing out the transitions between the major types of animals and plants, I find myself a bit short of the intellectual justification necessary for the job ...’.

—Personal letter (written 10 April 1979) from Dr Colin Patterson, Senior Palaeontologist at the British Museum of Natural History in London, to Luther D. Sunderland; as quoted in *Darwin’s Enigma* by Luther D. Sunderland, Master Books, San Diego, USA, 1984, pp. 89-90.

And having read many of Gould’s writings, we find it hard to avoid the conclusion that at least at one stage of his career, that is precisely what he was saying; at least until the famous Arkansas creation trial, when he seemed to shift ground somewhat, as a star witness for the anti-creation side.

PP. 215-218

Neither ICR, nor CSF, nor any other mainstream creation science group (to our knowledge) has ever been in favour of this sort of political lobbying, but no doubt it serves Plimer’s purposes to make the linkage.

P. 219

We are not familiar with the exact nature of the NSW State Government legislation, but our suggestion is that the Christian schools would not have objected to any requirement to teach evolution, rather it was probably the fact of insisting on ‘evolution only’. Plimer makes it sound as if Christian schools wish to censor the evidence for evolution, when it is in fact the anti-creation lobby that wishes to censor evidence for creation.

PP. 220-221

Plimer quotes Dr Henry Morris, but tries to make it sound as if Morris is in favour of banning books on evolution. That has never been the case.

The reason why we responded strongly to Barry Price’s book was not because it was ‘widely circulated’, but because it was so outrageously full of fabrications and falsehoods, as documented in our booklet *A Response to Deception*.

Plimer has another dig at the calibre of supporters of Creation Science Foundation; large numbers of them are, in fact, professionals, high school science teachers, nurses, etc. (as well as many medicos, specialists,

scientists and, yes, even the occasional university lecturer). Price used no ‘theological knowledge’ and used almost no science—it was a travesty of ethics almost from start to finish. The one episode already touched upon of Professor Rendle-Short’s fax was an attempt to alert the media to these amazing sorts of things going on, because we were clearly concerned that Plimer, in the process of advertising Price’s book, would repeat some of the false accusations he had made concerning, for example, our annual returns, and that it would be better to nip such false statements in the bud rather than go through the tedious process of requiring media apologies, etc. It was clearly an appeal to the ethics of the media, not an attempt to get them to support creation, nor to suppress anti-creationist comment as such.

Plimer writes that Carl Wieland wrote to the publisher of the Price manuscript saying that he should have been allowed to correct it before it was published. Neither Dr Wieland nor anyone at CSF has any recollection of this, which seems highly unlikely. If (and it is a big ‘if’) any correspondence took place, it might have been a suggestion that publishers of books containing libellous charges could usefully check the factual basis of such charges with the intended victims before publication.

PP. 221-222

Notice how when any individual offers to subscribe to our *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* for a library, this is an example of libraries coming ‘under attack’. Emotive, histrionic language to the very end.

Furthermore, we have not heard of the World Creation Science Association or their alleged circular letter. It may, in fact, have been one individual acting off his own inclination, or it may even have been written by a skeptic—who knows?

P. 223

We have never, ever (nor, we feel sure, has any other mainstream creationist) suggested censoring or correcting evolutionary sections in books. However, concerning the person called Ray E. Martin, the reader will find some eye-opening documentation in the item by Jim Lippard (mentioned earlier, and possibly sent to you with these notes) concerning the cynical use by Plimer of this whole issue. Lippard’s documentation also allows readers to speculate on whether Plimer himself has cut pages out of library books to discredit creationists.

PP. 223-226

We know of no prominent creationist who has ever stated that Dawkins ‘doubts evolution’. *The Blind Watchmaker* is pro-evolution from start to finish. We look forward to being enlightened by Plimer as to where in mainstream creationist literature such a claim appears. As far as our own detailed knowledge of the creationist literature is concerned, this appears to be another attempt to mislead. Perhaps somebody quoted Dawkins admitting that there was an incredibly small chance of getting one phrase of 23 letters by random processes. One should realize that in origin-of-life theorizing, before there is a self-reproducing mechanism there can be no natural selection, and one should then realize that random shuffling has to achieve much more than simply lining up 23 biochemical ‘letters’ in a row. Because of this, it would be highly appropriate for anti-evolutionists to use Dawkins’ admission, since the ‘cumulative natural selection’ argument breaks down here. The amazing thing is that on p. 225 Dawkins himself (quoted by Plimer) fudges this point by using the cumulative selection argument in relation to the statistical chance against a working enzyme molecule. Working enzymes are necessary for even the ‘simplest’ conceivable form of life. (Note also that there are 26 letters to the alphabet, not 23 à la Plimer.)

PP. 226-227

John Morris has in fact been quite open in his withdrawal of support for the ‘human’ tracks. CSF (and to our knowledge, ICR) withdrew his book as soon as the retraction was made. We don’t know where Plimer gets the idea from that it ‘is still being sold’, but on his past performance in Australia, all he has to do is find one obscure bookshop that hasn’t heard about the retraction and that would be enough for him to be able

to gleefully state that it 'is still being sold', and another misleading impression notches another nail in the creationists' coffin (in his view).

P. 228

It is misleading to state that CSF has done little to inform their readership that there is huge doubt over the 'human' tracks. We published a statement on the subject as far back as 1986 (*Creation Ex Nihilo*, 8(2), March 1986, p. 37), and inserted disclaimers in those books we were selling at the time which had any mention of the tracks. And the claims listed at the bottom of p. 228 concerning other man-tracks and alleged conspiracies to cover up the evidence have never been supported by us. Plimer is again indulging in guilt-by-association propaganda.

P. 229

He again implies that we are 'unwilling to abandon past claims', which is demonstrably untrue. And when it comes to substantiating 'preordained dogma' he dismisses the claim by Dr Clifford Burdick (geologist) to have found human footprints and sandal prints in rock containing trilobite fossils, because of his own 'preordained dogma' that this could not be, according to standard evolutionary belief. If he had actually done research to show that this find was wrongly interpreted, that would be a different matter altogether.

Note also the emotive description of museums being 'under fire'. Evolution oriented museums (blatantly stating 'Evolution is a Fact' in their displays, for example) are doing very nicely, actually.

P. 230

Because Plimer has already tried to make Christians who believe in creation look as if they are part of some sort of cultic conspiracy, the fact that Christians have complained about evolutionary exhibits makes it look as if this is some sort of 'orchestrated campaign'. It is not.

Note that we do not teach that science is 'anti-Christianity' or that scientists 'who are anti-creationist' are 'also anti-religious'. Just another bit of useful rhetoric for Plimer.

PP. 231-232

The statement by the Geological Society of Australia (GSA) is accepted by CSF as the belief of the overwhelming majority of GSA's members. However, it is wrong to imply (p. 232) that it is the view of all scientists in Australia. It is not even the view of all geologists in Australia, as we know of several geologists who support our stand, but are afraid of employment pressure and worse if they make their stand public. In view of such things that have already happened in this country, this is no idle fear. Legal threats are, in fact, the specialty of Plimer, not CSF, who has threatened this Foundation with legal action, and at one stage even threatened legal action 'on behalf of the Geological Society of Australia' (letter on file). When we asked the Geological Society of Australia whether Plimer had their authority to so threaten, they would neither affirm nor deny this. All that such statements do is to simply affirm the fact that the vast majority of people who have been through 'the system', which Plimer is attempting to further make immune from openness and critical (including self) appraisal, are convinced evolutionists.

P. 232

Note that creation is critiqued as being 'not open to empirical test'. However, there is no empirical test which can demonstrate unequivocally that reptiles once upon a time turned into birds, for example. Both creation and evolution have empirical and metaphysical aspects. Note how often anti-creationists claim that the creation model is non-falsifiable (non-testable) and therefore not science, yet in the very next breath they claim to have falsified it scientifically!

Further down the page Plimer says, 'To claim that creationism is Christianity is not true'. If Christianity is defined as the set of beliefs attributable to the teachings of Jesus Christ, then there is no doubt that the Lord Jesus believed in the historical truth of Genesis.

PP. 232-233

Reading the bottom of p. 232 and the top line of p. 233, one could get the impression that no scientist believed in a young earth before 1859, and that this idea only arose afterwards 'in order to kill the theory of evolution'. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is correct that the idea of long ages began to come into vogue leading up to the time of Darwin, but many of the eminent scientists pre-Darwin believed in a young earth. In fact, before uniformitarianism in geology became a dominant philosophy, a young earth would have been the dominant viewpoint, being so clearly supported by Holy Scripture. What's more, as pointed out earlier, theories of evolution were around before 1859. Plimer is here conveniently rewriting history to suit his purposes.

Plimer makes an odd attempt to link the alleged aberrations of flamboyant preachers of the past with the creation science movement.

We have never stated or implied in any shape or form that 'Genesis contains all the information necessary for life in this technological age'—another totally misleading, over-the-top, off-the-planet comment. We believe that Genesis (in common with every other book in the Bible) contains truth, but not exhaustive truth.

P. 234

Notice that any school board members who happen to be Christians and who believe in the historic, orthodox view of creation are denounced as 'cult members'.

Also, how nonsensical is the bland statement that 'medicine would be meaningless without the theory of evolution'. Even a committed evolutionist would surely have to recognize this as nonsense. Neither anatomy, physiology, pharmacology nor clinical science depends in any way on any evolutionary assertion being true. There is a small group of medicos now trying to introduce evolutionary concepts into medical thinking—but 'Darwinian medicine' as it is called, has yet to catch on. For example, a cough is said to be a protective mechanism, selected for in our evolutionary past. But how does this advance our practical knowledge any more than the belief that it is a protective mechanism designed to perform exactly this same function?

P. 235

CSF and the other educational creation science organizations we know of had, and have, nothing to do with these sorts of legal manoeuvrings.

P. 236

No mainstream creationist group we know of has ever dismissed the Arkansas case as being 'successful action by a group of scientists against good God-fearing Christians'. The fact that the ACLU went to great pains to find theologically liberal clergy to defend evolution was in fact highlighted by the creationist organizations we know of—certainly that is what we would have wanted to highlight.

As a passing comment, how sad it is that when Christians wanted equal time for both views, this was called 'to foist its religious beliefs on others', but when evolutionists censor all views on origins apart from those which fit with the religious view of philosophical materialism (that natural processes have generated all order and complexity in the universe) this is regarded as somehow religiously 'neutral'.

P. 238

It should be noted that Creation Science Foundation has at all times been completely open about its biblical and Christian basis and presuppositions. When other groups in the United States were trying to define the creation model without including religious terms, they were unintentionally laying themselves open to charges of deception.

P. 239

Re the allegation by Plimer that the textbooks used in the course at the Livermore school contained Henry Morris's claim on craters on the moon, etc. The book Plimer mentions, *The Twilight of Evolution*, does not even talk about moon craters, etc. This is something that he should know well, because it was clearly pointed out in our A Response to Deception rebuttal of Price's book, to which Plimer refers. What Plimer may be referring to is a small book put out well over 20 years ago in which Morris very tentatively discusses the possible role of 'some kind of heavenly catastrophe' associated with primeval spiritual warfare giving rise to features of catastrophism in our solar system. He uses words such as 'the possibility is at least open' and 'perhaps they reflect'. At no stage does he make a dogmatic claim, and in any case, this never became a plank of the modern mainstream creation movement.

Notice that the prejudicial comment 'did the creationists proud' makes it seem as if the creationist movement in general would support what this one man did.

PP. 240-241

We regret that someone used in one Grade 2 classroom in Victoria (presuming that the report is accurate) material which we would not endorse. Of course, Plimer is quite happy to leave the reader with the impression that we have 'by stealth' introduced it into State schools. Regarding the Queensland issue, we know of no State school in which biology teachers have ever been forced to teach creationism. Neither would we want to see such a situation of compulsion, as already mentioned.

P. 241

Towards the bottom of the page Plimer makes it look as if we have claimed our lack of intent to push into the State schools by legislation etc. in the past, but now we openly publish lists of school titles. We have always published lists of books and videos suitable for children at high school and primary school, and do not apologize that our books and videos are 'blatantly' Christian. We have not changed our position vis-à-vis the public school syllabus etc. one iota. If, as a result of education, Christian parents wish to counter the one-sided indoctrination of the school syllabus by giving the other point of view as well, then we are happy to provide material to help them do this in their homes.

P. 242

As a throwaway line Plimer says, 'The videos are also non-scientific', and gives as an example *Evolution: Fact or Belief?* Yet this deals exclusively with science, and interviews university science professors, giving their scientific opinions!

