

21/11/2011

Emails exchanged with Dr Joe Smith of the Open University

Thu, 30 Jul 2009 18:14:16 +0100

Dear Dr Smith

I have been informed by Clive Porro of DEFRA that there is a document entitled 'Real World Seminars' that you have kindly offered to send me.

Regards,

Tony Newbery

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Thu, 30 Jul 2009 18:24:00 +0100

Dear Tony

I have drafted the below to explain the purpose and origins of the seminars that you recently asked DEFRA about.

Best wishes

Joe

*(This 'Real World Seminars' document can be found on Dr Smith's blog [here](#))*

Fri, 31 Jul 2009 11:46:31 +0100

Dear Joe

Many thanks for your prompt reply which I have read with considerable interest.

This was Richard D North's description of the participants at your climate change seminar at BBC Television Centre in January 2006 when he posted on my blog:

"The BBC crew (senior executives from every branch of the corporation) were matched by an equal number of specialists, almost all (and maybe all) of whom could be said to have come from the "we must support Kyoto" school of climate change activists."

<http://ccgi.newbery1.plus.com/blog/?p=142>

I would be interested to know whether this is an accurate

description? Or would the BBC's description of the event as a 'high-level seminar with some of the best scientific experts' be more appropriate? This is a matter that could be decided very easily by making a list of attendees available, and I assume that such lists are provided at the seminars.

Best regards

Tony Newbery

Sat, 1 Aug 2009 12:23:03 +0100

Hi Tony

I'm afraid I don't agree with Richard's account - indeed his presence is a reflection of the wide range of views on environmental change that were present! But I'm afraid as my previous email makes clear we never circulate details of attendance: people are invited in a private capacity and under the Chatham House Rule to allow free flowing discussion.

Best wishes

Joe

Mon, 03 Aug 2009 11:23:54 +0100

Dear Joe

Thanks for that, but I'm afraid that I don't understand what you are saying. Richard also claims that:

So far as I can recall I was alone in being a climate change sceptic (nothing like a denier, by the way) on both the science and policy response.

<http://ccgi.newbery1.plus.com/blog/?p=142>

Which doesn't really sound as though 'a wide range of views' was represented.

And what about the BBC's reference to the 'best scientific experts?' You don't say whether you consider this to be an accurate description or not, which is the question that I asked.

Best regards

Tony

Mon, 3 Aug 2009 13:22:53 +0100

hi tony

just abt to go on hols so some haste!

In short: yes we agree with any suggestion that the meeting convened top scientific expertise, but this doesn't fully represent the fact that the meeting also included well informed business and policy community figures.

It is in the nature of a huge and complex topic such as climate change that with having 15 or so specialists present from science, policy and business you inevitable have a wide range of views.

Best wishes

Joe