



**(U) Presidential Encounters (Conclusion)**

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*(U) Here's the conclusion of our review of presidential anecdotes from NSAers, posted in honor of Presidents Day. (See [part 1](#))*

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**(U) Scolded by the First Lady**

(U) Here's my anecdote of meeting President Bush (41):

(U//FOUO) In early 1992, my family and I joined other American government employees in meeting President George H.W. Bush, and the First Lady, Barbara, in Melbourne, Australia. I was a member of the SUSLOM (Special U.S. Liaison Officer, Melbourne) contingent and worked with the Australian Defense Signals Directorate. The President made a stop in Australia on his way to Japan, where he famously became ill while dining with the Japanese prime minister.

(U) My 4-year old son [REDACTED] was roundly scolded by Barbara Bush for sticking his tongue on the gold ball on top of the crowd control pole. "You don't know who's been touching that!" she chided with an experienced grandmotherly air. My 5-year old, [REDACTED] posed for this dignified photo:



-- [REDACTED]

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**(U) Not the Hot Line, But the Next-Best Thing?**

(U) It was 16 Aug 1967. I was at the Minneapolis airport waiting to get on a plane to go to basic training. While I waited, I decided to call friends, figuring it would be my last shot for a long time.

(U) As I talked, I noticed someone go into the next telephone booth -- it was Richard Nixon. I commented to my friend who it was, and they said "Who cares!" Nixon was "between jobs" at the time, so I guess they weren't impressed. I was , however, so I and two others waited for him to finish, then spoke to him.

(U) He was very gracious, talked to us for five minutes and thanked us for serving our country, and then off we went to catch our plane. Fifteen months later, he became my Commander in Chief.

-- [REDACTED]

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**(U) Meeting the Johnsons on the White House Lawn**

(U) I was an "LBJ Intern" working in the Pentagon during the summer of 1965, and was invited to the White House to shake hands with the Johnsons and their daughters on the White House lawn. Those were the days when a visitor could drop by a congressional or Senate office and the politician would take you to lunch in the Senate or House restaurant (bean soup). I had a grand summer, and thought I would never see the East Coast again (so I visited every place I could).

-- [REDACTED]

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## **(U) Throwing the President a Curve**

(U//FOUO) I was barely one month into my F5 assignment at CIA back in March 2001, when it was announced to the workforce that recently-inaugurated President George W. Bush would be coming for his first visit. For one of my new officemates (NSA retiree and now CIA contractor, ██████████ and I, we knew they couldn't keep us away. When the day arrived, ██████████ and I made sure to pass through the metal detectors with time to spare, but even with that we found ourselves two-deep behind the rope line. Right behind us was a man who had a baseball autographed by President George H. W. Bush.

(U//FOUO) After giving a brief speech in the main CIA lobby, President Bush and entourage (included DCI Tenet, Chief of Staff Card, then-National Security Advisor Rice) emerged through the "anonymity" curtain to a corridor that erupted in raucous cheers. (I wondered what "Bush 43" felt when he first saw the bust honoring "Bush 41".) The President proceeded to work that rope line like a campaign stop.

(U) When he passed in front of our position, ██████████ and I both got a handshake, and the man behind us (to his delight) was able to get an autograph on the baseball. As the President looked up to pass the ball back I blurted out, "Sir, can you get us Alex Rodriguez's autograph?" (Yeah, sounds silly, but "A-Rod" had just signed a \$100M+ contract with the President's former team, the Texas Rangers.) "Nah, too expensive," was his reply. Now on a roll, I said, "Mr. President, when are you coming to Camden Yards?" (Opening Day was coming up, and it had been reported in the press that the Orioles owner was not rolling out the welcome mat for the new President; suffice it to say, he was a VERY disgruntled Gore supporter).

"NEVER!", the President retorted, looking me square in the eye. (Even though he was surely just having fun, you can picture me with that deer-in-the-headlights look.)

"Sir, please don't hold Peter Angelos against the good people of Baltimore," I meekly replied.

"Do you know what THAT MAN has said about your President????!!!"

"Which President?" I stammered.

"THIS President!" came the response, as he spun to continue down the rope line.

(U//FOUO) There must have been other co-workers who witnessed this brief exchange between the President of the United States and the "NSA interloper," because when ██████████ and I arrived back at our D.O. office our "legendary" boss was getting a "debrief." "There HE is now!" exclaimed one office mate. "WHAT were YOU doing talking to the President??!!!" asked the boss. Thankfully, I was not PNG'd (persona non grata), and remained at CIA for my full two-year tour, with at least one (there were more) amusing anecdote to show for it.

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## **(U) Goodbye to President Carter**

(U) During summer and winter breaks in college, I worked in the Executive Office of the President Information Center, i.e. the libraries in the Old and New Executive Office Buildings that served the White House and Executive Office staff. My temporary worker badge didn't allow me to go into the White House. But, when I was working there over winter break in early 1981, my boss told me that President Carter was letting any of the workers in the White House/Executive Office complex come by his office for him to say goodbye. So I got to go into the basement of the West Wing and get in a long line that snaked through the corridors, up the stairs, all the way to the Oval Office.

(U) When I finally made it inside the Oval Office, I found it a bit overwhelming. When my turn came, I shook the President's hand, mumbled a greeting, and quickly walked out. It was all kind of a blur. I didn't even notice there was a photographer taking pictures. Then, about three months later, an envelope arrived at my house that contained two copies of the picture of me shaking President Carter's hand with the caption "The Oval Office, 7 January 1981."

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(U) Editor's note: thanks to all who submitted their stories!

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