

Cracking Sir Crispin Tickell's Time Capsule: A Critique of "Climatic Change and World Affairs"

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"By itself no human activity has - yet - altered or substantially affected the climate of the world as a whole." - Sir Crispin Tickell, 1977 (1)

Sir Crispin Charles Cervantes Tickell, descendant of Thomas Huxley and of paleontologist Mary Anning, was born in 1930. Crispin's father, Jarred Tickell, penned dozens of novels and screenplays; including bestsellers. Crispin's mother also wrote professionally.

Crispin graduated atop the Class of '52, Christ Church, Oxford. Two years with the Cold Stream Guards readied him for a Foreign Office career traversing the British Antarctic Territories, The Hague, Mexico City, and Paris.

The Duchy of Lancaster's selection of Crispin as Private Secretary lifted him to the Royal circle. (Elizabeth knighted Crispin as the two sailed aboard Britannia.) In 1977 he became Chef de Cabinet to the President of the European Community. From 1984 to 1987 he ran Britain's Overseas Development Administration. From 1987 to 1990 he was Britain's UN Ambassador; and, *ex officio*, Britain's Security Council rep.

During 'retirement' Tickell served as:

- Warden of Green College, Oxford, 1990-7
- President of Royal Geographical Society, 1990-3

- President of Marine Biological Society, 1990-2007
- Chair of the UK Government's Sustainable Development Panel, 1994-2000
- Chancellor of Kent University, 1996-2006

A lifelong conservationist Tickell prompted PM Major to launch the Darwin Initiative – a state-funded quango missioned to protect wilderness in poor locales. Crispin presided over the African tree-planting NGO, Tree Aid.

A population control hawk, Tickell patronized and publicized Optimum Population Trust ([Population Matters](#)). In 2007 he told the BBC he wanted [Britain's population slashed](#) from 60 to 20 million.

Tickell facilitated the [Tory's weaponizing of Climate Change](#) in their war with coal-miners; a project culminating in a total coal phase-out. Tickell met privately with Thatcher in 1984 to discuss “global warming.” From that moment Thatcher became the climate campaign's most effective agent. Tickell is oft described as her Climate Envoy.

In 1986, alongside Republican Party supremo John Topping (and the American Gas Association), Tickell co-founded the Washington DC-based [Climate Institute](#) – the first NGO with “climate” in its name; and the first dedicated exclusively to Climate Change. Tickell chaired this NGO from 1990 to 2002, and from 2012 until his 2022 death. The seminal Climate Institute, now buried beneath the jungle it sowed, hosted a three-day “Preparing for Climate Change” confab in October 1987 that attracted 300 well-healed participants. A similarly themed March 1988 symposium drew reps from 40 embassies.

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Tickell wrote *Climatic Change and World Affairs* while a Fellow at Harvard's Center for International Affairs (1975-6). The Center (est. 1958) fostered analysis of the world system by worldly scholars and officials.

The first book written under Center auspices was Brzezinski's *Soviet Bloc* (1960). Their second, Kissinger's *Necessity for Choice* (1961), proved the first of several by that author. Morton Halperin, Seymour Lipset and Samuel Huntington also contributed. Harvard University Press published most of the Center's oeuvre while some tomes bore Oxford, Princeton, Yale and Stanford imprints. These books became must-read university texts across the Anglosphere. Center interests encompassed: the Cold War, higher education (especially student rebellions), land reform and military governance (especially in Latin America). Around the time of Tickell's Fellowship the Center issued:

Big Business in the State (1974), Organizing the Transnational (1974), Multinational Corporations and the Politics of Dependence (1974), Politics of International Monetary Reform (1976), International Politics of Natural Resources (1976), Oil Crisis (1976), Raw Materials Investments and American Foreign Policy (1977), Bankers and Borders (1977), and Storm Over Multinationals (1977). (2)

Tickell's manifesto was their 119th publication; their first on climate. Appearing simultaneously, albeit not under Center auspices, was the Central Intelligence Agency's [The Weather Conspiracy: the Coming of the New Ice Age](#). Tickell notes:

“Vulnerability to climatic change is increasingly recognized as a crucial element both in

economic management within states and in relationships between them. In the United States the Central Intelligence Agency was one of the first to try and assess the political and economic implications for the shifting balance of world power.” (3)

Further evidence of a trend can be culled from Tickell’s *Suggested Reading*:

- *Inadvertent Climate Change* (1971), MIT
- Calder’s *The Weather Machine* (1974), BBC
- *Weather and Climate Change; Food Production and Interstate Conflict* (1974), Rockefeller Foundation
- *Understanding Climate Change* (1975) US National Academy of Sciences (4)