Concerning the video *Ethics Abused*—to say that it is 'shown in public and to schools' is somewhat misleading. It has never been shown, to our knowledge, in a high school or primary school. It has been shown by university Christian groups who requested it, and it was, in fact, prepared because Plimer was going around giving lectures saying all sorts of outrageous things against the Creation Science Foundation. The video's purpose was to correct what we regarded as an abuse of ethics (not science or religion, hence the video did not deal with these). This video documents events which would enable the public to make up its own mind as to the credibility of the allegations it had just heard. It was done because it was not possible for us to accede to all the requests from various student Christian groups, for example, asking for us to fly in and answer the accusations in person. We believe Plimer knows it is truthful—he calls it

‘actionable’ and in another place indicates that he is itching for a court case with the creationists. However, he did not initiate action. We maintain it is truthful.

Re his comment about the Rev. Fred Nile—he makes it sound as if this is just one more example of ‘political pressure’, when in fact Plimer has never had any evidence contradicting our assertion that we do not engage in this sort of thing.

Notice how he appears to misrepresent Mr Nile—if you read the article quoted on this page carefully, Nile is saying that he wants to introduce legislation to allow teaching of creationism. Yet Plimer makes it sound as if Nile wants only creation taught. It is in fact Plimer and Co. who want only dogmatic evolutionism taught. In fact, Nile was quoted in the *Sydney Sun-Herald* of November 20, 1994 as saying, ‘I’m not trying to ban evolution. I just don’t think it should be taught as a fact or as the only view, otherwise it’s propaganda.’

P. 243

Dr Snelling’s alleged duplicity on the ages of rocks is yet another example of Plimer misleading a lay audience that has little understanding of the issues. First of all, Plimer does not tell his readers that Dr Snelling was a junior author of the two papers published in the *Journal of Geochemical Exploration*. Indeed, in his bibliography on pp. 301-302 Plimer wrongly places Snelling first in the list of three authors, thus giving readers the clear impression that Snelling was the senior author with primary responsibility for the paper. Such was not the case.

Second, Plimer does not tell readers that these two papers were definitely not about the ages of any rocks. As the titles indicate, the primary focus of the papers was the evaluation/assessment of stable lead isotope measurements in uranium exploration, for which soil samples were collected and analyzed, not rocks. The mention of Archaean and Proterozoic rocks was a mere passing reference in a brief description of the geological setting.

Third, the terms Archaean and Proterozoic are regularly used in the creationist literature merely as descriptive terms to identify the geological systems or divisions of the rock record without any connotation as to the absolute ages of the rocks. Snelling had already done that, so lay creationists familiar with his writings could hardly be confused. Instead, the confusion arises only in Plimer’s mind because for him as a uniformitarian/evolutionist geologist these terms always automatically denote not only the geological system but the geological age, there being no other ages in his mind apart from those based on uniformitarian/evolutionary assumptions/beliefs. Both of the other authors, CSIRO scientists, knew at the time about Snelling’s creationist position and employment with CSF and so the writing of the papers was discussed in that context, but the use of these two geological-record terms was never disputed/questioned because age issues were not the focus of the papers.

Fourth, Plimer fails to remind his readers that the papers had to pass through many hands for review before publication—other CSIRO scientific colleagues, other mining company staff, the CSIRO divisional editor, the *Journal of Geochemical Exploration* editor, and two reviewers. All these people were committed evolutionists, so any creationist disclaimers/explanations with respect to such a trivial and inconsequential issue (in terms of the papers) would have been quickly expunged, which all authors knew, and as Plimer would also know.

When Plimer wrote his letter to Dr Snelling, Plimer was already known to be a vindictive enemy, having already perpetrated the ‘paper in the rock’ hoax (see pp. 256-264) on an unsuspecting Snelling. So when Plimer’s matter-of-fact letter arrived with its blatantly obvious ‘trick’ question intended to ‘trap’ him, Snelling answered, but on a matter-of-fact basis, not on any friendly basis as peers as incorrectly suggested by Plimer. And of course Plimer, as a professor of geology, already knew what those geological terms meant, so Snelling hardly needed to explain their meaning to him. In any case, Plimer would not, and does not, accept them as simply geological system labels as creationists do, so entering into such controversy was definitely inadvisable.

Plimer has omitted crucial details that put the events, papers and geological terms in a totally different light. Snelling's published writings are all scientific and wherever published they are not diametrically opposed to one another. There is no duplicity, or even hint thereof. Indeed, Plimer should find Snelling's paper on false isochron 'dating' at Koongarra published in the Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Creationism (Pittsburgh, 1994) to be very instructive. Not only does Snelling use these same geological-system terms when referring to the rocks of the Koongarra area, but he shows, as he did with his co-authors in the second of those two *Journal of Geochemical Exploration* papers, that the soil samples at Koongarra give a hopelessly faulty Pb-Pb isochron 'date' that is sheer geological nonsense. (Incidentally, Snelling references his JGen and other papers in this creationist scientific paper, refuting yet another Plimer accusation, see p. 247.) However, Plimer forgot to tell the readers of his book this detail also—hardly surprising as it would undermine his smear of Snelling, particularly as his respected evolutionist CSIRO colleagues were party to pointing out the same amazing false isochron and fortuitous 'date'. So while these two *Journal of Geochemical Exploration* papers were eminently successful in showing the viability of stable Pb isotopes as a uranium exploration technique in the Koongarra and surrounding region, they also revealed the non-viability of the Pb-Pb isochron 'dating' technique for assigning millions-to-billions of years 'ages' to the rocks of the region as stipulated by Plimer. But advertising such failure in his book would hardly make good press.

Note how Plimer deliberately contrasts the words 'scientific' and 'creationist'. This prejudicial approach implies that all of Dr Snelling's scientific papers (sometimes highly technical) in the refereed creationist literature are by definition not 'scientific' (because not evolutionist).

P. 244

Plimer's lack of concern for factual accuracy is further demonstrated by the fact that Dr Snelling has not been the editor of 'various quote books', but only *The Revised Quote Book*. He was once listed as 'technical editor' of our magazine, but has never been the 'editor' as such.

There is enormous distortion in the comments on p. 244 of Plimer's book—Dr Snelling has never concluded 'that the fossil record is hopelessly wrong'. Nor has he ever concluded that 'all the fossil-bearing sequences were formed in "Noah's Flood"'. As previously stated, virtually no creationist believes that. Furthermore, to critique a philosophical framework (uniformitarianism/evolutionism) underpinning many assumptions associated with one branch of geology (historical geology) is quite different from claiming that 'all geology ... is incorrect'. This claim is arrant nonsense. The science that underpins Snelling's Ph.D. thesis is describing the minerals in rocks and chemically analyzing them—totally empirical, reproducible-in-the-present science, not Plimer's belief system about the past.

Re Dr David Hendry—he is actually a long-time friend of Andrew Snelling, his family and his parents, although he disapproves of Andrew's creationist stance. Concerning the alleged denial of David's opportunity to speak—the facts make an interesting contrast. What happened was this: at a scientific creationist conference, one of Plimer's cohorts (Alex Ritchie) brought David Hendry into a meeting at which Andrew was speaking and as Andrew was finishing David stood up and began yelling emotionally from the back of the hall. It would appear that David had been put under the misapprehension that Andrew was telling the audience that his (creationist) view was somehow representative of mainstream geology and that the audience didn't know of his Ph.D. thesis on the Koongarra uranium deposit, written for a conventional perspective. This was most certainly not the case, and was of course very inflammatory, but appears to have been partly responsible for inducing Dr Hendry to publicly attack his long-time friend.

The other contributing factor appears to be the fact that David had received a lot of 'stick' from fellow academics and anti-creationists for having mentored a post-grad student who turned out to be a creationist. One can thus understand his embarrassing outburst, which was a way of releasing his tensions and giving a public demonstration of his own position in contrast to that of his former student. Things were quite different when Andrew and his family had a chance to explain the context to him, and he calmed down.

It is certainly true that while the yelling and interrupting was taking place, participants angrily rose from the floor and attempted to encourage him to cease. However, the way it reads sounds as if there was some sort of official rejection of Dr Hendry's applications to speak —totally untrue. Everyone present respected David's position and right to express his objections. That was never at issue or denied.

Notice how Plimer also manages to contradict himself and get it all wrong (yet again) in the space of a mere 10 lines. He first says 'Snelling's scientific publications all derive from his unpublished PhD thesis', but then says only eight lines later 'All of Snelling's scientific publications are from his PhD and related work on the Koongarra uranium deposit'. The truth is that neither statement is correct! Plimer failed to do his homework thoroughly, otherwise he would have included in his bibliography Snelling's paper (co-authored with CSIRO's Bruce Dickson and Angela Giblin) on 'The source of radium in anomalous accumulations near sandstone escarpments, Australia' (*Applied Geochemistry*, vol. 2, 1987, pp. 385-398) and recognized/reported that this paper had involved research and sampling of other geological areas, as well as the Koongarra area—the western Pine Creek Geosyncline, the Fish River area in the Gulf country of the Queensland-Northern Territory border, and in the Sydney Basin.

PP. 244-245

Because the readers of Plimer's book cannot easily check the actual content of Snelling's papers unless they go to a university geology library, Plimer abuses his responsibility as a geology professor by misrepresenting Snelling's papers. (After all, who would bother to check? If a geology professor says these things, people assume he must be right!) The fact is that dealing with isotopes from radioactive decay and the Precambrian (Archaean and Proterozoic) in his papers does not automatically signify 'old' rocks to a creationist, but only to ardent followers of uniformitarian/evolutionary geology. There is no discussion of 'old' rocks or 'the very long time for geological processes' in anything but passing references, and yet such comments are always reporting what evolutionist researchers have concluded, as evident from all the references Snelling (and his co-authors) make to other scientists and their papers from whence the claims/comments come. Isotopic analyses of radioactive decay products are simply analyses, not rock 'dates' unless a long age interpretation is applied, based on uniformitarian assumptions/beliefs. Archaean and Proterozoic, as we have already explained, are in the first instance only geology system labels applied to divisions of the rock record. But then Plimer can't tolerate a creationist being a real scientist, and especially one who has studied radioactive decay of uranium and published in the uniformitarian/evolutionist literature about the problems of using radioactive techniques to 'date' rocks, which Snelling has done with CSIRO co-authors. So he avoids the facts about Snelling's papers, and instead accuses Snelling of not mentioning in his papers his 'view that radioactive dating is invalid'.

Of course there is no mention of the Flood in Snelling's papers published in evolutionary science journals, because the mode of deposition of the rocks in the studied areas was not the focus of research. Discussion of the Flood is hardly relevant to soil geochemistry, groundwater chemistry, Pb isotopes in soils, He and Ra in groundwaters, geochemical techniques in uranium exploration, and the description of a uranium orebody and the minerals in it. Plimer fails to give his readers a true picture of Snelling's papers, otherwise he would mention that Snelling and his co-authors do deal with problems of radioactive 'dating' when they report in their *Journal of Geochemical Exploration* paper their finding of a false Pb-Pb isochron and 'date' from the soil samples they analyzed.

As for Setterfield's decreasing-light-speed theory, it is hardly relevant to Snelling's papers either, but Plimer can't restrain himself from having a side-swipe! In any case, Plimer knows that radioactive decay of uranium does not of itself imply a constant speed of light, unless one first assumes that decay rates have always been constant, which Plimer as a uniformitarian/evolutionist does (by faith).

At least Plimer gives Snelling due credit for continuing to publish in evolutionary scientific journals while employed by the Creation Science Foundation, so he obviously has continued to be, and still is, a 'real scientist' by Plimer's definition. However, it is not Snelling's fault that the international readership of his papers does not know from his papers that he does not believe in 'ages' for rocks of billions of years, for disclaimers/explanations have never (and would never have) made it into the papers due to reviewers

and editors. Furthermore, it is the uniformitarian/evolutionist mindset of such journals and readers that ensures that only 'accepted' terminology and conclusions are allowed, and that the 'accepted' terminology is only understood in terms of millions and billions of years. Remember, the terms 'Archaean' and 'Proterozoic' are in the first instance only geological system labels for divisions in the rock record; the millions and billions of years time connotation is placed on those terms only by uniformitarian/evolutionist assumptions. Thus there is no conflict between Snelling's overlapping series of papers.

PP. 245-246

Plimer asserts that 'the planet is 4500 million years old' as if that were a proven fact, which it is not. Discerning readers will already realize that such a claim is based on uniformitarian and evolutionary assumptions/beliefs held to unswervingly by faith. Allied to this is Plimer's insistence that, 'Geological processes can range from instantaneous time periods to those that take eons', but how would he or any other scientist know that beyond doubt, if they have not been around for those claimed eons to observe that those geological processes have always only ever been proceeding at such a snail's pace? Thus it should be obvious that Plimer's agenda is not simply scientific but religious—Snelling's beliefs clash with those of Plimer and the 'establishment'. That does not make Snelling in any way dishonest. (The Apostle Peter warned in 2 Peter 3:3-7 of scoffers who would be willingly ignorant and deliberately reject evidence of creation and the Flood.)

