

ADIRONDACK FOREST BOOK BRIGHTENED THE HOLIDAYS

January 7, 2003

While the *Express* and its trusty minions rested for the holidays, world, national and state events continued a steady progression down a path to gloom and doom. I noted with more than usual interest the demagogic politicians on both sides of the aisle proselytizing to the gullible and uninformed on those events.

A cartoon by Dick Wright summed up the situation on coming events for the New Year. In it, Father Time is giving Baby New Year some helpful advice: "Always keep a bottle of aspirin handy and don't watch the news."

The most prominent and typically overblown event was the gaffe by Trent Lott at Strom Thurmond's birthday party. It was a stupid remark especially for a leader of a major political party. It cost him his leadership post, as well it should have. One political analyst, Ann Coulter, pointed out that Lott is "on track to break Bill Clinton's single-season record for public apologies."

The opposition's official spokesperson on the subject, Senator Clinton, topped everyone by expressing outrage that any political party could stoop so low as to continually exploit race for political gain. As cartoon character Snuffy Smith "That take the rag off the bush."

I also noted with interest Senator Clinton's recent intentions to push for a position within the Home Land Security Administration to direct its attention to illegal entry on the Canadian border. Does she know nothing about the crisis on the Mexican border? Can it be she does not dare risk alienating the considerable Democrat voting base among Latino voters? She should be asking our Mexican immigrant friends, as Phyllis Schlafly suggests, "Are you assimilating or invading?"

Congressman Charley Wrangel, Senator Clinton's New York colleague, commands my respect and admiration in at least two respects. First is his willingness to appear on "The O'Reilly Factor" and answer the hard questions - something our aforementioned Senator is afraid to do.

Second, is for his call to re-institute the draft and use the military to guard both borders. It is one of the most meaningful measures proposed by any member of either party regarding our present situation.

It is, in addition, the only fair way to ask our young people to defend and uphold the values and traditions of our nation and way of life.

In all fairness to Senator Clinton, on the subject of security on our borders, the present administration is doing little more in that regard for the

same reasons she is. Both parties are placing party considerations above national security.

North and South Korea are both generating a great deal of controversy and consternation. North Korea seems on the surface to present an even greater threat to the world and our nation at the present time than Iraq.

South Korea is criticizing our policies regarding the North and many of its citizens are calling for our ouster. After the sacrifices we went through for them we should leave post haste and take our aid along with personnel. It would be tantamount to treason to sacrifice any more young Americans than we already have defending an ungrateful nation.

Democrats are pleading for us to show constraint in all our actions in the fight against terrorism and let the UN guide our actions in the war on terrorism. Where have they been since the UN's inception and its deplorable record in defending human rights? The bottom line is that the UN and most of its member nations do not care one iota about what happens to the USA.

On the State level, we heard Governor Pataki's State of the State Message and his call for unity to overcome the many crises we face. Most of what he mentions concerns lack of money.

You never have known there was a money crisis back in the weeks preceding the election. Remember the State largess lavished on localities just prior to the election? We are all getting the point now that the election is over. Our latest property tax bills are graphic evidence; did yours go up?

I, for one, do not appreciate my tax money going to buy votes, whether they go to special interest groups or municipalities.

One of the bright spots in my holiday season was the gift of a book. The title is *Living With the Adirondack Forest* by Catherine Henshaw Knott, Director of Women in International Development and an adjunct assistant professor of anthropology at Oregon State. It is the most insightful and complete analysis of the history and present state of the controversy surrounding our area by a neutral scientifically trained observer over a number of years. It is an honest and factual account and perspective on the most important issue facing us on a regional basis today.

If the library doesn't have a copy, buy it.