Said books were part and parcel of government-led initiatives involving the World Meteorological Organization and International Council for Scientific Unions. These entities created the Global Atmospheric Research Program (GARP) to sponsor conferences on climate physics, climate modelling, and paleoclimatology. GARP’s US subsidiary found lodgings at MIT, NASA and Colorado’s National Center for Climate Research. Across the pond:

“In Britain the Climate Research Institute at the University of East Anglia and the Meteorological Office have done pioneer work across the whole field.” (5)

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Weather warfare worries walked climatology to the fore. According to Tickell:

“Beginning in 1963 and continuing until 1972 the United States experimented with various means of environmental warfare...” (6)

Examples:

- “...attempts over five years to intensify normal monsoon rainfall so as to wash out North Vietnamese supply trails.” (7)
- “...the Central Intelligence Agency tried to dry out the Cuban sugar crop by seeding clouds which could otherwise have brought rain to Cuba.” (8)

Tickell brandishes: the creation of floods, droughts and hailstorms; inducing lightning strikes; and blowing holes in the ozone layer.

“News of the existence of this Pandora’s Box of horrors focussed international attention on the need to keep the lid as tightly shut as possible.” (9)

In December 1974, the UN resolved to prohibit influencing climate for military purposes. In August 1975, Americans and Soviets co-proposed **banning weather warfare to the Conference on Disarmament**. As Tickell’s manuscript went to press, many rallied behind this proposal. (10)

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Tickell’s “CALL FOR ACTION” chapter recommends consolidating climate and weather institutes (Tickell thought there were too many) into one omnibus “World Climate and Meteorological Organization” capable of cataloging climate research; convening climate

conferences; and counselling governments. (11) The treaty chartering this organization must stipulate:

“...mandatory obligations in some parts of the agreement and voluntary adherence to a code of good behaviour.” (12)

And:

“...develop a framework which could be strengthened and enlarged as circumstances later required.” (13)

Moreover:

“International acceptance of even a few mandatory obligations would only be a beginning.” (14)

“We can even imagine the institution of a kind of international thermostat for the management of the world’s climate.” (15)

Although utilizing UN imprimatur the organization shouldn’t be UN-controlled:

“However disagreeable it may sound, the countries or group of countries able to exercise leverage in this respect in the possible circumstances of the future are those who grow and export a surplus of foodstuffs, in particular grain. At present, this group includes Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, and could include members of the European Community. It would be much easier and more generally acceptable if they were to exercise leverage to support provisions of an international agreement than for motives which could be interpreted as selfish....” (16)

Tickell wrote as Anglospheric and European states withheld foreign aid from countries resisting birth control programs. Tickell advocated withholding grain from countries resisting the climate agenda.

One ulterior motive was surveillance. Tickell envisioned regular “*climatic censuses*” to which all “*governments should provide full and honest information*” with data gaps filled by satellites and other meteorological instruments (balloons, buoys etc). There would be climate truants, namely:

“China, whose statistics are suspect, and the Soviet Union, for whom secrecy is a disease...” (17)

Efforts to woo Russians went unrequited.

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Tickell’s list of activities this climate authority might suppress deviously mixes absurdly dangerous ideas with benign proposals only environmentalists oppose. In the first category, along with weather weapons, we find:

- Hurricane dispersal
- Towing Antarctic icebergs
- Permanent diversion of ocean currents

- Spraying sea ice with soot to warm the planet
- Burning sulphur in the upper atmosphere to cool the planet

Amidst these wild cards Tickell shuffles:

- Oil drilling in the Arctic
- Diverting rivers for irrigation
- Supersonic commercial air travel
- Deforestation to expand farmland

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Deemed the brightest mind available, Harvard tapped Tickell to survey the state of climate science. The salient takeaway is Tickell's acknowledgement of the uncertainty pervading the field. Passages reflecting humanities' climate benightedness abound:

- *"...of all the aspects of the earth's environment, the climate and its variations, natural and otherwise, remain one of the least understood. It is an area where vital information is still lacking, where scientists can both passionately and plausibly disagree..."* (18)
- *"What conclusions can be drawn from this summary description of the processes of climatic change? Perhaps the first is to underline the fragmentary nature of our knowledge and the immense difficulty in assigning causes to effects... there are many factors in this complex system of which we know little and there are probably others of which we know nothing."* (19)

Fast-forward 15 years and climate scientists, *sans* interim eureka's, express pathological confidence that CO2 emissions cause catastrophic global warming!