What's the big deal about the publication of Snelling's papers in evolutionary scientific journals never being heralded in the creationist press? Who else would be interested in the use of stable Pb isotope measurements in uranium exploration in the Koongarra area apart from a subset of readers of the *Journal of Geochemical Exploration*? Not even all geologists would be interested in the paper or read it, so does Plimer really expect ministers in churches, medical doctors, school teachers, families, etc. (who are found on the CSF mailing list) to be interested?

Plimer quotes correctly from Snelling's *Ex Nihilo* paper on Precambrian sediments, but then immediately misrepresents what he just quoted! Snelling suggests that 'Precambrian sediments containing fossils and organic remains were laid down during Noah's flood', whereas Plimer says that Snelling believes 'Precambrian sediments are the result of the "Great Flood"'. Note the crucial difference, which makes all the difference! There are enormous volumes of Precambrian sediments that do not contain fossils or organic remains which Snelling was not suggesting were deposited by the Flood, yet Plimer (who knows this) tries to make the unsuspecting reader think Snelling believes all Precambrian sediments were so deposited. Besides, as Plimer knows, Harvard-trained palaeontologist Dr Kurt Wise responded to Snelling's ideas re such Precambrian sediments and fossils with a counter-suggestion published subsequently in the *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* (of which Snelling is editor), all of which refutes Plimer's caricature of creationist geology being 'preordained dogma'.

Yes, the presence of fossils or organic material was used to construct the geological column, but assumptions regarding the succession of life (the so-called 'great chain of being'—a pre-Darwinian concept) and then evolution were used in the process also. Plimer has misunderstood and/or misrepresented the meaning of Snelling's comments here—Snelling was referring to which sediments may have been deposited by the Flood, and why should all sediment layers scattered around the globe containing the same fossils (e.g. the same trilobites) all have been deposited at exactly the same time, as uniformitarians/evolutionists assume? Snelling was not talking/writing about dismissing the geological column/record per se, because there's no question that the rock sequences exist. What Snelling was disputing were the assumptions leading to a particular interpretation of the rock record and offering some possible alternative criteria for interpreting the geological column within the creation/Flood biblical framework.

Of course, the geological column as propounded by Plimer and his uniformitarian/evolutionist colleagues 'has been checked and refined hundreds of times and, as a result of more than two centuries of rigorous scrutiny, has not been abandoned'. This is surely to be expected, for the checking, refining and rigorous scrutiny has all been conducted totally within a uniformitarian/evolutionary belief system. So of course the resultant interpretation of the geological record will always check out and never be abandoned, unless the

belief system behind the interpretation were to be questioned. Plimer's geological column has survived the test of time, not simply because it is based on evidence, but because the evidence is always interpreted with the same set of assumptions. What Snelling and his fellow creationist Ph.D. earth scientists are working on is a better interpretation of the geological record within a biblical framework of earth history with which even more evidence will be consistent and better explained.

PP. 246-247

Plimer again plays fast and loose with the facts when it comes to his 'discussions' of Dr Snelling's 1990 paper on the Koongarra uranium deposits published by the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy in Geology of the Mineral Deposits of Australia and Papua New Guinea. That Dr Snelling was asked by Denison Australia Pty Ltd (not Noranda as wrongly asserted by Plimer on p. 248), his former full-time employers for whom he still consults, and the editor of the above-named prestigious volume, speaks volumes in itself for his integrity and for the respect with which he has been held by his peers in the mining industry. Yet Plimer again twists the facts, knowing that his claims and selective quotations out of context (something he has earlier accused creationists of doing) cannot and/or will not be easily checked by the average reader.

Because of the publicity earlier generated by these scurrilous accusations, and as a measure of the seriousness with which the CSF Board viewed this attack on Dr Snelling's integrity, the chairman of the CSF Board issued the following statement:

STATEMENT RE KOONGARRA MATTER

This statement concerns the matter of an article on Koongarra uranium deposits written by Dr Andrew Snelling (one of the members of the Board of this Foundation as well as a valuable employee) utilizing geological designations such as 'mya' (millions of years ago) in describing the ages of various formations or the duration of various processes. This has been the basis for charges of "duplicity" and "lying" by opponents of creation ministries.

Understanding the context in which Dr Snelling wrote is important. The mining corporation for which he consults part-time asked him to contribute to a significant specialist text on the geology of Australian ore deposits. He was asked to review all the published information on Koongarra and to summarize the research of other people, whose publications he has in fact extensively referenced. The opinions of these other researchers naturally involve the standard terminology and conventional beliefs in millions of years, for example.

The Foundation acknowledges that a reader unaware of this context could be led by parts of the article to believe that it was the writer's opinion that in fact the ages of certain objects were millions of years. While acknowledging that it would have been better for the wording to make this distinction more clearly, we recognize that any caveats or explanatory comments inserted into the text by Dr Snelling for this purpose would certainly have been deleted by the editors (who, incidentally, along with Dr Snelling's secular part-time employers, are fully aware of his own position).

It is unfortunate that those Skeptics attempting to imply that Dr Snelling was trying to conceal his creationist views from the secular geological community in order to retain respectability do not tell the full truth; namely, that Dr Snelling has more than once published spirited defences of his creation/Flood/young earth position in the most open forum possible in the Australian geological community, the newsletter of the Geological Society of Australia*.

We affirm our belief in Andrew Snelling's scientific and personal integrity, Christian character and unswerving commitment to Scripture.

(Signed G. Peacock)

Chairman

**The Australian Geologist* No. 68 20/9/88 pp 16-21. Also, No. 71, 20/6/89 p. 18.

However, there is more that can be said which exposes the nature of Plimer's tactics. It is true that Plimer has correctly quoted from Dr Snelling's paper, the quotes showing that Snelling did use the terms 'Archaean', 'Proterozoic' and 'Myr', but the full context that Plimer leaves out puts a different light on the whole matter. Far from there being 'no cross-reference to other authors' as charged by Plimer, the truth is that such cross-references to other authors are there in Snelling's paper, but Plimer left them out of his quotes. Snelling, in fact, says:

'The regional geology has been described in detail by Needham and Stuart-Smith (1980), and by Needham (1984). Hegge et al. (1980) compared the similar geologic settings of the four major uranium deposits of the region—Ranger One, Jabiluka, Koongarra and Nabarlek.'

Then follows the description of the regional geology as quoted in part by Plimer, but this introductory statement makes it quite clear that this description that follows is a summary of what Needham, Stuart-Smith and Hegge et al. have written about the regional geology. Those cross-references to Needham, Stuart-Smith, and Hegge et al.'s work are fully listed in the extensive reference list at the end of Snelling's paper, so there is no hiding the fact of where Snelling obtained this regional geological description. Because Needham, Stuart-Smith, and Hegge et al. had used the standard terminology of Archaean, Proterozoic and Myr, it would have been totally unethical for Snelling to insert his own reinterpretation of the regional geology and the time-scales instead of faithfully reporting from his sources.

Besides, any caveat, disclaimer or reference to his earlier work in the creationist literature on the Precambrian (where the same terminology is used for ease of identification) was definitely out of the question, because the paper was first rigorously scrutinized by two Denison staff members before being submitted to the book's editor, who then passed the paper by at least two reviewers, one of whom was Needham! There is no way that Needham, the expert on the regional geology because of having spent many years in the field mapping the region in his employment with the then Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics, would have tolerated any deviation in Snelling's paper from his (Needham's) description of the regional geology and the terminology he used, or any caveats, disclaimers, creationist references, etc. Snelling's paper was in that sense not all his own work, as erroneously claimed by Plimer, being in no small part a bringing together in a comprehensive summary the work of others, as the reference list at the end of the paper clearly substantiates. Indeed, this was the 'brief' given to Dr Snelling by Denison and the volume's editor.

Thus this whole charade of Plimer's to try to smear Dr Snelling with duplicity and lack of integrity is totally mischievous. Remember, the terms Archaean and Proterozoic are in the first instance only labels applied to divisions of the geological rock record, and the millions and billions of years rock 'ages' are only imposed on those terms by the geological establishment because of its uniformitarian/evolutionary mindset. It should be noted that in spite of Plimer's caricature and the accusations about Snelling and his Koongarra paper, the two papers by Dr Snelling on the Koongarra area that appear in the Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Creationism (Pittsburgh, 1994)—one on garnet compositions and regional metamorphism, and the other on false Pb-Pb isochrons—both contain a description of the regional geology and the Koongarra uranium deposit virtually identical in to that which Plimer is complaining about in Snelling's 1990 Koongarra paper (as does a paper in our *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, **9**(1), 1995). The creationist reviewers, editors and conference attendees knew exactly what Snelling was talking about—geological record terminology and uniformitarian 'ages' of rocks as labels and descriptors—and none 'raised an eyebrow', shouted 'duplicity' or doubted Snelling's integrity.

Until creationist geologists come up with a new set of terms and descriptors more compatible with the biblical model for earth history and its geological record we are stuck with still using the terminology associated with the evolutionists' interpretation of the geological column. That is why Snelling made the quoted comment in his 1991 *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* paper about creationist geologists needing 'to avoid being bound by the evolutionists' geological column and associated terminology', while before and since he continues to use the evolutionists' terminology as purely labels and descriptors.

PP. 247-248

Concerning the video Scientists Say 'No!' to Evolution—this was produced by a professional video producer (we were told) at the request of the university chaplain (Dr Jeff Hammond) who arranged the meeting at the University of Melbourne in October 1992. To our knowledge, the only question cut out was a long back-and-forth argument between O'Neill and the university chaplain—not on any scientific question, but concerning the terms of the proposed debate from which O'Neill had backed away. From our memory, Dr Hammond's testimony about his recollection of events was not edifying to O'Neill. Certainly the snide Plimer innuendo that it may have contained something damaging to us is untrue (Plimer was not in attendance). If anything, the deleted remarks were damaging to O'Neill and Plimer's cause.

Anyone who has ever seen the transcript of a spoken conversation would realize how often things said spontaneously come out rather garbled. However, it is important to know that Dr Snelling had read the scurrilous pamphlet which was being handed around by people on that occasion who, unable to properly challenge creation on scientific grounds, were trying to attack his integrity. The minute this woman got up with her voice dripping with sarcasm and referring to the leaflet, his attention was focused on the leaflet. His comment, 'It is not correct,' was most probably referring to the leaflet. In the context, it looks as if he was denying having published on Koongarra. There is no way that he would have consciously denied such a thing because he knows that everybody knows that he has published many times on Koongarra—even his Ph.D. thesis was on Koongarra. It was also in the context of the last part of her statement which was 'which is older than 2000 million years old'. Snelling does not believe that to be the case, therefore he did not lie, as Plimer claims, when he said, 'It is not correct'. Neither the pamphlet's insinuations, nor the statement that Koongarra was older than 2,000 million years, was correct. And Snelling did not publish his belief that Koongarra was older than 2,000 million years, which is what the pamphlet was implying and which Dr Snelling was geared up to respond to from having seen the pamphlet just beforehand.

But Dr Snelling's response, 'It is not correct', was also appropriate for yet another (third) reason. This refers to the claim in the scurrilous leaflet, and repeated by the woman in her question, that evolutionary geologists believe that the Koongarra uranium deposit is older than 2,000 million years. Those uniformitarian/evolutionist geologists who are informed (and Plimer should be because as a professor of geology his speciality is ore deposit geology, and he claims to have read Snelling's 1990 Koongarra paper), would know that no geologist has claimed that the Koongarra uranium deposit is older than 2,000 million years. Based on the work of Page et al. (1980) and Maas (1987, 1989) the evolutionary 'age' estimate for the Koongarra uranium deposit is between 1,650 and 1,550 million years old. So neither uniformitarian/evolutionist geologists nor Dr Snelling believe the Koongarra uranium deposit is older than 2,000 million years.

Thus the statement made in the leaflet and repeated by the woman questioner was totally incorrect, and Snelling was not lying as claimed by Plimer, but was absolutely correct on several counts when he said, 'It is not correct'. Yet Plimer immediately goes on to agree with Snelling when he says, 'it is not the believed age by evolutionists'. So Plimer knew all along that Snelling was in reality quite truthful in saying that it is not correct that the Koongarra uranium deposit is older than 2,000 million years, but he still accused Snelling of lying.

