

# The Washington Times

## Global warming believers deny reality Wasting resources on a potential threat ignores problems at hand

By: Richard Rahn

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Much of the media treat those who are skeptics about man-made global warming with the pejorative term “global-warming deniers,” as if they were Holocaust deniers. Yet many of those in the media who watched presidential spokesperson Jay Carney engage in what can only politely be called “reality denial” day after day were-all-too silent about his obvious misstatements.

Reality deniers get away with many of their fibs because we live in an age in which we have been taught that most statements of fact are really conditional, and there is always a possibility that some outrageous statement could be true or something that most people believe to be true could be false. The Obama administration manages to sell to the gullible media that their proposals to mitigate global warming by spending trillions of dollars and destroying millions of jobs over the next few decades are necessary for our survival as a species. The administration, though, admits that if the president manages to implement all of his new rules and laws, the world would only be two-tenths of 1 degree Fahrenheit cooler in a hundred years than if we did nothing. There is no real benefit to forcing all of those coal miners in West Virginia and elsewhere to lose their jobs.

When asked, reality deniers cannot tell you what the optimum amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere should be (currently, it is about 0.04 percent). We do know that more carbon dioxide causes plants to grow faster, and that is why they pump the gas into greenhouses. We also know that the world is getting greener. Studies have shown that world vegetation increased somewhere between 11 percent and 14 percent in the years 1982 to 2011, which means that food is more plentiful and that there is more habitat for wildlife. The southern Sahara (the Sahel) and the Amazon are getting greener, not drier (as many radical environmentalists have claimed). This is just one of the side benefits of a little more carbon dioxide. By the way, the Earth has not warmed in the past 17 years, as the reality deniers and their models claimed it would. The oceans have been rising since the end of the last ice age. About 20 years ago when better satellite technology became available, it appeared that the oceans were rising at a bit faster rate of about one foot per century, yet that rate has slowed for the last nine years.

In the coming years, we face many problems that are far more likely to kill people than global warming — unsustainable government debt and global terrorism — but the reality deniers prefer

to waste resources on a potential threat a century from now than to deal with the immediate threats to our well-being.

Reality deniers seem to think we can make people wealthier just by mandating things like a high minimum wage. Such folks ignore the fact that the least skilled will not be hired at all, and prices will be higher on many goods and services, which is most painful for low-income people. The fact is the minimum wage is cruel and liberty-destroying for many people, by denying them the opportunity to work for less for various reasons, including developing job skills.

Every time I see a politician demanding that the government spend more for this or that, without cutting some other program by an equal or greater amount, I know they are reality deniers, because numerous studies show that the U.S. government (and that of most other countries) spend far more than the optimum amount for economic growth and job creation. That is, all the additional spending will only make things worse, not better.

Those who advocate higher taxes, or more regulations or more big-government bureaucracies like Veterans Affairs or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) are reality deniers, because they ignore all of evidence of the last 2,500 years as to why big government makes us worse off rather than better off.

The reason the political class is so filled with reality deniers is all too many voters are also reality deniers. Out of ignorance or the inability to think beyond Stage One, they think they can get something for nothing and, hence, are willing to vote for those who promise fantasyland.

At some point, many reality deniers seem to start believing their own lies, that lying doesn't matter or the public is too stupid to notice they are lying. The missing IRS emails are a case in point. Certainly, there is a very, very small probability that the critical emails of those who just happened to be under congressional investigation were all destroyed in a computer crash and only theirs were not backed up. Fortunately, most people have a sense of how small that probability is, so when Rep. Paul Ryan (who is still connected to reality) tells the IRS commissioner (a reality denier) that he does "not believe" him, Mr. Ryan wins.

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