Future draft plea: the White House needs you

It was a heartrending scene in the Wasp household. Mr. and Mrs. Wasp's oldest son, Irving, had just been drafted.

"Well, it isn't the end of the world, son," said Mr. Wasp, trying to smile bravely in the face of this disaster. "After you do your two years, you can go back to college on the G.I. Bill. Tell me, have they assigned you your branch of service yet?"

"Yeah, Irving said gloomily. "They're going to make me a White House aide."



innocent bystander

"A White House aide!" Even Mr. Wasp blanched at this blow. "Well, it could be worse, I suppose. They could've made you a congressman."

Mrs. Wasp broke into tears. "Oh, I didn't raise my boy to be a politician," she sobbed. "Whatever willour friends think?"

"Now, now, mother," Mr. Wasp said, patting her on the shoulder, "Everybody knows Irving isn't becoming a politician by choice. He was drafted. His country needs him and he's answering his country's call. We should be proud of him."

"I should've gone to Canada like some of the other kids," Irving said grimly.

"You'd be an exile for life, son," Mr. Wasp said.
"They'd never grant you amnesty. It wouldn't be fair to the other young men who took their chances in Washington."

"Well, I still don't see why they can't have all volunteer politicians the way they used to," Irving

Mr. Wasp sighed. "You know the answer to that, son. When the polls in 1973 showed politicians ranking at the very bottom of the list of those the public trusted and admired — right below used car salesmen — young men started refusing to go into politics."

"So what?" Irving said.

"The country needs White House aides and congressmen and even a president, son, to defend us from our enemies. Our national security was involved. So we had no choice but to revive the draft."

"Don't worry about me ever being president," Irving said, "I'm sure not going to be a lifer."

"I know, son. All you have to do is survive the next two years without getting indicted. Just take care of yourself, boy. Keep a low profile. Don't write any memos...

"And always remember that anything you say may be recorded against you," Mr. Wasp said. "But don't worry. Many young men come home unscathed. And while they have a difficult time readjusting to civilian life..."

trying suddenly folded his arms, sat on the floor and began chanting, "Hell, no, won't go! Hell, no,

"Oh, Irving, you mean you're going to be a draft resister?" cried Mrs. Wasp, wringing her hands. "But you'll have to go to jail."

"Don't you see, Mother?" Mr. Wasp said proudly. "Irving's standing on high moral principles. He'd rather go to jail than take part in what he feels is an immoral occupation. Right, son?"

"Frankly," Irving said, "no. I just figure the odds of my surviving two years in Washington without going to jail are real slim. So I might as well go to jail first and get it over with."

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