Snelling appears to have made an inadvertent slip of the tongue when he said, 'you wouldn't see'—should it have been 'you would see'? No, for once Plimer is absolutely correct when he writes, 'With his second reply, Snelling was quite correct and it is not the believed age by evolutionists.' What Dr Snelling was saying was that if the woman and the audience read the article (his 1990 Koongarra paper), they would not see that 'older than 2000 million years old' is the believed age by the evolutionists. Why? Because what they would have seen Snelling reporting in his paper was that the 'age' believed by the evolutionists is 1,650-1,550 million years.

However, Plimer is not correct when he then says that, 'It is the scientifically measured age which Snelling, as sole author, has published'. What Snelling published in his 1990 Koongarra paper was that the pattern of alteration around the uranium ore confirms that the mineralization must post-date both the overlying

Kombolgie Formation and the reverse fault at Koongarra, since it occupies the breccia zones generated by the post-Kombolgie reverse faulting. He then went on to report what evolutionist geologists Page et al. (1980) and Maas (1987, 1989) have published regarding the evolutionary 'age' of the Kombolgie formation and the timing of mineralization, derived by interpretation of scientifically measured isotopic ratios (not the scientifically measured age as incorrectly claimed by Plimer) using uniformitarian/evolutionist assumptions/beliefs. Snelling was not 'caught', and he had no duplicity to explain, so he didn't have to try to explain.

Plimer then says 'Wieland took over ... and suggested ... that Snelling was obliged to publish his 1990 scientific paper as part of his employment requirements'. In fact, to show the misleading nature of Plimer's comments on this, and his snide insinuation that there was a misleading/'wonderfully ambiguous' answer given, the following is exactly what was said:

Snelling: 'I was asked by the company and by the editor to bring together a summary of the published information in the evolutionary literature on that deposit, and this document (referring to the pamphlet) doesn't fully quote the article that I wrote, because I also referenced all the authorities that were being referred to. I wasn't asked to give my beliefs or opinion—I was asked to summarize and bring together, fully referenced, all that was in the evolutionary literature.'

Wieland: 'I'd like to point out that the implication of this sort of propaganda is that somehow Dr Snelling is "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds" and trying to hide his creationist position from the geological community. Let me say that these same people that put this out do not tell you that they know very well that Dr Snelling has flown his flag very high by publishing a spirited defence of creation/Flood in the organ of the Geological Society of Australia, *The Australian Geologist*, on more than one occasion, and of course he's here now making it very clear where he stands. I think that when people have to resort to this sort of thing rather than to scientific argument it's a sad day.'

Note that Wieland said nothing about Snelling's employers. At this point it is worthwhile that readers refer back (p. 90, ff of these notes) to the fuller treatment of, and CSF statement on, the innuendoes and other accusations made against Snelling because of his 1990 Koongarra paper which will put this quoted conversation in perspective. Snelling 'was asked' in 1988 by Denison Australia Pty Ltd (not 'obliged ... as part of his employment requirements' as Plimer incorrectly claimed was suggested by Wieland) to write that scientific paper that was eventually published in 1990. Dr Snelling was employed by Denison, not Noranda. In 1988 and 1990 Snelling was both an employee of the Creation Science Foundation and still engaged as a consultant geologist to Denison—so what? Denison wanted a Koongarra paper in this prestigious volume on Australian ore deposits, and they wanted the man who had been continuously involved in the field and in research on the Koongarra project since 1975, and who was still their consultant, to write the paper, so they asked Dr Snelling. He was neither required nor coerced, but accepted the invitation, both from Denison and the volume's editor. Plimer is again way off the mark.

P. 249

Bruce Dickson and Brian Gulson, both CSIRO scientists, are quite correct in saying that Dr Snelling was not under pressure or coercion from either them or anyone else to write the two *Journal of Geochemical Exploration* papers with them. Furthermore, Snelling agreed to the use of the words Archaean and Proterozoic because their usage was unavoidable, due to the fact that they were an integral part of the terminology of the regional geology of the area, being used on all the maps and in all the reports, papers, etc. In any case, as we have noted before, these terms are, in the first instance, only labels used to designate divisions of the geological record, and it is only within the uniformitarian/evolutionary mindset/belief system that the terms have been assigned ages of millions and billions of years. Thus for Snelling the words have no millions and billions of years age connotations and there is, therefore, no conflict or contradiction with his creationist position or writings, contrary to the snide assertions by Plimer. Plimer is making much ado about nothing in his propaganda campaign.

Plimer is at least correct when he writes that Snelling's 1979 Mineralium Deposita paper with Dr Bruce Dickson demonstrated that the disequilibrium of the uranium/daughter isotopes in the Koongarra uranium

deposit meant that radioactive 'age' determination using isotopes in disequilibrium is folly. How could he not be truthful about this paper? If he weren't, his evolutionary colleagues would quickly learn of it, and there would be great consternation over the embarrassing 'loss' of their 'champion' fighting those dreaded creationists. Of course, his colleagues don't bother to check his comments on creationist writings.

And he is yet again misleading here. He claims that Snelling, having written with Dickson in *Mineralium Deposita* in 1979 that isotopic disequilibrium at Koongarra renders radioactive 'age' determinations using isotopes in disequilibrium 'is folly', then wrote an article in *Ex Nihilo* (vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 44-57) claiming that the radioactive 'age' determinations gave the ore an 'age' of zero years, thus deliberately misleading his lay creationist readership into thinking the technique was valid. This is utter nonsense and totally untrue, as is patently clear to anyone who takes the trouble to read Snelling's *Ex Nihilo* paper. To quote from the abstract/summary which appears in large bold type at the beginning of the paper:

'The evidence presented serves to demonstrate conclusively that the U/Pb system in this uranium deposit has been so open that it is impossible to be sure of the precise history of U and Pb in any sample selected for dating, making any age determinations meaningless. The Th/Pb age of the deposit, indicated by the published results, is zero years, a contrasting and significant result.'

Snelling could not have made it any clearer, so it is Plimer who misleads his readership and not Snelling. How can a professor of geology say this? Snelling's comment about an 'age' of zero years was as an appendix to the paper and was being used as subsidiary evidence that U/Th/Pb 'dating' of the ore was meaningless, all of which is totally consistent with Snelling and Dickson's conclusions in their 1979 *Mineralium Deposita* paper. It is not Snelling who is guilty of deceit and scientific fraud. In the abstract Snelling says (repeating the previously quoted sentence):

'... making any age determinations meaningless. The Th/Pb age of the deposit, indicated by the published results, is zero years, a contrasting and significant result.'

The context of the statement about a zero 'age' is quite clear—any 'age' determinations are meaningless, including the zero years 'age'. So why is the Th/Pb zero age 'contrasting and significant'? Snelling clearly says why in the appendix—'contrasting' because the published 'age' of the uranium ore at that time (Hills and Richards, 1976) was 1800 Myr with a remobilisation/resetting at 870 Myr, making a zero 'age' quite a contrast indeed; and significant because if 'the $^{232}\text{Th}/^{208}\text{Pb}$ age is taken as the standard isotopic Pb clock', then the 'consensus radiometric age of the Koongarra uranium deposit is 0yrs, since this is the only isotopic Pb date supported directly by a majority of samples.' That's all! If any U/Pb radioactive 'age' determinations are meaningless, then so is this zero years result.

Why then is Plimer making a fuss? Because he needs to manufacture accusations since Snelling has not practised deceit or deliberate scientific fraud, or misled lay creationist audiences using his genuine scientific qualifications. Any remaining doubts about these matters should be soundly laid to rest by Dr Snelling's paper on 'The failure of U-Th-Pb "dating" at Koongarra, Australia' in the *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, 9(1), 1995, pp. 71-92.

P. 250

It is common knowledge among creationist circles about the de facto blacklist of creationist authors. It is an easy matter to challenge one to 'provide the evidence' since the challengers would know that such evidence could never be forthcoming by definition. Such a blacklist would clearly be unethical and would almost certainly be on an unofficial basis. It is simply a matter of editors being aware (or made aware) of who the creationist authors are so that they don't end up with egg on their faces as they did when they published creationist Robert Gentry's work on polonium halos in *Nature*, *Science*, etc.

Concerning the integrity of scientific publishers, etc. —serious discrimination against creationists has been well documented in the books *Creation's Tiny Mystery* and *The Criterion*. Many creationists of note

Table of Contents

[Introduction—p.52](#)

[PP. 54–100](#)

[PP. 101–149](#)

[PP. 150–200](#)

[PP. 200–249](#)

[PP. 250–Conclusion](#)

have experienced it personally, and one only has to look at the recent case of Forrest M. Mims III who was actually openly told by *Scientific American* that he was not being employed in future as a science writer despite his qualifications, because he admitted to belief in creation! (The account was reported in *Creation Ex Nihilo* 13(2), March-May 1991, pp. 16-17.) Furthermore, Dr Snelling would not have claimed that all journals have the same detailed list—but in general, the major journals know full well who the prominent creationist scientists are. This would not mean that their work would automatically not be published, but it would be very, very closely scrutinized to ensure that it gave no credibility for any of the creationist positions of the author. The generalization of a blacklist is stretched to absurdity if it is presumed that therefore a person would never be allowed to publish something which was totally non-creationist, and which was an important contribution to international science (as Snelling's papers have been), independent of any origins philosophies.

And in fact, Plimer makes it clear that creation science, by definition, 'would not be accepted by the editorial board of any respectable scientific journal' (p. 251). Also, the pages cited earlier in W. Bird's scholarly book are very definitive for the serious inquirer. (Ref. *The Origin of Species Revisited*, Philosophical Library, New York, vol. II, 1987, pp. 403-406.)

Actually, Dr Snelling is able to demonstrate that the rejection of a paper he wrote by an international scientific journal was undoubtedly because he is a creationist. The paper involved geological descriptions and documentation of features of a sequence of strata, and the conclusions drawn strongly suggested catastrophic deposition. The journal editor (a European) communicated that the paper had been sent to two reviewers — one in Europe and the other in Australia, the latter being a staff member at the university in the area which was the subject of the paper. This reviewer had personally met Snelling and knew first-hand of his creationist stance.

When the editor reported back to Snelling about the results of the reviews, he indicated that the European reviewer was quite enthusiastic about the paper and had recommended its publication, whereas the Australian reviewer had been guardedly negative without stating reasons. Indeed, his official reviewer's response form had very few comments on it and indicated no major reasons why the paper should not be published after minor modifications. Yet the editor indicated in his letter in a fumbling manner that he had decided not to go ahead and publish the paper—without an adequate explanation or reason! Thus the European reviewer, who did not know Snelling, had been extremely positive, while the Australian reviewer had written very little but was only guardedly negative, a situation which on balance should have tipped the scales in favour of publication. So why was the editor fumbling with this decision? And if the Australian reviewer had written very little on the official response form that Snelling would be shown, what did he write unofficially to the editor that caused the paper to be rejected against the outward official appearance of the on balance assessment, and what made the editor fumble his communication of the unfavourable decision? It is hard not to conclude that it was because of Snelling's creationist stance known to the Australian reviewer.

PP. 251-252

There is nothing that Snelling has written in the scientific literature that 'has shown that the Earth is billions of years old'. None of his work has demonstrated this; as the statement above makes clear, he may have been writing within the same assumptive framework, but it is false and defamatory to equate this with 'knowingly committed scientific fraud'. The words are used by Plimer as emotive 'buzz words' and have no logical backing. All scientific reasoning legitimately takes place within such frameworks—implicit or explicit. In other words, assuming that such-and-such is right, then such-and-such ... It would be different if someone had openly written in favour of the time frameworks; they would then be able to be accused of duplicity, but it would still not be 'scientific fraud' if their work was fair and accurate within that framework. However, as stated, this is not applicable in Dr Snelling's case (see earlier discussion).

Concerning Piltdown Man and other scientific fraud—this is not a major argument used by us, and we certainly do not use any such argument to state that one 'cannot trust the body of science and scientists'. We have used it as an example of the way in which enormous bias can colour one's understanding of the

facts. It has less to do with the one or few people who implemented the hoax, but more with the fact that the scientific community was thoroughly taken in for an entire generation. The fact is that it was not even a clever fraud and did not require an enormous 'investment in time and money' to uncover—Plimer has his facts wrong. Furthermore, the perpetrator(s) of this fraud cannot have been 'totally discredited' because there is still serious debate as to who it really was.

PP. 252-253

Notice also how Plimer makes it sound as if the illustration of Nebraska Man in *The Illustrated London News* (Plimer incorrectly calls it *The London Illustrated News*) was simply a 'beat-up story' by 'a popular magazine', implying that evolutionist scientists had nothing to do with it. Once again the reader is subtly misled. The facts are as follows:

The tooth was found by geologist Harold Cook who felt that it closely approached the human size. He sent it to Dr Henry Fairfield Osborn of the American Museum of Natural History, who said, 'It looks to me as if the first anthropoid ape of America had been found.' (This information is documented in Sir Arthur Keith's *The Antiquity of Man*, 1925.) A leading tooth authority, Dr W.K. Gregory, declared that Osborn was right. In April 1922, Osborn proudly presented the tooth to the world and the artist A. Forestier drew the reconstruction, which was featured as a double-page spread in *The Illustrated London News* of June 24, 1922, pp. 942-43. Rather than being a beat-up newspaper story, Nebraska Man was given a proper scientific name, *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii*.

