

# **Presentations Of My New GWPF Report In The House of Lords**

## **Christopher Booker**

Since we've now been living with the global warming story for 30 years, it might seem hard to believe that science could now come up with anything that would allow us to see that story in a wholly new light.

But thanks to a book written more than 40 years ago, before global warming was invented, that is what I am suggesting in this paper.

Its author Irving Janis was the professor of psychology at Yale. He called his book *The Victims of Groupthink*, later shortened just to *Groupthink*, a word now used loosely all over the place. But what he did was to define very much more specifically just how groupthink works.

Although he drew his case studies only from a series of disastrous US policy decisions, what he showed has very much wider relevance than his seminal book allowed for. What he identified was that the operations of "groupthink" essentially follow three absolutely basic and consistent rules.

The first rule is that a group of people come to share a particular idea or way of looking at the world which seems hugely important to them, but which has not been based on looking properly at all the relevant evidence. So in fact it is just an untested belief, tinged with a strong element of make-believe.

Rule two is that, because they have shut their minds to any evidence which might contradict their belief – as Janis demonstrated in all his case-studies – they need to insist that it is supported by a "consensus" (a word Janis repeatedly emphasised). The one thing supporters of such a consensus cannot allow is that anyone should question it.

His third rule is that, because their belief relies only on looking at evidence which seems to confirm it, they are incapable of debating it properly with those who disagree with it. Instead any contrary views are dismissed with irrational hostility. Those holding them must simply be ignored, side-lined, ridiculed and discredited.

What I have tried to do in this paper is to look again at the entire story of global warming in the light of Janis's three rules. And it certainly helps to explain so much about this extraordinary story that many of us have long found puzzling.

Stage one of the story, what might be called the Anticipation Stage, began back in the late 1970s and early Eighties, when a tiny group of meteorologists, led by Bert Bolin and John Houghton, head of the UK Met Office, became convinced that because, since the mid-Seventies, the levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> and global temperatures had both been rising, one must be causing the other. They needed to warn the world as a matter of urgency that this was going to lead to catastrophic warming.

Stage two, what might be called the Dream Stage of the story, began in 1988 when Bolin and Houghton were authorised by the UN to set up that body called the

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC, with Bolin as its chairman and Houghton in charge of the science. They were to issue a series of reports based on computer models programmed according to their theory, to predict just how fast the world would heat up as CO<sub>2</sub> levels continued to rise.

Their first report in 1990 predicted that temperatures through the 21st century would be rising at up to 0.5 degrees per decade.

What was astonishing was just how quickly and comprehensively their idea caught on. For reasons we might go into later, it was a perfect example of “an idea whose time has come”. They got key politicians on side, like Al Gore and Margaret Thatcher, who fully backed Houghton. They were soon to be joined by the EU.

Also rapidly on side were all the leading Western scientific institutions and journals, along with the major green NGOs, such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and WWF. And so, of course, captivated by this apocalyptic scenario of how the planet was now being threatened by catastrophe, were the media, led here in Britain by the BBC.

Almost at once, as billions of dollars began to be poured into confirming the IPCC thesis, we were being told that it was supported by a “consensus” of the world’s scientists. “The science is settled” was the cry. And it was quickly noted that any scientists who could not agree with the consensus were being marginalised, deprived of funding and regarded as beyond the pale.

No one described all this more eloquently at the time – than that world-ranking atmospheric physicist Dr Richard Lindzen, then a professor at MIT. Right from the start he was profoundly sceptical, both about the theory itself and the crudely simplistic bias of the IPCC’s computer models, which missed out so many of the natural factors which had such influence on the climate. And I’m happy to say he has kindly contributed a foreword to my paper.

For 20 years the “consensus” seemed to enjoy dream-like success. There was the mammoth Earth Summit in Rio, followed by the Kyoto Treaty, each based on the idea that the developed nations of the West would drastically curb their “carbon” emissions, while the developing world would be exempted until their economies had caught up.

The IPCC continued to produce its mammoth reports, each more confidently scary than the last. The highlight of the third in 2001, still under Houghton’s direction, was Michael Mann’s famous “hockey stick” graph which completely rewrote accepted climate history. It showed that, after 1,000 years of temperatures gently declining, completely disappearing the Mediaeval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age, until in the late 20th century they had suddenly shot up to make 1998 the hottest year in history.

Around 2006 and 2007 scientific and political hysteria over global warming reached its height, with Al Gore’s Oscar-winning movie and the IPCC’s 2007 report, predicting that almost all the Himalayan glaciers would have vanished by 2035, half the Amazon rainforest by 2040 and the African crop yields would have halved by 2050.

These were particularly highlighted in the Summary for Policymakers personally drafted in Delhi by the IPCC's then chairman, Dr Rajendra Pachauri.

