

Oval Office
by
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Scene: The Oval Office of the President of the United States. President Boswell is having his blood pressure taken by his doctor Ben Seeman. A Secret Service Agent, Betty Low, is standing immediately behind the President nervously scanning the room. The President's Chief of Staff, Jim Peters, wearing a Harvard sweatshirt, is reclining on a couch reading Machiavelli's The Prince. "Bull" Armstrong, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is doing curls with a pair of dumbbells.

President Boswell: Well Ben? God damn it! Don't keep me in suspense!

Dr. Seeman: Your blood pressure is much too high, Mr. President: higher than when you discovered your wife was having an affair with the Secretary of Housing, higher than when you vetoed the bill banning the civilian use of flame throwers, higher than when you advocated a bill raising the income tax for homeless people, . . .

President Boswell: Christ, Ben, get on with it!

Dr. Seeman: I don't like it, Mr. President, not one little bit. I've some pills in my bag here that should do the trick (reaches in his bag)

Agent Low: (quickly pulling a handgun from her shoulder holster) Easy there Doctor! Take your hand out of that bag very slowly!

President Boswell: What in Christ's name are you doing Agent Low? Ben is my personal physician! Jesus, I've known this old bastard for twenty years!

Agent Low: Secret Service agents are not allowed to discuss procedure, Mr. President. But I can tell you that a recent background check of Dr. Seeman revealed some disturbing facts.

President Boswell: What the hell is this all about, Ben?

Dr. Seeman: (embarrassed) Frankly, Mr. President, I've some reservations about your proposed 50% cut in Medicare Benefits to blind and deaf elderly people and I may have told my barber about how I feel. What I could not have known is that my barber is a card-carrying member of the American Humanists.

President Boswell: What? You expressed your reservations to a God damned humanist? Ben, you are beginning to piss me off. I thought you're loyal! Jim did you know about this betrayal?

Jim Peters: (putting aside The Prince for the moment) Actually, Mr. President, I was not privy to this disturbing intelligence. But I advise you to change physicians and get one who is more politically perspicacious.

President Boswell: What the hell are you talking about? Can't you God damn Harvard whiz kids talk English?

Jim Peters: Look, Mr. President, Dr. Seeman apparently wants you to take pills for your high blood pressure. This is perhaps a good idea medically but it is a bad idea politically. If that ever got out, your popularity rating would drop 10 percentage points. People worry about a pill-taking president, Sir.

President Boswell: Christ, now you are beginning to make some sense. What do you think, Bull?

General Armstrong: (breathing hard after his exercise) Mr. President in this case I agree with this brainy Harvard piss ant. It is absolutely essential that we maintain First Strike capability against all terrorists known or unknown. In order to do that, Sir, the Commander-in-Chief must maintain a tough macho image. But such an image cannot be maintained by a president who takes Mickey Mouse faggot Commie pills. Do you follow me, Mr. President? . . .

Jim Peters: Mr. President, although I would not have used the General's colorful locutions, I essentially agree with his sagacious sentiments. Interestingly enough, a similar point is made by Machiavelli. (flipping through The Prince) Here it is! On page 39 he writes . . .

President Boswell: For Christ sake cut out the intellectual horse shit, Jim! What do you advise?

Jim Peters: Mr. President, I counsel you to use your presidential authority and have the national blood pressure standard raised so that your blood pressure will be in the normal range. The reason given for the change would be supposed recent studies.

President Boswell: Brilliant! Jesus! Your Phi Beta Kappa was not wasted! What do you think, Bull? Would that help preserve First Strike Capacity?

General Armstrong: Sir, I have to hand it to the Harvard piss ant. Yes, it would. I could do some things to help also.

President Boswell: (very excited, slapping General Armstrong on the back) Out with it, you old bastard!

General Armstrong: (excitedly pacing up and down) Well Mr. President, The Marine Corps has traditionally set the standard for being macho. I could make the Corps' blood pressure standard equal to your blood pressure. Glory to the Corps! Glory to the Chief!

Jim Peters: Excellent idea, General Armstrong! Amazingly fertile! Do the same for the Rangers, the Air Borne, the Seals and Delta Force. Mr. President, just think, your blood pressure will set the standard for our military's elite units. Your popularity ratings will soar out of sight!

Dr. Seeman: (furious) Mr. President! This is outrageous! This is a perversion of the national blood pressure standard. It holds the same place of honor as the national resting pulse rate standard, the national cholesterol standard, the national 20/20 eyesight standard, the national penis length standard, and the national gold standard. If I ever told. . .

(Everyone in the room stops and looks at Dr. Seeman with malice. Finally after a pregnant pause)

President Boswell: (in a threatening tone) That would be a damned stupid thing to do, Ben.

Dr. Seeman: (with hesitation) Why?

General Armstrong: You shit bird! If it ever got out that you prescribed your Mickey Mouse piss ant faggot Commie pills for the Commander-in-Chief, you would not be able to get a job as the physician for a mentally retarded girls' chess team.

Dr. Seeman: (with anxiety) Oh please! I'll not say a word.

Jim Peters: (sternly) Need I remind you, Doctor, what happened when you advised the US Marines to stop eating red meat? There were so many threats on your life that the President had to assign Secret Service agents to protect you.

Dr. Seeman: Yes, I remember. I still get hate mail from the Society of Marine Corps Mothers.

President Boswell: So, Ben, I'm asking you to resign your post as White House physician. I am damned sorry but it is necessary.

Dr. Seeman: Very well, Mr. President.

President Boswell: Agent Low, escort Dr. Seeman out of the building!

Agent Low: Yes, Sir.

Dr. Seeman: Just one question, Mr. President. What reason will you give for my resignation?

President Boswell: (looking at Jim Peters) Jim?

Jim Peters: (without looking up from his book) Health reasons. You have low blood pressure.

Dr. Seeman: Thank you, Mr. President!

Dr. Seeman leaves the room followed by Agent Low. The President exits. Jim Peters continues reading The Prince. General Armstrong does a few more dumbbell curls.)