It is simply wrong, as documented in our own literature (e.g. *Creation Ex Nihilo*, **13**(2), March-May 1991, pp. 10-13) with which he claims to be familiar, to say that 'the Nebraska Man newspaper story has been shown to be a fabrication'. Incidentally, even the well-known British anatomist Professor Grafton Elliot Smith gave complete support to Osborn's anthropoid identification. Nor is it fair to say that creationists use Nebraska Man 'as proof that the hominid fossil record is inaccurate'. We have actually promoted scientific work showing that the human fossil record, far from being 'inaccurate', serves to falsify evolution (how can a 'record'—rather than its interpretation—be 'inaccurate' anyway?)

PP. 253-255

Plimer misleads the reader by suggesting that we have an 'ark site'—that is that we claim that the Ark is definitely located at a particular site in Turkey, and that therefore this was the reason for our concern about the false 'Ark' claims. To suggest that our carefully written 13-page article by a geological scientist (*Creation Ex Nihilo*, **14**(4), September-November, 1992, pp. 26-39) was a 'snow job' is in fact a classic 'snow job' by Plimer, who actually repeated our article's conclusions (without acknowledgment) on public television! And to say that there is no reference from 'a scientific source' is another 'slap in the face' for those highly qualified people whom Dr Snelling does quote—such as Dr John Baumgardner who works for the US government at Los Alamos National Laboratories. And the whole point of it was to show that creationists themselves have evidence which debunks this as the site of the Ark. Plimer also neglects to mention that it was this very same article which demonstrated the true geology of the site—and demonstrated it to be the same as he acknowledged it was (a mud-flow, covering interbedded crosscutting limestone and basalt) on ABC TV in 1994.

He then goes on to make it look as if Dr Snelling is deliberately omitting the previous work of anti-creationists claiming to discredit the 'ark site'. This is an amazing statement, because firstly, the article certainly does mention these claims—and demonstrates that they are in fact false! Plimer himself has been quoted as saying that the site was a syncline (in fact, he says it earlier in his book on p. 101) — it is not. The only value in publishing those (erroneous) opinions was to demonstrate how anti-creationists are so keen to discredit the Ark that they are willing to voice opinions about matters on which they have no direct geological information and, in fact, may jump to wrong conclusions. To suggest that it is an attempt by Snelling to gain the credit for himself is nonsense, since the other statements by critical geologists were actually incorrect! Dr Snelling's article most certainly did 'disagree with any of these prior refutations'.

Furthermore, Plimer claims that, 'All the references are from fellow creationists hence the article can hardly be described as objective.' This is totally false. The major scientific report of actual fieldwork on the site was co-authored by Dr Salih Bayraktutan, Director of the Seismological Research Centre at the Ataturk University in Erzurum in eastern Turkey. A respected Turkish geologist who is now a professor, Bayraktutan can hardly be described as a 'fellow creationist' of Snelling. The Baumgardner-Bayraktutan scientific report was submitted to the university and the Turkish authorities after detailed investigations of the Akyayla site, including ground magnetometer, ground-penetrating radar and seismic surveys. To say, as Plimer does, that, 'Not one reference is from a scientific source', is simply not true. Plimer has been to Turkey and met Bayraktutan, even appearing on the Akyayla site with Bayraktutan on the Australian ABC TV program Four Corners, so he is fully aware of this credible scientific report from a reputable scientific source.

And why should Snelling mention the widely circulated published comments made in 1992 by Plimer's anti-creationist colleagues, those so-called 'real scientists', who had not yet been to the site, when he had a detailed scientific report of actual site investigations published in 1987? Accordingly, when the concept of priority is applied, the 1987 scientific report from on-site investigators must take precedence over the 1992 comments by hostile armchair observers. This is also relevant to another of Plimer's 'complaints'—the cited references to phone conversations, face-to-face chats, unpublished notes, etc. Dr Snelling, in conducting his inquiries to prepare the *Creation Ex Nihilo* article, contacted people who had actually visited the site to get their eyewitness testimony of important details. Dr John Morris, for example, had collected rock samples from the site, taken photographs and made notes, all of which he made available. Dr John Baumgardner provided, along with his official scientific report co-authored with Dr Bayraktutan, thin sections of rock samples, photographs, and copies of seismograph charts from their 1988 fieldwork. Dr William Shea most certainly exists (he was formerly Professor of Old Testament at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, and then Associate Director of the Biblical Research Institute in Silver Springs, Maryland, as listed under 'The People Involved' on p. 38 of Snelling's article), he had also been to the site and had copies of the original ground-penetrating radar printouts obtained by Wyatt and Fasold. He also provided Snelling with unpublished notes, although he had already published three papers about the site in reputable refereed journals—all very public documents. In fact, Plimer presumably knew all these biographic details as they were all published in the *Creation Ex Nihilo* article he is lampooning. How then can Plimer write: 'Does O'Shea really exist or is this just another devilish Irish joke?' (In any case, the name is Shea, not O'Shea.) Additionally, the only public record of some of the claims about the site was on advertising material.

Snelling did a very thorough job of gathering the information incorporated into his extensive *Creation Ex Nihilo* article, so much so that one would venture to say, rather hesitantly, that Plimer may be somewhat jealous that he didn't have as much information/data to 'sink' the site. But then when Plimer finally went to the site in September 1994 and finally pronounced it to be a mud-flow on Australian TV (for the first time), according to the very important concept of priority in science Plimer should have acknowledged Dr Snelling's September 1992 article where he had already concluded it to be a mud-flow. This omission could hardly have been accidental because Plimer's book (in which he acknowledges having read Snelling's 1992 article) had to be already on the presses, or even already printed, ready for its October 1994 release. Snelling's, not Plimer's, is actually the genuine, thorough scientific investigation.

PP. 255-256

Plimer also writes that Snelling 'has undertaken no new scientific work'. He has already said 'later associated work on Koongarra', so therefore any ongoing publishing on anything even remotely associated with his expertise on that uranium deposit is automatically ruled out of court. Furthermore, by definition 'à la Plimer', anything scientific to do with creation is not 'scientific'. However, as we shall see, the statement is not true, even within those restrictions.

Dr Snelling has, in fact, published research he did with Dr Bruce Dickson and Angela Giblin of CSIRO in geological areas other than the Koongarra area—the western Pine Creek Geosyncline, the Fish River area of the Queensland-Northern Territory border Gulf country, and the Sydney Basin. This work was mentioned earlier in these notes, along with the comment that Plimer is here displaying his ignorance, yet

again. The paper was published in *Applied Geochemistry*, vol. 2, 1987, but Plimer failed to mention this or cite this paper in his book's bibliography. Dr Snelling has also conducted field research with the same CSIRO scientists in the Tennant Creek area, which has resulted in CSIRO reports. There has also been the presentation of a poster paper on the Walloon Coal Measures at the 1985 International Conference on Coal Science, the text of which was published in the conference's Proceedings volume.

Plimer's snide comments about travel to the Grand Canyon are incorrect. In association with Dr Steven Austin, a geologist at the Institute for Creation Research, San Diego, Dr Snelling has regularly visited the Grand Canyon over the past few years in possession of a US National Parks Service permit to collect rock samples during fieldwork in the Canyon. Such permits are not easy to come by, being given out only to bona fide scientists who pass their checking procedures. Regular reports have been submitted to the Parks Service with details of samples collected and the results of investigations, and consequently the permit has been renewed because of their satisfaction with the quality and quantity of the scientific work performed. Already some of these research results, that include petrography, major, minor and trace element analyses, and a large suite of isotopic analyses, have been presented at an Annual Meeting of the Geological Society of America. Plimer's caricature of Snelling and his fellow creation scientists is totally false.

P. 256

Plimer shows further willingness to mislead in the title of the flyer—the full title was headed 'If the Bible is not really, truly true ...' and then goes on from there to say 'shouldn't we just stop playing games and bulldoze all the churches?' Never mind the legitimate context and the rhetorical point being made—Plimer uses omission to make it seem as if CSF is into bulldozing churches.

Now—a real doozy. Plimer makes it look as if there was deception by CSF in the 'paper in the rock' hoax which Plimer perpetrated.

PP. 257-258

Firstly, one fails to see how the letter should be transparent evidence of a hoax. Why would one be concerned when an obvious lay person (even a high school science teacher who may never have taken a geology course at university) makes somewhat subtle errors in what he writes? Why would it ring alarm bells unless one had previously experienced such blatant dishonesty? The fact that the matter was all unsolicited was not unusual at all—it happens from time to time. And one begins by assuming that it comes from the site described by the discoverer. If it turns out to have a significance, then one needs to be absolutely sure that one is able to properly document the locality—retrospectively if necessary. So out of respect for the person who wrote in with sample and photographs, it was only natural that Snelling and Wieland took all this at face value, not suspecting a dishonest setup.

PP. 258-260

It is simply untrue for Plimer to suggest that we stated that we had undertaken any research on the sample. There is nothing at all wrong with publishing the fact that we have just been sent something which could be a significant specimen and that we want to explain to our readers that this is the sort of thing which needs doing from time to time. How could we be accused of misleading our readership about its significance when we didn't even say that it was anything definite at all? Secondly, it is not at all a fact that paper would burn in hot volcanic ash if the layer of paper began as a very thick bundle. In fact, hot lava has been known to only part-burn bunches of leaves.

The full story, as usual, throws a different light on the twist that Plimer gives to the whole episode. Snelling, in a portion of his letter to Holland not quoted by Plimer, said that if it can be verified, then ... Although Dr Snelling wrote kindly and warmly, there was never any statement that it had been verified, and in fact he wrote that it would take some time (probably at least six months) for him to get around to checking it out. To cement his misleading little game, Plimer, in the quote from the *Prayer News* article on p. 259, omits a crucial paragraph! Between his paragraphs 2 and 3, there was another one, as follows: 'If this item turns out to have genuine significance for the creation/evolution controversy, readers of Creation magazine will

be given all the details.' Notice how Plimer leaves it out without any ellipsis points to indicate something had been left out, so that the unsuspecting reader would not have any reason to believe that his quote was not full, accurate and representative. It puts a whole new slant on the matter.

Indeed, even the issue of the published photograph is twisted by Plimer. Snelling never said they were bad photographs. In fact, as quoted by Plimer, he said, 'It wasn't that your photography was bad, it was just that the photographs did not seem to show clearly the details you were referring to ...'. Then in another portion of Snelling's letter also not quoted by Plimer, Snelling said, '... thank you for sending us in your rock specimen and the great photos you have taken'. The problem with photographs, as many people often find, is that they are only two-dimensional, and therefore some details are hard to see, even if the photographs are excellent quality. Plimer's photographs were also black and white prints. Colour can often make a difference. Nevertheless it is only Plimer who calls his photographs 'bad' and 'dreadful', but that is only so he can slam CSF for publishing one of them. The fact of the matter is that publishing the photograph was not out of order at all, or a demonstration of 'pseudoscience'. The published photograph was never meant to show readers the identity of the so-called 'paper', but only to illustrate an otherwise dull page crowded with print with a picture relevant to the text—nothing more, nothing less—no scientific merit or intent. Plimer has here erected yet another straw-man to 'blow' down.

PP. 260-262

Here on p. 261 Plimer tells us that the so-called paper is the fibrous clay mineral palygorskite. Otherwise, Plimer waffles on and on about different scenarios that may or may not explain 'genuine fossilised paper' in the tuff, all of which is nonsense that he already knows is not true. In any case, at no time did Snelling or CSF say that it was 'paper'. All that was stated was that it was worthy of investigation, with Snelling indicating that he wouldn't have time to get around to checking it properly for some time. It was used in the October 1988 *Prayer News* as an example of what CSF scientists occasionally get asked to investigate, all of which took time to get done if it were to be done dispassionately and methodically to get it right.

Plimer also claims, 'Previous publications in the creationist literature report "fossilised iron bolts" in the Newcastle Coal Measures which were used to demonstrate "proof" of the "Great Flood"'. So begins another part of one of his nonsense scenarios, but this appears to be a serious allegation of scientific stupidity. However, Plimer never says which creationist literature or who wrote the alleged report. Yet this appears to be a cross-reference to his comments in *The Australian Geologist*, No. 61, 1986 where he accused Dr Andrew Snelling of having published about fossil anchors and gold chains in Australian coal (which was a complete fabrication by Plimer, a complete invention and a fraudulent accusation) and more particularly to the accusations on pp. 166-167 of his book about Snelling and Mackay writing in *Creation Ex Nihilo* of finding a 'fossilised iron bolt' in the Newcastle Coal Measures, already dealt with earlier. (His Australian Geologist comment was preceded by a similar accusation referring to Newcastle coal and offering a financial reward if the evidence for such finds (which reports he fabricated) were produced!)