By this time, in keeping with Janis's third rule, anyone who dared question any of this was being vilified as simply an anti-science "denier", no better than those evil cranks who denied the reality of the Nazi Holocaust,

But then came Stage three, what might be called for the "consensus" the Frustration stage, when the story began dramatically to change.

First it was noticed that since the El Nino year of 1998 the global temperature trend had simply stopped rising as those scary computer models had predicted. The famous "hockey stick" graph had been shown by Steve McIntyre and Ross McKittrick to be no more than a fiction cooked up by computer trickery. Al Gore's movie was even found in court to be full of wild errors and ludicrous exaggerations.

And most significantly of all there was the advent of the internet, along with expert blogs like Climate Audit and Watts Up With That, able to challenge and disprove every single claim the "consensus" came up with.

Vanishing Arctic ice, disappearing polar bears, the melting snows of Kilimanjaro, unprecedented hurricanes, floods and droughts. The real world data showed that none of these things were happening as claimed

What we were seeing around this time was what I called "the rise of the counter-consensus". And I should in fact add that even before this, one of the very first of the new "climate sceptics" or "deniers" had already been none other than Nigel's former boss Lady Thatcher. In her last book *Statecraft* in 2003 she had completely recanted her earlier enthusiasm for the "consensus", for all the reasons which were only now were becoming increasingly familiar.

Then in 2009 came Stage Four of the story when, for those in the "consensus" bubble, it seemed to be entering something of a Nightmare Stage. Reality was at last beginning to close in on them.

This began when they were hit with three hammer-blows. The first was those Climategate emails, between the little group of scientists, including Michael Mann, who for years had been at the heart of the IPCC establishment. Again these reflected every one of Janis's three rules: falsification of the evidence, attempts to preserve the illusion of a consensus, and the levelling of unpleasant abuse at anyone daring to question them.

Next was the collapse of the UN's vast Copenhagen climate conference, which so signally failed to agree the new treaty the consensus wanted, for exactly the same reason as the failure of Kyoto: that division of the world between the developing nations and the rest, led by China and India. We shall come back to this again in a minute, because it was this divide which would eventually turn out to be the crux of the whole story.

The third blow in early 2010 was the plethora of scandals which now erupted around the authority of the IPCC itself. The revelations that all those scary predictions in its

2007 report about Himalayan glaciers, the Amazon rainforest and African crop yields had not been based on science at all. They were just wholly bogus claims dreamed up by climate activists and environmental pressure groups. An exhaustive study showed that nearly a third of the claims made in the 2007 report were from similarly unscientific sources. So much for the authority of an IPCC which supposedly relied only on gold-standard “peer-reviewed” science from the world’s top 1500 climate scientists”.

We can now fast forward to stage 5, and what I mean by the crux of the whole story: the “collision with reality”: This came with the Paris conference of 2015, and the last concerted attempt to get all the nations of the world to sign a binding treaty committing them to phase out all those fossil fuels on which the whole of modern civilisation was built and depends for its survival.

The colossal giveaway, almost totally missed in the West, lay in all those technical documents every nation had to supply before Paris, setting out its intended energy policy for the years up to 2030: the so-called Independent Nationally Determined Contributions or INDCs.

The Western nations, led by Obama and the EU dutifully explained how they were all going to reduce their “carbon” emissions by up to 40 percent. But what could we see buried away in the small print?

China, by now the world’s largest emitter, responsible for a quarter of the global total, made clear that, thanks to its intention to build hundreds more coal-fired power stations, its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030 would have doubled. Those from India, the third largest emitter, would have tripled. The story from other developing countries was similar.

Add up all the INDCs, as our friend Paul Homewood diligently did, and their net showing was that, far from total emissions being cut by 2030, they were actually set to rise by a staggering 46 percent.

In other words, the real lesson of Paris was that, whatever the West proposed to do, the rest of the world, led by China and India, intended to take absolutely no notice. They would carry on just as before.

Not only had the West failed to get anything more than a meaningless “accord”, in effect binding no one to anything. Paris marked the moment when in reality it should have finally become obvious that the whole global warming scare had been a huge act of make-believe created, run and promoted by the West (except of course also by Dr Pachauri, who for quite other disreputable reasons had now been forced to resign as chairman of the IPCC and vanished from the scene).

The fast-growing economies of the rest of the world just weren’t interested any longer. And the one Western politician who recognised this was President Trump, as he explained when he announced last July that the US was pulling out of that fraudulent Paris accord. In his speech as delivered, he even mentioned those INDCs.

And what was the response of other Western leaders and the entire international climate establishment? It was simply to shower Trump with abuse. Because that is the only kind of response those within any groupthink bubble can fall back on when they run up against anyone who dares to challenge their make-believe.

That is the message of my paper. Understand the Janis rules, and we can see how the global warming story in every respect makes a further perfect case-study in how self-deceiving groupthink behaves.

As I say in a short epilogue there's a lot else we find puzzling about the world today that those rules also help to explain. And if you want another good example, just try looking at the psychology behind political correctness.