Spiritual recognition

Retired physicist who became Anglican priest wins $1 million religious prize

British physicist Rev. Dr. John C. Polkinghorne, left, is congratulated by Sir John Templeton on Thursday in New York. Polkinghorne of Cambridge, England, has won the 2002 Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities.

"I have argued about religion with him in a friendly sort of way," Weinberg said, "but I really am happy he got the (Templeton) prize. He is sincere and intelligent and eloquent." And wrong, any scientists who believe there is no divine design in the world.

"It seems to me that one of the great services that science has done for mankind is to weaken the hold that religions have on people," Weinberg said. "I would like to see that continue rather than to see the differences ... papered over, so I am quite hostile toward the aims of the Templeton Foundation."

Religious certainty in the wrong hands and in the extreme can be harmful, he said. "Whether it is from people flying airplanes into office buildings or people tearing down the temples ... or even worse, theocracies like Iran or Sudan or Afghanistan under the Taliban."

Polkinghorne said he will use his 700,000 pounds sterling (roughly $1 million), to be awarded in a private ceremony April 28 at London's Buckingham Palace, to establish a post-doctoral fellowship for science and theology at the University of Cambridge.