We strongly urge readers to note the following. Snelling wrote, in *The Australian Geologist*, No. 68, 1988, p. 18:

'But his [Plimer's] tactics reach "rock bottom" when he blatantly accuses me of reporting in the CSF literature the alleged occurrence of fossil gold chains and iron anchors in Australian coal seams. I have NEVER made such a claim and I publicly challenge Professor Plimer to produce that piece of the CSF literature he purports to refer to. His integrity is on the line, unless he can produce that document and show that I made such a claim therein.' (Emphasis in the original)

After 7 years Plimer still has NOT produced even a shred of evidence to back up this claim. He has evaded this public challenge and so stands condemned. With such a 'track record' can anything in his book be relied on?

P. 262

Rather than accept what Dr Snelling had said in his letter that he wouldn't get around to investigating the sample until the new year, Plimer got impatient to 'spring' his supposed trap and, as he says, lined up one Patrick Lyons to be at Snelling's public meeting in Bendigo. According to the CSF *Prayer News* (May 1989) the meeting was held on Friday night, April 21, on the campus of the then Bendigo College of Advanced Education (not April 19 as stated by Plimer, who wasn't there). The public meeting was actually a debate in which Dr Snelling, with the support of Guy Wood and Dr David Logan (a theologian), took on two biology lecturers at the Bendigo CAE (one with a Ph.D. and the other having just completed a Ph.D.), and a Uniting Church minister, all of whom were defending evolution.

It was in the closing audience question time that Patrick Lyons, who was seated right up near the back of the packed auditorium, asked Dr Snelling whether he had yet identified the 'paper' in the rock sample he'd been sent. Unlike Plimer's recollections which were second-hand, Snelling, who was there, says that Lyons did not clearly identify himself and did not 'challenge' him, instead he merely asked a simple question. Neither was there any 'vigorous exchange'. All that happened was that Snelling was naturally surprised by the question and asked Lyons how he knew about the sample, whereupon Lyons mumbled something about Professor Plimer and said he had copies of letters, which he did not visibly produce for either Snelling or the audience to clearly see. Intrigued, Snelling pressed Lyons again and Lyons mumbled something about Melbourne and the 'paper' was actually the mineral palygorskite.

At no time was Snelling frustrated or caught off guard, but realizing that Lyons knew more than he was letting on, yet not being able to fully understand his mumblings against the background audience noise, and realizing the audience didn't know what it was all about, Snelling calmly and without any embarrassment began to explain the story of the sample to the audience (Snelling had nothing to hide). Snelling thought at the time that Lyons was from Melbourne, which suggests that Lyons was not communicating coherently. In any case, when Lyons said the mineral was palygorskite, Snelling, who had heard of the mineral, simply said, 'If you say so, that's what it is'. Snelling, who has witnesses to these events, was not 'very agitated', as claimed by the non-present Plimer. He neither needed to acknowledge that he'd been tricked nor needed to laugh off the trick as a harmless little joke. Snelling was more bewildered and bemused about all the fuss, than to become agitated about this trifling matter. After all, he hadn't even gotten around to examining the sample because of his busy travelling, speaking and publications schedule, so it was something of a relief to know that he now wouldn't have to bother any more about the sample.

The only agitation that arose was due to the organizers getting concerned that Lyons' charade was wasting the question time on a matter nobody else knew or cared about, and as the meeting had already run overtime other people might still want to ask questions. At no time was Snelling 'floored for the count' and the meeting did not close quickly because of the Lyons incident or any embarrassment to Snelling. The audience had simply had enough and was restless. Plimer is erroneously dramatizing what happened so as to 'play the gallery'. His account of the exchange, via Lyons no doubt, is nothing but a slickly doctored story.

PP. 263-264

There is no problem at all with what CSF stated, because what was the point of being concerned whether the mineral was palygorskite or attapulgite, since obviously once the 'tip off' had come, an examination with a hand lens revealed that it was indeed in that group. Why waste any supporters' funds on an X-ray diffraction test to distinguish between the two, because it was at that stage an academic exercise? CSF said in print that we had information that it 'may be' palygorskite, and that was the end of the matter. At no stage did CSF ever publish any conclusions as to the specimen, much to Plimer's chagrin.

In the winter 1989 issue of *The Skeptic* (produced by the Australian Skeptics), and again in the spring 1989 issue, Plimer repeated the misleading allegation that CSF had done a 'publication of their results undertaken by Andrew Snelling'. Furthermore, he said that we communicated our 'discovery' of 'paper in rock' in the *Prayer News* (October 1988). This was 100% untrue, and has been so demonstrated by the

omitted paragraph in the quote Plimer used (on p. 259) from that *Prayer News* —see our notes referring to his pp. 258-260.

In that same article in *The Skeptic* Plimer attacks CSF for announcing that the mineral may have been the mineral palygorskite, because we should have issued, according to Plimer, an ‘admission that the data was made up’. What data was made up? The rock sample existed and the fibrous mineral with the paperlike appearance in it existed. What was made up? Where does he pluck these things out of the air? The fact that the research was not done, which Plimer mocks strongly, indicates that in spite of Dr Snelling’s politeness and warmth towards the person sending it in, it was deemed rather low priority and rather unlikely, from a probabilistic point of view, to have been paper. However, it looked to the naked eye intriguingly like it and therefore the proper steps would have been taken in due course, just to be sure.

The release of the ‘leak’ (which Plimer tries to dress up as a ‘double-blind test’ in *The Skeptic*) was almost certainly because of his frustration that we had not published any definitive research results after some time. To give an example of the false information which was allowed to circulate at that time, Plimer’s friend and compatriot Graeme O’Neill wrote an article in which he first of all said that Carl Wieland had said that the discovery was very important—false.

The second thing in O’Neill’s article was that Andrew Snelling had published research about it in the CSF magazine—again not true. O’Neill says also (remember his only information source was likely to have been Plimer) that an article had been published saying that further ‘research’ had confirmed it was palygorskite. This is not what we said —obviously, we did not indicate that it had been researched, but rather that the idea that it was likely to be palygorskite was from ‘information now to hand’. All that the May 1989 *Prayer News* article said was that it was highly likely that it may be palygorskite. What ‘web’ was anyone caught in? So what if it was attapulgitite, which is a mineral so closely related that it takes X-ray diffraction to tell the two apart? It should be noted that palygorskite-attapulgitite is not a common mineral pair, and is not even discussed in many university mineralogy textbooks—e.g. *An Introduction to the Rock-Forming Minerals* by Deer, Howie and Zussman —so most trainee geologists would never get to see them while at university. Furthermore, Plimer was not correct when he wrote in *The Skeptic* (winter 1989) that the mineral was palygorskite. Yet he says he knew all the time that it really was attapulgitite.

Why spend any of our supporters’ funds splitting hairs as to which in the group it really is, when the clear issue is that it was a deception initially, and a check with a hand lens revealed that it really was a fibrous clay mineral? Plimer is quite right that ‘not the slightest bit of research was undertaken on the specimen provided’. We never claimed we had, and in fact the incredible busyness and underfunded nature of our operation (contrary to Plimer’s allegations) had meant no work had been done on the sample, so no tentative ‘conclusions’ were aired. No ‘facts’ were published which fitted any preconceived dogma. Our article did not imply what the specimen showed, only what it would show if correct. And we had every intention of checking it out in due course. In the course of time, the specimen would have been checked. The subsequent ‘leak’ apparently undertaken by Plimer made such a check redundant.

P. 264

Plimer talks about a long letter that Carl Wieland wrote dated November 25, 1992. He says that this was to ‘an alleged faithful follower of creationism’. It was not; it was to palaeontologist Dr Brian Macness, who had challenged Dr Wieland at Melbourne University on the issue. Carl Wieland had said to him that the reports on the ‘paper’ by Plimer in *The Skeptic* were a gross distortion of the truth. Macness said that he gave his word that he would, if Wieland could show him this documentation, make every effort to see a correction published. Wieland took him at his word and wrote him a long letter with intensive documentation to that effect. Nothing was ever published, but it appears that Macness handed the whole thing over to Plimer.

However, lest it be implied at some future point that Wieland thought that he was writing to an ‘alleged faithful follower’, the letter also stated, ‘I am fully aware that your sympathies do not lie with us or with biblical Christianity.’ Carl Wieland did not do anything in the way of any ‘admissions’: he made it very clear that our articles did not mislead in any way—Dr Snelling had not gotten around to checking the rock

yet. Plimer is quite right that it should have been checked, and it would have been checked. No research conclusions would have been published, or were published, in the absence of such checking. And Carl Wieland certainly did not spend pages 'trying to say that the lay folk were not misled' —he made it clear that the lay folk in fact were not misled.

Plimer's comments are outrageous—suggesting that we have 'malevolent intent' and that we were involved in 'an attempt to mislead a lay audience'. Where? How? Plimer smears facts with innuendo and propagandistic statements and gives a totally misleading impression.

Notice again the propagandistic way in which he frames the whole thing. First of all he gives the reader the impression that we were devious for having said that we had researched the so-called 'paper in rock' (we did not say this) and then when we made it plain that it had not been researched, he makes this sound like some sort of an 'admission' of something which shouldn't have happened! To cap it off, the comment that this was 'an attempt to mislead a lay audience' is absolute nonsense. That could only be said truthfully if in fact we had told them that it had been researched when it had not, or if we told them that it was definitely something which it was not. So why should Snelling ever have 'offered an explanation' when the only problem exists in Plimer's misleading presentation of events? And probably in the minds of some not quick enough to follow his light-footed dancing from one point to the next.

P. 266

Plimer says, 'When we examine the best evidence for creation "science", we see it is junk science'—but nowhere in his book does he examine the best evidence for creation. He then says 'When we investigate the strongest criticisms of science by creationists, we see that such criticisms do not hold water.' Creationists do not criticize science. However, if by 'science' he means the evolution model, then he has not investigated in his book the strongest criticisms of the evolution model.

He asks about creation science contributing just one invention to the modern technological world. It has already been established that creationists have, but why would a science of origins per se necessarily contribute to inventions and to technology? For example, has evolution science as such contributed any invention to the world of technology? The fact that molecular biology is done by people who themselves believe in evolution and that molecular biology may have contributed something to technology, etc. is irrelevant—some molecular biologists believe in creation. But the speculations and model-building of the evolutionary model itself have not contributed to technology at all. Plimer says creationism has nothing to do with science or religion—this is a strange piece of logic. Even if the model were incorrect, it still has to do with science. And it has everything to do with Christian belief, as he well knows.

P. 267

He implies that no one in the creationist movement holds 'recognised theological qualifications'. Ironically, the last two scientifically trained international guests we had visit us here (at the time of writing), Don DeYoung and Marvin Lubenow, both have recognized theological qualifications (M.Div., M.Theol.) in addition to their science degrees.

Plimer says that his book shows that creationists 'are well aware that the message being transmitted is fraudulent'. Where has he shown this? By sleight of hand, the reader may have been given that impression. But when worked through carefully, and only those factual aspects of his claims allowed which turn out to be true, then this claim fails, like the others, as these notes have documented.

P. 268

Plimer again wrongly says that, 'The Bible clearly instructs us that the planet is flat'. Using Plimer's logic here, every meteorologist and TV weather reporter teaches that the sun revolves around the earth when every day they speak about sunrise and sunset, as figures of speech. Thus Plimer's assertion is absurd nonsense.

P. 269

CSF *Prayer News* of August 1993 did not attack the late Fred Hollows—it mentioned him as an example of someone who apparently lost a previously held biblical faith. All of us hold his memory in high regard and have always regarded him with respect. This is in fact what the article said:

‘It was clear from media interviews with Fred Hollows shortly before his death that, though given the opportunity, he expressed no assurance of salvation. However, the Christian worldview of his childhood was still very much a part of his thinking, and had clearly influenced his warm and humane outreach to the needs of others. For example, in a broadcast interview, Fred said that when he had been speaking to Nick Greiner, the former NSW Premier said something like “the basic motivation of man is self-interest.” Fred responded that this may be animal motivation, but not human—human motivation was to help those less fortunate than yourself. Of the two, Greiner was of course being consistent with belief in evolution.’

