

Fighting Global Warming, the Ted Turner Way

by Con Chapman

"Most of the people will have died, and the rest of us will be cannibals."

Ted Turner on the impact of global warming in 30 years, interview with Charlie Rose.



It has been my pleasure to serve the highest levels of Atlanta society as waiter at the Drumlanrig Club for my entire working life. During that time I have met such eminences as Snooky Lanson, star of "Your Hit Parade," Braves first baseman Fred "Crime Dog" McGriff, and First Brother Billy Carter, but there is a special place in my heart for the Turner family, and particularly Ted, my contemporary from the more prosperous side of the economic tracks.



Snooky Lanson

Today—November 19, 2038—is Ted's one hundredth birthday, and club members have planned a surprise for him; a

luncheon at which he will be “roasted”—figuratively, of course—by friends and colleagues.

The chairman of the event is dispatched to usher the sports and media mogul into the dining room on the pretext that a prime cut of a young left-handed pitcher who lost his fastball is about to be carved at a buffet. As the two enter the main dining room the shouts of “Surprise!” ring out to the crystal chandeliers overhead.



“What’s all this?” Turner asks in his usual self-effacing tone, pretending that such a fuss couldn’t possibly be raised for him.

“Happy birthday, you old buzzard,” says club president Hardy “Coot” Whalen as he grasps the elbow of America’s largest private landowner and ushers him to the head table.

“Happy birthday, sir,” I say in greeting.

“Happy birthday to you,” he replies.

“It’s not my birthday,” I say back to him.



Turner, with arm snack

“Whatever,” he says as he looks around the table for a laugh, which he gets from an appreciative group of his closest friends. The members start the meeting as always, standing for the singing of the club song, “It’s Better to be the Eater Than the Entrée,” then sit down.

"What's on the menu for today?" Turner asks after he's settled in.

"We have a number of specials for the occasion," I reply. "We have steak tartare patties, made from freshly ground news anchorman mixed with red onion, Cognac, Dijon mustard and raw egg yolks, and grilled to your specification."



"Wait a minute," Turner says. "How can you have grilled steak tartare—it's an oxymoron, you moron."

"The grilling burns off the chemicals in the hair spray, sir."

"Oh, okay. Continue."

"We have *Dance Team Members a la Provence*, two select young 'dancers' from the Atlanta Hawks A-Town Dance Team which have been marinated in lemon juice and Brandy Alexanders, then roasted with basil, garlic and *herbes de Provence*."



"Are these the girls who made the team, or the rejects?" Turner asks.

One never likes to be caught unprepared with Mr. Turner.

"All of the girls are current or former members . . ."

"Cut—'former' is all I need to hear. You're trying to serve me something that's no spring chicken," he says, looking around the table with an expression of comic umbrage. "Is there any sharecropper on the menu? You know I'm a plain, down-to-earth guy . . ."



"I'm afraid the sharecropper is an endangered species, sir, due to the diversification of the Southern economy."

"I always liked my sharecropper. Well, is that it?"

"There's one more, sir. We have a dot-com founder flambéed with gin over hot coals."



Finally, a dish that seems to strike his fancy.

"Is the founder free range?" he asks.

"I don't know sir—I'll have to check."

"What do you care, Ted?" one of his tablemates asks.

"They may be ignorant brutes, but I still hate to be cruel to them."