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Tickell equivocates between warmers and coolers; listing to the latter. He signs-off:

"The pleasantly warm moment we now enjoy... will not last forever." (20)

He earlier warns those basking in clement weather:

"...in a time span of 500 years or longer, this warmth was distinctly abnormal. It was cooler before, and between 1945 and 1970 it became cooler again. Indeed the period between 1900 and 1945 may have been the warmest in a thousand years." (21)

Tickell leans heavily on Nigel Calder, a scientist convinced *"the trend is clearly towards glacial conditions."* (22). ([Calder](#) died a vociferous critic of anthropogenic global warming.) Nature, not humanity, causes cooling. Tickell thrice summons the Little Ice Age (1645-1715) when fairs adorned a frozen Thames; and he links this cooling to dips in solar radiance.

He presents the standard cooler case:

"...dust, which is rapidly blown high and wide, casts a veil over the atmosphere, and, depending on the size, color and shape of the particles, shuts out more solar radiation from outside than it shuts in terrestrial radiation from below." (23)

Then adds: *"most authorities doubt it..."* (24)

Regarding *"man-made aerosol particles"* he opines:

"...here even the best authorities can arrive at opposite conclusions. One believes that aerosol particles should have recently cooled the northern hemisphere by about 0.5 C., thus counteracting the rise in temperature caused by carbon dioxide; while another does not rule out the possibility that they have recently had a warming effect at the surface in same area." (25)

He pours ink on the long-abandoned hypothesis that *"urban heat domes"* warm the entire atmosphere. (Alarmists forsook this because it implies warming bias at weather stations engulfed by urban sprawl.)

Of human-induced warming culprits Tickell considers CO2 most significant, cautioning:

"How much the observed increase in carbon dioxide has in fact warmed the lower atmosphere is in dispute. Some calculations show it should have warmed it by 0.2 C. to 0.3 C., but if so, other factors must have been operating the other way." (26)

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"If men will breed like rabbits they must be allowed to die like rabbits." (27)

Tickell approvingly relays this quip from A. V. Hill while deeming the *"present dizzying expansion of human numbers"* as *"the biggest threat we face."* (28) Population phobia spawns many passages:

- *"...maximum exploitation of land and other resources for the production of food can prove hazardous if not dangerous to present as well as future generations if it is based on the notion of a stable environment and ignores the climatic dimension..."* (29)
- *"What place should climate factors have in this depressing equation? Perhaps the single most important one is that overpopulation, with all that it implies, greatly diminishes our ability to respond to change."* (30)

Democracy and the insatiable mob undergird this crisis:

- *"No responsible, still less, elected government could lightly sacrifice a short-term and direct advantage in terms of wealth and employment for its people to avoid a long-term, indirect and uncertain disadvantage for the human race of life as a whole."* (31)
- *"...as populations and demands on resources continue to increase, governments will be under mounting domestic pressure to put national requirements first to ensure their own survival...."* (32)

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Tickell disgorges stock Malthusian-conservationist tropes about: Nature's balance; the frontier's end; tipping points; and, precautionary principles. The Great Dread is population pressure prompting rushes to the hinterland that undermine land values within, and the political reach of, metropolitan states. Tickell wrote just after Ehrlich's *Population Bomb* and

the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* broke records for sales and impact. Pre-1980s policy wonks pitched restricting: population growth, land development and energy usage, without recourse to climate scares. Tickell's favorite scientist, Stephen Schneider, coined "*climatic limits to growth*" so climatologists could join the fray.

Prescient as he appears, the climate campaign isn't what Tickell envisioned. The "Energy Transition" (hydrocarbon fuel phase-out) is now center and motor of climate politics. Tickell's CO2 concerns were bycatch of his trawling for larger climatic pretexts that might enable the under-development agenda. Although eclipsed by geo-politically orientated energy independence aspirations, uber-green motivations remain explicit, important drivers of the climate crusade.

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William Walter Kay is a regular contributor to Global Research.

Notes

1. Tickell, Crispin. *Climactic Change and World Affairs*; Harvard University Press, 1977, p 26
2. Ibid p 71-5
3. Ibid p 11-2
4. Ibid p 65
5. Ibid p 51
6. Ibid p 60
7. Ibid p 60
8. Ibid p 60
9. Ibid p 60-1
10. Ibid p 61
11. Ibid p 57
12. Ibid p 58
13. Ibid p 54
14. Ibid p 58
15. Ibid p 43
16. Ibid p 59
17. Ibid p 52
18. Ibid p 12
19. Ibid p 35
20. Ibid p 61
21. Ibid p 13
22. Ibid p 39
23. Ibid p 40
24. Ibid p 23
25. Ibid p 29
26. Ibid p 29
27. Ibid p 36
28. Ibid p 36
29. Ibid p 44-5

30. Ibid p 37

31. Ibid p 37

32. Ibid p 53

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