Can that by any stretch of the imagination be referred to as ‘attacking’ Professor Hollows, whom we actually elsewhere called ‘renowned humanitarian, who was deservedly named Australian of the Year’? Is it not obvious that Plimer is cunningly using public sympathies to influence opinion against CSF? Countryman was quoted because of his comments in his book *Dirt, Sex and Greed*—he claimed that bestiality was not ruled against by the Gospel. We stand by our article—again, Plimer omits the key points.

Plimer says that we have only ‘once or twice’ held a meeting on Anglican property—in fact, we have held meetings on Anglican property many times. And it is scarcely ‘rare’ for us to go to a Presbyterian church. The moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland came out in strong support of creation science after Plimer’s book was published. Plimer implies that Anglicans do not embrace creation, but this is by no means true for evangelical Anglicans, particularly those not in the hierarchy. Furthermore, there is a significant creationist movement within Roman Catholic circles, including scientists and clergy. Could the fact that we do not hold meetings on Catholic premises have something to do with the fact that we are largely an evangelical Protestant group? Plimer makes the ‘agents of Satan’ smear sound as if we write inflammatory, extremist rhetoric attacking people—anyone who believes this has not read our literature. We would be fascinated to know what medical practitioners are supposed to have been labelled in our literature as an ‘agent of Satan’.

P. 270

Plimer substantially misrepresents the General Assembly of the NSW Presbyterian Church. On the information provided to us, the heresy charge was because of particular statements Rev. Dr Peter Cameron made on the nature of the Bible during a sermon delivered on Sunday, March 2, 1992 at the Ashfield Presbyterian Church in Sydney. Cameron clearly declared himself in a subsequent TV interview with Richard Carleton when he said that the real issue for him was the nature of the Bible and (in his eyes) the need to rid the world of fundamentalists of all forms. There was no ‘inquisitor’, and Rev. Peter Hastie had no official role, so Plimer is wrong.

The official record shows that the church body holding jurisdiction over Dr Cameron, the Presbytery of Sydney, appointed Rev. B.H. Christian of Rose Bay as the ‘prosecutor’. His role was akin to that of the crown prosecutor in a civil court. Cameron was never tried for ‘heresy’. The Presbytery tried the case according to the laws of the church and found Cameron guilty of teaching contrary to chapter 1 of the Westminster Confession of Faith—the doctrinal basis of the Presbyterian Church, which basis Cameron had vowed ‘to the utmost of my power and in my station to support, maintain and defend’!

Plimer is absolutely wrong—Cameron’s trial was not concerned with the place of women in the church and Cameron admitted in the Carleton TV interview that it was not the real issue. The church body had hoped that Cameron would repent. Plimer is wrong also in referring to the Old Testament. The record shows that Cameron’s statements dealt with the New Testament, which does not endorse the death penalty for anything (including heresy).

One wonders what Plimer can possibly mean by referring to his ‘theological colleagues’—perhaps this is an attempt to align himself with Christian belief? In any case, how dishonest must be these self-confessed would-be heretics, to stay in their churches while disagreeing with, and personally denying, what their churches believe and teach?

It’s hard to tell what Plimer is trying to do by linking the Crystal Cathedral with creationism, because our information is that Robert Schuller is a theistic evolutionist. Plimer implies that creationism is divisive because we wrote about the evolutionist and anti-biblical views of the World Council of Churches. Yet it is presumably not divisive for prominent churchmen to write about our views in disagreement.

P. 271

In a small book written many years ago, Dr Morris did speculate about the craters on the moon resulting from warfare in the heavenlies, although not in the caricaturing way in which Plimer puts it. (Plimer has previously made these comments on his p. 239, so refer back to our comments there also.) Plimer then asks why we don’t use this quote — the answer is obvious: we don’t agree with it. However, he then goes on to wonder whether the ‘politicians who are lobbied by the Creation Science Foundation really know of the cult’s “scientific” interpretation of the moon and the asteroid belt’? Firstly, we don’t lobby politicians; and secondly, he has no right to say that this is our interpretation (ignoring his wrong and prejudicial use of the term ‘cult’).

‘Wieland and his associates’ are not trying to beat their way ‘past the school gates’, as we have previously documented.

Plimer makes another untrue statement by saying ‘there is no legal financial accountability’ to our financial supporters. As already stated, we are compulsorily audited each year and our financial returns are a matter of public record. Furthermore, there certainly is scientific and intellectual accountability—much more so than the average. Our statements are probably scrutinized more closely (looking for any avenue of attack) than any scientific statements we know of. They are also subject to criticism/comment by our peers in creationist circles worldwide. Finally, regarding ‘no religious accountability to one’s church congregation’ — all of us are members in good standing of recognized Bible-believing Christian churches to whom we are most definitely accountable.

P. 272

Plimer talks about people telling lies for God—the reader who has come thus far is free to judge whether Plimer actually believes this, or whether it is an attempt to generate the court case he has been itching for (as stated by him). The comments which follow on pages 272 and 273 are beneath contempt. Enough has been documented for the reader to judge whether Plimer’s book displays any concern for integrity, ethics, morality, or even plain decency or fair play when it comes to his obsessional hatred of creationists and devotion to his cause. Despite Plimer’s quoting of his fellow evolutionists and their assessments (which are coloured by their bias), it is simply not true that Gish, Snelling, Wieland, etc. deliberately or subconsciously lie. They work very hard at maintaining personal and public honesty and integrity in all that they say and do.

P. 274

It is impossible to tell what Plimer is trying to get at by his apparent ‘one test of the truth and knowledge of a creationist’. Of course, he could turn around and say that whatever process was postulated, that this by definition was ‘changing the fundamental laws of science’, since he clearly regards the doctrines of slow and gradual change, macroevolution, etc. as fundamental laws of science. To say that ‘no creationist passes this test’ is amusing, because none of us in the creation movement has ever been subjected to this test—the lack of passing exists only in Plimer’s imagination. In any case, both test questions can be answered, but Plimer would not really be interested in good scientific details as that would destroy his caricature of creationists.

P. 275

Plimer's quotes from Matthew 4:6 and 2 Corinthians 2:11 actually seem to be his own very, very loose paraphrasing, to put the kindest interpretation on it. Actually, his Matthew 4:6 'quote' bears no resemblance to the verse at all! It is misleading for him to put his own words in quote marks and call it 'the Bible'! Interestingly, for Matthew 7:16, by the nature of the English he is clearly trying to quote the Authorized Version, but manages to misquote it—Matthew 7:16 actually has a different grammatical order and the context clearly reveals the verse should not be applied in the way Plimer does. Proverbs 3:13 is also an abbreviation of the AV, yet he has it in quotes. At the bottom of this page, he distorts the facts again by talking about what are in reality only those very, very small numbers of 'creationists' (not part of the mainstream creation movement) who believe in geocentricity (Plimer says 'heliocentrist', but obviously means 'geocentrist'). We don't know any who believe in a flat earth.

P. 276

Plimer once again misrepresents the Rev. Fred Nile by making it sound as if Nile wanted only creationism to be taught, whereas Nile was clearly quoted as saying he would introduce legislation to allow teaching of the theory of creation. Plimer also makes a completely unjustified side-swipe at Christian schools, implying that they have lower academic achievement in areas outside of the creation/evolution question. In fact, at the recent (1995) Asia-Pacific Convention of Christian Community Schools, one of their speakers and organizers repeated in front of 500 teachers statistics showing that on average, a pupil in a Christian school is one year in front!

P. 277

Once again we are misrepresented; we have never said that it is not possible to believe in God and evolution. Quite the contrary. Concerning the poll result Plimer gives—Plimer's figures may be correct, but *The Sydney Morning Herald* of October 19, 1985 (p. 13) said one in five first-year part-time biology students in skeptic Michael Archer's class at the University of New South Wales supported creation. The figure Plimer gives is one in eight. It may be that Plimer is citing an average figure.

Notice that when Plimer talks about the US survey showing that '47 per cent of the entire adult American population is creationist', he cannot resist trying to prevent the full implications of that sinking in by adding '... and has little knowledge of basic science'. Of course, he then goes on to indicate that, by definition, to believe the Bible shows a 'lack of basic knowledge'.

P. 278

Plimer even seems to include belief in life after death as a surprising, annoying result, showing that 'school children are not being taught how to think'. Yet he portrays himself on some media outlets as a 'defender of religion'.

The rest of the page and pp. 279-280 deal with the report of a meeting which CSF had nothing to do with. From what follows, the reader can judge the credibility of the anti-creation lobby, spearheaded by such as Plimer and Ritchie.

John Heinger, of the Evangelical Apologetics Society and the National Alliance of Christian Leaders, was one of the speakers. He writes that both of Dr Ritchie's claims (that Ritchie was selectively misquoted and that he was denied the right to respond) are in no way representative of what happened. Heinger writes:

'Selectively misquoting Dr Ritchie out of context would have been extremely difficult as I never quoted him at all, as the record bears witness.'

Heinger had simply referred to the two published letters to the editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald* written by Ritchie, explained what their main points were, and actually repeatedly invited Ritchie (and Barry Price, who was also there) to respond from the floor, with questions such as 'is that true?' and 'did you not?' to ensure that the audience knew that they had not been misrepresented. In one of these letters,

Ritchie had accused creationists of quoting someone out of context (a common Skeptic ploy, it seems), so Heininger asked Ritchie in public, 'Would you like to mark in yellow where he has quoted people out of context. Would you do that for me today?'

Heininger goes on to say that he 'further stressed during my presentation that I welcomed questions from Ritchie and others at the conclusion of my talk'.

In addition, in a signed statement, the chairman, Bruce Coleman, says that before Ritchie asked his question, he politely indicated to him that there had to be rules so that everyone had a fair go, namely, the questions had to be concise, addressed to a particular person, and be questions, not statements. Ritchie proceeded to talk, turning around to face the audience. After about 20-30 seconds, the Chairman interjected: 'Excuse me, Dr Ritchie (at which point he paused), are you asking a question or making a statement?' His simple reply: 'Making a statement.' 'Well then, be quiet and sit down,' stated the Chairman. 'Now has anyone got a question?' From that point on Dr Ritchie remained silent.

As the reader can see, this is substantially different from the significantly distorted impressions given in Ritchie's version.

P. 280

It should be noted that evolutionary ideas were around before 1859—Darwin's grandfather published his own. Furthermore, our organization is not interested in global conspiracies. Some readers may not be aware that the scientific orthodoxy for Marxist philosophy is most certainly given, openly and officially, as evolution. Karl Marx wanted to dedicate his book *Das Kapital* to Darwin, an offer Darwin declined.

Concerning the quote by Judge Dean, we would not support such a comment, and in fact, having seen this comment in attacks on creationists long before its appearance in *Time* magazine, one wonders about its source. To our knowledge, Judge Dean is not a member of any mainstream creation group, but this is another good old Plimer trick to inflame passions by inappropriate linkage. He then tries to cement the link with us further down the page, even though no such link exists.

PP. 280-281

As the new professor and head of the Department of Geology at the University of Newcastle in 1985, Plimer did indeed organize the Nineteenth Annual Symposium on 'Advances in the Study of the Sydney Basin'. However, the abstract Dr Snelling submitted was neither 'bland' nor 'innocuous'. Lest it be portrayed as merely a dozen or so lines, this in fact was an extended abstract that ended up occupying four full pages in the Proceedings volume. Entitled, 'Evidence of catastrophic deposition of coals and sediments of the Newcastle Coal Measures', the extended abstract summarized all the data collected in the field through the strata exposed in cliffs from Catherine Hill Bay to Nobbys Head that was evidence of catastrophic deposition, so the subject matter was totally relevant to the conference theme of 'Advances in the study of the Sydney Basin'. And why should the question of whether Dr Snelling 'was unknown for his work on the Sydney Basin' be made an issue? Yes, most researchers on the Sydney Basin may be in close contact with one another, which is reasonable, but how does a newcomer break into what therefore is portrayed as a 'closed shop'? Perhaps it is an exclusive 'club', which you can only join if you agree that catastrophism can never be allowed to explain the formation of coal measure sequences.

Dr Snelling had submitted an extended abstract to the previous symposium, the Eighteenth, but it was not altogether 'similar', being entitled, 'The 1980 Mt St Helens eruption: The role of volcanism in the formation of coal beds (a modern analogue of ancient coal measure formation)', although it did promote catastrophism (volcanism) as a viable model of coal bed formation. However, it is totally untrue to say that, when it came to Dr Snelling's presentation date at the symposium, 'he gave an evangelical lecture about the "Great Flood" and deviated somewhat from advances in the study of the Sydney Basin.' How can it be that presenting new ideas on how the vast, economically significant coal beds of the Sydney Basin might have been formed is deviating 'somewhat' from 'Advances in study of the Sydney Basin'? The 'Great Flood' was never mentioned.

