

## **The original denier: into the cold**

*The Deniers -- Part V*

*Lawrence Solomon, Financial Post*

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Most scientists who are labelled as "deniers" for their views on global warming don't embrace this role. They cringe at the thought of disagreeing with colleagues who think that the science is settled, they do their best to avoid making waves, and they fear being marginalized as cranks who disagree with the scientific consensus. Dr. Richard Lindzen is an exception.

Dr. Lindzen is one of the original deniers -- among the first to criticize the scientific bureaucracy, and scientists themselves, for claims about global warming that he views as unfounded and alarmist. While he does not welcome the role he's acquired, he also does not shrink from it. Dr. Lindzen takes his protests about the abuse of science to the public, to the press, and to government.

His detractors can't dismiss him as a crank from the fringe, however, much as they might wish. Dr. Lindzen is a critic from within, one of the most distinguished climate scientists in the world: a past professor at the University of Chicago and Harvard, the Alfred P. Sloan professor of meteorology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, and a lead author in a landmark report from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the very organization that established global warming as an issue of paramount importance.

Dr. Lindzen is proud of his contribution, and that of his colleagues, to the IPCC chapter they worked on. His pride in this work matches his dismay at seeing it misrepresented. "[Almost all reading and coverage of the IPCC is restricted to the highly publicized Summaries for Policymakers which are written by representatives from governments, NGOs and business; the full reports, written by participating scientists, are largely ignored," he told the United States Senate committee on environment and public works in 2001. These unscientific summaries, often written to further political or business agendas, then become the basis of public understanding.

As an example, Dr. Lindzen provided the committee with the summary that was created for Chapter 7, which he worked on. "Understanding of climate processes and their incorporation in climate models have improved, including water vapour, sea-ice dynamics, and ocean heat transport," the summary stated, creating the impression that the climate models were reliable. The actual report by the scientists indicated just the opposite. Dr. Lindzen testified that the scientists had "found numerous problems with model treatments -- including those of clouds and water vapor."

When the IPCC was stung by criticism that the summaries were being written with little or no input by the scientists themselves, the IPCC had a subset of the scientists review a subsequent draft summary -- an improvement in the process. Except that the final version, when later released at a Shanghai press conference, had surprising changes to the draft that scientists had seen.

The version that emerged from Shanghai concludes, "In the light of new evidence and taking into account the remaining uncertainties, most of the observed warming over the last 50 years is likely to

have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations." Yet the draft was rife with qualifiers making it clear the science was very much in doubt because "the accuracy of these estimates continues to be limited by uncertainties in estimates of internal variability, natural and anthropogenic forcing, and the climate response to external forcing."

The summaries' distortion of the IPCC chapters compounds another distortion that occurred in the very writing of the scientific chapters themselves. Dr. Lindzen's description of the conditions under which the climate scientists worked conjures up a scene worthy of a totalitarian state: "throughout the drafting sessions, IPCC 'coordinators' would go around insisting that criticism of models be toned down, and that 'motherhood' statements be inserted to the effect that models might still be correct despite the cited faults. Refusals were occasionally met with ad hominem attacks. I personally witnessed coauthors forced to assert their 'green' credentials in defense of their statements."

To better understand the issue of climate change, including the controversies over the IPCC summary documents, the White House asked the National Academy of Sciences, the country's premier scientific organization, to assemble a panel on climate change. The 11 members of the panel, which included Richard Lindzen, concluded that the science is far from settled: "Because there is considerable uncertainty in current understanding of how the climate system varies naturally and reacts to emissions of greenhouse gases and aerosols, current estimates of the magnitude of future warming should be regarded as tentative and subject to future adjustments (either upward or downward)."

The press's spin on the NAS report? CNN, in language typical of other reportage, stated that it represented "a unanimous decision that global warming is real, is getting worse, and is due to man. There is no wiggle room."

Despite such obtuseness Lindzen fights on, defending the science at what is undoubtedly a very considerable personal cost. Those who toe the party line are publicly praised and have grants ladled out to them from a funding pot that overflows with US\$1.7-billion per year in the U.S. alone. As Lindzen wrote earlier this year in *The Wall Street Journal*, "there is a more sinister side to this feeding frenzy. Scientists who dissent from the alarmism have seen their grant funds disappear, their work derided, and themselves libeled as industry stooges, scientific hacks or worse. Consequently, lies about climate change gain credence even when they fly in the face of the science that supposedly is their basis."

Lawrence Solomon is executive director of Urban Renaissance Institute and Consumer Policy Institute, divisions of Energy Probe Research Foundation. Email: [Lawrence.Solomon@nextcity.com](mailto:Lawrence.Solomon@nextcity.com).

#### CV OF A DENIER:

Richard Lindzen received his PhD in applied mathematics in 1964 from Harvard University. A professor of meteorology in the Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the National Research Council Board on Atmospheric Sciences and Climate. He is also a consultant to the Global Modeling and Simulation Group at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, and a Distinguished Visiting Scientist at California Institute of Technology's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Prof. Lindzen is a recipient of the AMS's Meisinger, and Charney Awards, and AGU's Macelwane Medal. He is author or coauthor of over 200 scholarly papers and books.

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