

CLIMATE CHANGE: PROPAGANDA OR REALITY?

24 August 2010



The Department of Economics and International Studies and its MA in Global Affairs programme were pleased to support students who organised this symposium to discuss one of the most controversial topics of international debate.

The panel, chaired by Professor Martin Ricketts, included Mr Michael Jefferson, Visiting Professor of Global Business at Buckingham and Chairman of Policy Issues, Renewable Energy and Energy Policy, WREC, UK; Ms Rachel Saunders, political campaigner for Oxfam; and Dr David Whitehouse, former BBC News Science Editor and Correspondent and member of the Advisory Council for the Global Warming Policy Foundation.

Their specific and sometimes contrasting presentations included issues such as climatic data particularly from the last few decades, which are meant to substantiate the 'reality' of Climate Change and not 'propaganda' - even when science itself is uncertain and changing. Other 'realities' of Climate Change were presented, especially the need to address its effect on human conditions and well-being. Finally, what is the advantage, if any, of international summits such as Copenhagen? They seem only to lead to more disagreements. Is human activity the cause of Change and hasn't this happened before? Indeed it has. However, the key priority this time may be sustained development.

What is truth and what lies, how much of it is propaganda and how much reality? An active audience engaged in an open discussion, which, if it did not solve, at least questioned and exposed matters that in one way or other concern us all.

We are grateful to Ernest Okwudike, MAGA student, for his enthusiastic efforts towards the success of this event, proof that individual students' initiatives undertaken with the support of their tutors can succeed. We hope that his project *Life Initiative International* will continue to do well.

The next debate, which will also count on the support of the Economist Club, will take place on Tuesday 31 August. The theme for discussion will be *The Niger-Delta Oil Spill: Worse than the Gulf of Mexico?*

Report by Patricia C. Prada Jimenez

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