Perhaps the reason why Plimer has got it all completely wrong is because that was the version he was given by his colleagues in his Department when he asked them. Far from the audience suffering 'in polite, restrained silence', there was one staff member in particular who was restless during the presentation and vocal during the question/discussion time following. It seems the presentation of a catastrophic model upset him, because the evidence presented challenged his peat swamp, slow-and-gradual, model. He certainly thus had a vested interest in stopping Dr Snelling's proposed presentation of the evidence of catastrophic deposition of the Newcastle Coal Measures at the subsequent symposium, being the 'guru' on the subject of the Newcastle Coal Measures. Furthermore, it was the same staff member who, according to Plimer on p. 256, gave Plimer the infamous 'paper in the rock' sample and the inspiration for that deceitful 'game.'

Plimer's caricature that Snelling's 'evidence for creation was so forcefully presented that the audience of eminent scientists was unable to ask questions' is nothing short of sick mockery. The presentation at the 1984 symposium had nothing whatsoever to do with evidence for creation —that is totally untrue. And the audience did ask questions. Indeed, some symposium attendees continued to ask questions for some time even after the session closed. As for selectively misquoting and ridiculing the keynote speaker at that symposium in a creationist publication, readers can judge for themselves. Professor Martini of Guelph University (Ontario, Canada) gave his keynote address at the symposium on 'Cold climate environments of peat formation in Canada'. After a lengthy description and discussion of cold climate peat swamps in Canada, copiously illustrated, he put on the screen a photograph of a piece of coal and at the same time asked himself the question, 'What is the relationship of peat to coal?' Amidst stunned silence he answered his own question with the words, 'I don't know!' Of course, he then proceeded to make various conjectures, but his honest admission remained. One wonders how a simple, matter-of-fact summary report of this episode published in *Ex Nihilo*, 7(3), March 1985, p. 25 can be deemed as ridiculing Professor Martini and selectively misquoting him. The way we reported it is exactly how it occurred, and how it was perceived and received at the symposium, judging from the audience's reactions.

Plimer, of course, distorts and exaggerates so as to legitimize his rejection (as the 1985 symposium convenor) of Dr Snelling's second submitted extended abstract. What utter nonsense to suggest that CSF was publicizing Dr Snelling as a 'well-known eminent scientist and that there was broad acceptance of creationism in the scientific community.' Why would CSF have reason to exist in the first place if there was broad acceptance of creationism in the scientific community? And CSF never implied that 'this acceptance of creationism somehow had the seal of approval from my [Plimer's] Department because A.A. Snelling was politely listened to by his peers'. What acceptance? What seal of approval?

Perhaps Plimer's letter to Snelling rejecting his extended abstract and offering a counter-proposal had a lot to do with the fact that it had been announced in the CSF *Prayer News* (March, 1985) that Snelling's paper had been accepted and would be presented at the Newcastle symposium, yet the excuse given in his letter (and conveniently left out by Plimer here in his book) was because we had 'misquoted' the keynote speaker at the previous symposium, referring of course to the *Ex Nihilo* report. Note that it wasn't because we had presented 'evidence for creation' or 'an evangelical lecture about the "Great Flood"' at the previous symposium as Plimer alleges in his book (p. 281).

And what of the counter-proposal? Why still attend the symposium, yet not be allowed to present the scientific evidence of catastrophic deposition of the Newcastle Coal Measures at the symposium? Ironically for Plimer, it is certainly evident that this rejection was a hurried and pressured decision made very late in the organizational flow, because Snelling's extended abstract was still published in the symposium Proceedings volume! Why the last minute rejection? It cannot have been anything to do with the scientific quality of the extended abstract as it had already been accepted, both for presentation and publication. It can't have been that the subject material and scientific research 'deviated somewhat from advances in the study of the Sydney Basin' or that 'he had made no advances' 'in his research on the Sydney Basin'. There had been ample time and opportunity to reject the paper prior to that point if the paper was not real science. No, Plimer's 'excuses' are very thin indeed, and the whole affair smacks of censoring of creationists only because they are creationists.

Plimer's counter-proposal was ludicrous. To cap it all off, Plimer accuses us of saying in our literature that he had abused his power by banning Dr Snelling, and that 'this was part of a conspiracy of totally undemocratic evolutionists'. This is misleading. The comment in the *Prayer News* (June, 1985) said absolutely nothing about abuse of power, nor did the word 'conspiracy' even appear. What was said was that 'the real problem, of course, is the fact that John and Andrew are creationists, and therefore are not considered "real scientists" by evolutionists, and so they cannot be allowed to attend the conference'. Even from Plimer's own statements here in his book, that has to be the real reason for Snelling not being allowed to present his totally scientific paper (that had already been accepted) at the symposium.

P. 283

Concerning Plimer's 'gentle public lectures and articles written for fellow geologists'—the first such article was scarcely 'gentle'. The first one we came across, in any case, which was in the Geological Society of Australia's publication *The Australian Geologist*, was called 'Creation Science: The Work of the Devil'. It had all the same hallmarks of Plimer in it, as in this book—including scant regard for the facts, and a blatantly political (as self-confessed) attempt to undermine creation ministries at any cost.

P. 284

We have never heard of anyone who 'had lost loved ones' to 'the creationists'; creation science is a construct of ideas and beliefs, and not a social structure like a 'cult'.

The statement Carl Wieland made about the paucity of reasoned scientific argumentation in Plimer's article is perfectly correct. Plimer argues that a medical practitioner is unqualified to comment on geological arguments—but the fact is that Wieland was not commenting on geological arguments as such, but upon the general absence of reasoned scientific argumentation (Plimer's article in fact ranged far beyond his own area of expertise), and the fact that there were major errors of fact. Such as, for example, Plimer wrongly accusing Andrew Snelling of publishing articles on the discovery of iron anchors and gold chains in Australian coal—this, as previously stated, was a total fabrication. What rubbish for Plimer to say that this response was 'another revelation to me' — the evidence indicates he had already made up his mind about us and was freely using his standard 'take no prisoners'-type tactics to oppose us, about which he bragged in newspaper articles. (E.g. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, June 25, 1988, p. 74.)

P. 285

The 'tragic misuse' of 'authority and influence' had nothing to do with Plimer 'defending science', but had to do with such misleading statements as Plimer's stories alleging things that never happened, etc. If that is not a misuse of authority and influence, we don't know what is. And if Plimer had written in support of creationism, if he had used the same sort of inflammatory language and unethical tactics, there is no way that he would have received 'gushing praise from Wieland' as he implies.

Regarding the matter of Plimer's lawyer, after we had defended ourselves against this outrageous article, this lawyer wrote a letter to the Foundation demanding an apology. Our memory of events is that the majority on the Board had no taste for controversy and were initially prepared to issue a very generally worded apology ('Sorry if any offence has been caused') as Christian gentlemen wishing to 'turn away wrath' with gentleness, but without at all backing down from the truth of the statements in the *Prayer News* article.

However, on closer consideration, it was decided that this would not be the most principled and appropriate stand to take, and that this would likely be twisted into a parody of truth. Furthermore, Plimer kept on repeating his outrageous distortions at public meetings. Plimer's lawyer was informed that no apology would be made, and that if Plimer carried out his threat to launch a court action, then the extremely defamatory and false things stated in his own article would definitely be an issue at the trial. Not surprisingly, no action was forthcoming. It is obvious that Plimer's 'strong public stand' (we would say hatred of creationism bordering on the fanatical) preceded these actions of ours, therefore again he leads

the reader by the nose. Readers are invited to peruse copies of the original article and our response at our address.

While it is certainly possible that Plimer has received some oddball letters, so do we—from anti-creationists, including some with spelling errors, etc. But in any case, how can we be sure that the letters he quotes

P. 286

Once again, Plimer misleads the reader with the statement about ‘psychologically battered non-achievers’. For example, our founding chairman, John Rendle-Short, is Professor Emeritus of the University of Queensland, and has been honoured by the Queen for his research into infantile autism. Hardly a ‘non-achiever’. Also hardly someone likely to be involved with ‘cults’, or ‘frauds’, etc., incidentally.

Concerning Barry Price’s book—the careless handling of truth and ethics in Price’s book has already been exposed, along with Plimer’s involvement, by the openly anti-creationist *American Skeptic*, Jim Lippard. However, Plimer takes a breathtaking twist by the way he makes it seem as if Price received a libel writ as a result of ‘exposing creationism’. Price, in fact, received a libel writ (not from CSF) because he made a 100% false allegation of financial deception against a former member of the CSF Board, a practising lawyer. As a result of the totally non-defensible nature of this defamatory falsehood, the book’s publishers offered an apology and pulping of all unsold copies.

Plimer’s description of the legal letter from Wendell Bird is interesting. Wendell Bird’s letter was not inappropriate despite the differences in law, since what he said (we have a copy) was that if Plimer did republish or repeat his comments (which were lies about Duane Gish travelling with young boys who were continually touching him—Gish was actually always travelling with us or his wife) in the USA then he would be prosecuted under US Law. Plimer cannot of course tell you this, because he would be exposing the despicable nature of his own actions—this was in a signed circular-type letter on University of Newcastle letterhead, of which we have a copy.

P. 287

We have no way of checking Plimer’s allegations about the updated version supposedly being riddled with errors, because Plimer specifies none, but the suggestion that Wendell Bird is simple and ill-educated is ironic considering he has a Yale doctorate in Law.

Plimer says that he is ‘now’ of the view that debates, discussions and correspondence with creationists are pointless. Yet he has never actually had a proper debate—see the mockery of a debate he had with Gish. He had already decided before that time that he would not take part in a normal debate on this issue, by his own admission (see p. 183 of his book). Here again Plimer makes it clear that he wants creationists in court, but this is not, we believe, because of an attempt to get at the truth. The revealing part is the last phrase: ‘with the appropriate media attention’. He knows full well that the secular media will report only those sections they wish to report, as has been done before, and that this is not likely to be anything favourable to Christians/creationists. He also knows that he can say whatever he likes as ‘opinions’ in the witness box under privilege without fear of any comeback, and it can be reported in the papers under privilege. No doubt, on past performance, horrendous claims would be made which would then be given wide media publicity.

P. 289

It is hard to decipher what Plimer means by calling the Bible ‘the Truth’ when he says in the same phrase that it ‘is not true’.

P. 290

Plimer refers to the ‘chicken and egg argument’ that we needed proteins to get genes, and to get genes we needed proteins. He dismisses it by saying that these arguments disappear, ‘With the knowledge of the massive organic input by meteorites and modern molecular biology’. Leaving the grammatical problems to one side, organic input by meteorites scarcely solves the problem—both genes and functional proteins contain large amounts of coded, ordered information. The problem still exists and is being worked on—Plimer misleads or misunderstands this issue outside of his field. Secondly, it is not known whether the first genes on the planet were RNA—this is just one idea. At the bottom of the page Plimer makes a scientific prediction concerning RNA molecules — yet elsewhere he castigates creationists for daring to talk scientifically outside of their own field.

P. 291

The comment about ‘the vast ongoing flux of advantageous genes’ is confused—if Plimer has an alternative evolutionary mechanism to ‘random mutations’, then he should inform his biological evolutionist colleagues. As they have often acknowledged, ultimately random mutation is the only way in the evolutionary scenario to provide new raw material, rather than reshuffling of the old. Also, as an earth scientist, Plimer should know of the geological/geochemical evidence indicating that the early atmosphere could not have simply consisted of ammonia/methane/nitrogen, but seemed to contain oxygen from the beginning. However, that is another controversy.

P. 293

Those who are of the theistic evolutionary (God-guided evolution) persuasion, and who have been perhaps misled to see Plimer as on their side, should take careful note of his comments on this last page. He clearly supports the position of Stephen J. Gould, which is that if you ‘played the tape again’, you would get something quite different. In other words, the appearance of humanity has been by no means inevitable and is the result of chance alone. For those astute enough to pick this up, this aligns him squarely in opposition to the idea that evolution is a progressive, preordained process leading inevitably up to mankind as the chosen end result. His comments about ‘God’ would appear to make sense only as an extremely cynical ‘political’ gesture. (The vast majority of Australians are ‘theistic evolutionist’ in one form or another and might be repelled by rank atheism.)

In Conclusion

We are sure that most readers of these notes will be as horrified as we are over Plimer’s inaccurate and vindictive attacks on our ministry and other Bible-believers. To run newspaper advertisements and use staff time to prepare this response (which was urged by many supporters desperate for answers) has cost many thousands of dollars sorely needed for ministry projects.

Table of Contents

[Introduction–p.52](#)

[PP. 54–100](#)

[PP. 101–149](#)

[PP. 150–200](#)

[PP. 200–249](#)

[PP. 250–Conclusion](#)

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