

DUBYA'S PLAY DOH

by

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FADE IN: DAY - THE WHITE HOUSE, THE OVAL OFFICE

George W Bush II, "Dubya", sits at his desk. Aristocles, son of Ariston, "Plato" is wandering around the room. Plato is a rather pompous character throughout.

DUBYA

Yo, Playdoh ! o you've come for a little disintercourse with me?

PLATO

'Discourse' - yes. I have 10 minutes and two questions to ...

DUBYA

Whoa, boy. Security check first. How'd you get here?

PLATO

Well, through time and space ... err ... forced oneself ...

DUBYA

Air Force One ? Heh, heh. Good enough for me. So ... two questions?

PLATO

Ah, yes. I'm writing an epilogue to one of my discourses. I shall ask the same two questions to those many political leaders - great Republicans - who have been in office since I wrote that piece - commonly known as "Plato's Republic"

DUBYA

"Playdoh's Republic?" Is that like their "Activity Centre"?

Dubya walks around his desk to the centre of the Oval Office. He sits on a sofa. In front of him, on a coffee table, is a "Play Doh" Activity Centre. He starts to play with it.

PLATO

Well certainly, the ideal Republic that I proposed had many centres of activity.

DUBYA

Only, look here - I got the
Fiftieth Anniversary Version. It's
got twenty-six molds!

Dubya holds up various parts of his "Play Doh" Activity Centre. He gestures to Plato to join him at the table.

DUBYA

And then there's cutters and
extruderers. You feed the dough in
here and crank this handle and
then those squidgy little ...

Plato sits opposite Dubya. He takes a plastic "Play Doh" mold of Jabba the Hut that Dubya has offered to him. He is puzzled by this object.

DUBYA

That's from my Jabba the Hut Play
Doh Play Set - a collector's piece
from 1983. I sometimes get the
parts from different Play Sets
mixed up together ...

(beat)

... a bit like policies and
decisions... and here's ...

PLATO

1983 ? I ...

DUBYA

... Salacious Crumb, Jabba's little
monkey pet. I make him up in green
so that he looks like a little
mint-monkey. Heh heh heh.

PLATO

I've only got seven minutes left
before I have to visit another
leader.

DUBYA

Two questions in seven minutes eh?
That's four, er, three minutes per
... heh, heh.

Dubya turns back to his "Play Doh" Activity Centre, happily squeezing a lump of bright red Play Doh in his hands.

PLATO

First - *What is your personal
opinion of your political office?*

Dubya stands, walks and gestures at the room. He's still holding a handful of Play Doh.

DUBYA

Well, This is the Oval Office. The round shape is shambolic of the Knights of the Round Table in days of yore in England. It means that I am like King Arthur. Also, in England you know, they call people 'lads' - and I am just a simple lad.

He scratches his head in a deprecating manner - leaving a lump of red Play Doh dangling from his hair.

DUBYA

Yep, just a simple lad, that's me. It's just that - I'm in charge!

Plato stands and walks around the Oval Office. His gestures during the following speech are in the manner of an orator from a classical play.

PLATO (PROCLAIMING)

Beware, for the people have always some champion whom they set over them and nurse into greatness. This and no other is the root from which a tyrant springs; when he first appears he is a protector.

Dubya is back at his "Play Doh" Activity Centre watching PLATO striding around the room whilst pushing his lump of Play Doh into a plastic mold. Plato stops his pacing behind the President's desk. He stands next to the US Flag and the President's Flag. He walks back to the centre of the room as Dubya speaks.

DUBYA

Hey! Hey! Please! Let me finish talking about my office. I'll continue. Thank you.

(beat)

My office is a shrine to democracy. And we treat it that way...

Dubya stands and walks around, making grand gestures, not unlike those of PLATO. He has a lump of Play Doh in each hand.

DUBYA

... When people walk in here, they -
- they don't come in here in
bathing suits and flip-flops. They
come in here dressed like they'd
come to a shrine. It is to be
respected and honored because the
"Office of Bush" is bigger than
the person who occupies it. It's
one of the great things about a
true democracy -- is that I ...

Plato is now standing under the Presidential seal in the
ceiling. He points to it.

PLATO

... I meant to ask about your
Political Office - as President
of the United States.

DUBYA

Oh, w ... w ... duh, don't ... why are
you wearing a dress? You a
crossing dresser? Heh heh.

PLATO

No, I'm from the year 357 BC. This
is the accepted attire of my time.
(beat)
What is *key* to your presidency?

DUBYA

Weeeell, it's, yes, it's important
for people to know that I'm the
President of everybody.

PLATO

Could you explain further?

Dubya walks back to his desk and sits down. He opens a
drawer and takes out a Play Doh person. It is an model of
himself. He places it on the desk and gestures to Plato to
join him. He points at the figure on the desk.

