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I'm asked to run

By Curtis Seltzer

BLUE GRASS, Va.—On Wednesday after the election, a prominent Washington, D.C. political consultant who has known me for years called at 9 a.m.

Him: Seltzer, we need you to run.

Me: Where to?

Him: No dummy. For office, in 2012. You're our kind of guy—somebody who has no relevant experience, no record of doing anything and no idea what you're talking about. You're perfect. You'll start out with 80 percent approval.

Me: I'm flattered, of course. Not to brag, but I am a shovel-ready candidate.

Him: What will it be—governor, senator, president?

Me: There's one thing: I don't look like a politician.

Him: Not to worry, we'll buy you a hair piece. A big one. It'll cover everything. We'll make you look like Jack Kennedy or Newt Gingrich. Take your pick.

Me: My wife, Melissa, won't recognize me. The last time I shaved off my beard and she saw my face, she started crying. She didn't marry a Beatle.

Him: Our people will handle this. They'll train her to stand in reverential silence by your side and one step back, smiling blankly in your direction.

Me: Fat chance.

Him: Once we have her on board, you can deny in a press conference that you spent last week in a Russian brothel.

Me: I never did that!

Him: Who cares? We need you to triumph over some adversity. If the adversity is phony, even you can triumph. A false story is a lot easier to prove untrue than a true one. See?

Me: Can't I just say something really stupid like...I was the first one in my

family to go to zombie school, but I never practiced because I couldn't pass through the bar?

Him: That may have been really stupid 30 years ago, but it won't make the first cut with Rachel Maddow. You're a lock if she makes fun of you.

Me: Can you make me competitively stupid?

Him: With you, we feel we have a diamond in the deep rough, a guy's whose boo-boos will find an audience in the electorate. And if you can't screw up on your own, we'll go with a leak that North Korea is funding your campaign. I'm here to tell you that we have your back.

Me: Who's we?

Him: Who's who?

Me: What?

Him: Who's what?

Me: I'm a little confused.

Him: That's why you're our man. We'll teach you a few North Korean phrases just in case.

Me: But I have no qualifications for public office?

Him: Qualifications are largely in the mind of the candidate. No qualification is the new entry hurdle.

Me: Don't I need experience?

Him: No one has experience holding a particular office until he or she is elected.

Me: What about issues?

Him: Oh, pish posh. You already know what you think you know. Come on, I'll run you through a few examples.

Him: Unemployment. For or against?

Me: Against.

Him: See how easily that came to you. What about health care?

Me: Against.

Him: Government.

Me: Against. I want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. I'm also against bathing of all types. We should go back to cheap perfume and nose plugs.

Him: Man, that kind of historical analysis blows me away. Where would you take our country?

Me: I want to take our country back, way back to when men were men and wore stockings and made themselves sneeze. Kids should spend their time productively sweeping chimneys and cutting down cherry trees.

Him: What about the terrorists?

Me: Is that an NFL expansion team? Well, I'm against expansion of everything, everywhere...beginning with waistlines.

Him: What about waste?

Me: I'm for recycling.

Him: No, not that kind of waste. Aren't you against waste, fraud and abuse?

Me: In the private sector or the public sector?

Him: IN GOVERNMENT!

Me: I'm for privatizing all criminal behavior. I'm for separation of crime and state.

Him: We'll, let's talk about your economic policy. A chicken in every pot? For or against?

Me: What kind of chicken? Fryer, broiler? Thighs?

Him: The kind of chicken doesn't matter.

Me: Oh, you want to know about the kind of pot that the chicken's in. I'm against all pots on principle, except crackpots, which are a different kettle of fish. I also favor the legalization of sticky pans.

Him: A chicken in every pot means more prosperity. For or against?

Me: If chicken filled every pot every night, what happens to beef and pork producers?—unemployment! Not to mention vegetarians. I oppose any unfunded federal mandate that forces us to eat chicken every day, even if it's in a pot of my choice. How's that?

Him: What's this thing you have about pots?

Me: America's pots -- just like our waists -- are too big. They're out of control. I'm for downsizing pots, because, as a Nation, we have to tighten our belts. If elected, I will confiscate all spoons and ban the four-tined fork, which will end obesity in nothing flat.

Him: You are off the beaten path, that's for sure.

Me: I'm in the mainstream of a road less traveled.

Him: Well, your program could do with a tweak or two.

Me: I'm against all mind-altering substances, including Bill Clinton's statements under oath.

Him: Anything else you're passionate about?

Me: I'd outlaw cell phones in public restrooms. As a matter of fact, I'm against public resting in all forms. We need to put ourselves back to work digging ditches for our economy to stay in. Shovels all around. No one gets out of it, including nursing infants and lactating mothers.

Him: Where would the money come from? You know, to pay them?

Me: Who said anything about pay? Ask not, what your country can pay you to do, ask what you can pay to do for your country. Or something like that.

Him: How about your foreign policy?

Me: I like all foreigners, except the ones I don't know. Many speak English as well as other languages, like Australian.

Him: What should we do about Iran building a nuclear bomb?

Me: I'd send Brownie over to manage their program. Since Katrina, he's had time to diminish his skill set. Brownie, Brownie, he's our man. If he can't do it, BP can.

Him: I'm impressed. You have an amazing command of things that resemble

facts. And your personality will appeal to everyone who hates politicians as usual. There's just one thing missing: a campaign theme song.

Me: Here's my choice.

*I'm a little teapot,
Short and stout,
Here is my handle
Here is my spout
When I get all steamed up,
Hear me shout,
Tip me over and pour me out!.*

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