DUBYA

I'm the commander - see, I don't
need to explain - I do not need to
explain why I say things. That's
the interesting thing about being
the president.

Plato walks over as Dubya takes some more Play Doh people out of the drawer. These are much smaller than the first model. He arranges them in a semi-circle in front of the larger figure. Plato looks at the contents of the desk. Dubya talks to Plato as if explaining something to a small child.

DUBYA

Maybe somebody needs to explain to me why they say something ...

Dubya takes hold of the figure of himself between his thumb and middle finger and "walks" it away from the other figures.

DUBYA

... but I don't feel like I owe anybody an explanation.

(beat)

Second question Play Doh!

PLATO

Oh, er, so - *What has been your most significant achievement as President?*

DUBYA

You mean besides winning the war against terrorism? 'Cos we've ... I've nearly achieved that, once we can begin to catch the terrorist suiciders before they die. Then *that* will be it which is the most significant thing in my Presidency.

Dubya squashes all the small figures on his desk and carefully replaces "himself" into the drawer.

PLATO

I'm sorry, I don't ...

DUBYA

So, until then I'd have to say Education is the significant achievement that I have achieved.

Plato is back on familiar territory and his delivery is that of a classical orator once again. He paces the room making dramatic gestures.

PLATO (PROCLAIMING)

Yes! The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life.

DUBYA

Hmm, possibly. Here's what I say. What I say is this - teach a child to read and write and it will pass a literacy test. Yes sir.

PLATO (PROCLAIMING)

Certainly, in the ideal State, the first care of the rulers is to be education.

(beat)

May I ask more about the war to which you referred?

Dubya stands, shakes his head, stretches and turns to look out of the window at the Rose Garden.

DUBYA

Against turrists? Well, you know I don't have my thinking head on today. Tomorrow is when I've got to put some thought into that war - but today, you know these are historic times. This is a historic moment in history, as far as I'm concerned. I have to take my time.

Plato stands at the other end of the Oval Office. He looks at a collection of Play Doh figures on a shelf.

PLATO

I understand, it's just that in my original discourse we came to the conclusion that only the dead have seen the end of war.

Dubya turns around from the window, chuckling, amused by Plato's last comment. He walks back to the coffee table in the centre of the room.

DUBYA

Well, of course they have. They're dead! Seems pretty simplistical that "Discourse" of yours. What else it say?

PLATO

It suggests an ideal by blending ethics, political philosophy, moral psychology, epistemology, and metaphysics into an interconnected and systematic philosophy.

Dubya stops short at this. He enters a trance-like state for a few seconds. Plato walks over to him, concerned, and stares into his eyes. Dubya snaps back to reality.

DUBYA

Some ... sometimes I don't sleep too good, but if America goes to sleep, the rest of the world is in trouble. If we blink, the rest of the world will close their eyes. So we're not blinking, and we're not going to sleep.

PLATO

Well then, no more philosophical discourse. One can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.

DUBYA

Yeah! We got a lot in common.

Dubya removes the tray containing his Fiftieth Anniversary Play Doh Activity Centre from the coffee table and replaces it with a large, flat box which he slides from underneath the sofa.

DUBYA

This is another Play Doh Play Box Playdoh - for when I want to play at being a simple barber.

(beat)

Is Playdoh your real name?

PLATO (POMPOUS)

No, my true nomenclature is Aristocles, son of Ariston

DUBYA

Well hoo! No wonder it got changed - 'the Play Doh Fuzzy Pumper Barber and Beauty Shop' just trips off the tongue - but 'the Aristocalis Fuzzy Pumper Barber

and Beauty Shop' - now that just does not have the ring of authenticity. Does it?

PLATO

It ...

Dubya walks to the shelf full of Play Doh figures - he hunts among them. He's searching for a particular figure.

DUBYA

Now, yesterday I learned to make a Play Doh tropical fish with my Play Doh Marine Life Play Box. It was pretty tricky ... but I managed it and ...

Plato's form begins to shimmer and fade. He looks at a wall clock. His speech is hasty.

PLATO

I'm out of time. Do you have any last words to sum up your presidency?

Dubya turns around. He's holding up his Play Doh Tropical Fish.

DUBYA

... I know the human being and fish can coexist peacefully.

Plato disappears as Dubya looks at him. Dubya looks at the empty space for a couple of seconds.

DUBYA

'Bye now.

He continues talking directly to the Play Doh Tropical Fish in his hand. He yawns.

DUBYA

"Accepted attire of his time" huh? Well, Attire very quickly in my time too and it's not always acceptable is it ?

Dubya takes the fish to the coffee table and continues playing with his Play Doh Play sets.

FADE OUT.