

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB DINNER WITH JEFF DUNHAM

SUBJECT: AN EVENING WITH JEFF AND FRIENDS

MODERATOR: DONNA LEINWAND, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

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**DONNA LEINWAND:** (Sounds gavel.) Good evening, welcome to the National Press Club. My name is Donna Leinwand. I'm a reporter for *USA Today*, and I'm President of the National Press Club. We're the world's leading professional organization for journalists, and we're committed to a future of journalism by providing informative programming and journalism education, and fostering a free press worldwide. For more information about the National Press Club, please visit our website at [www.press.org](http://www.press.org).

On behalf of our 3,500 members worldwide, I'd like to welcome our speaker and our guests in the audience today. I'd also like to welcome those of you who are watching on C-SPAN. We're looking forward to today's speech. And afterwards, I will ask as many questions from the audience as time permits. Please, hold your applause during the speech so that we have time for as many questions as possible. For our broadcast audience, I'd like to explain that if you hear applause, and I suppose in this case if you hear laughter, it may be from the guests and the members of the general public who attend our dinners, and not necessarily from the working press. Because, you know, the working press never laughs. (Laughter)

I'd now like to introduce our head table guests and ask them to stand briefly when their names are called. From my left, Andrew Schneider from Kiplinger; Elaine Schock, a publicist; Theresa Werner, producer for Associated Press Television, and a member of the National Press Club Board of Governors; Audrey Merdick, Jeff's girlfriend (laughter and applause); and already, no one following instructions.

So moving on, we have Angela Greiling Keane of Bloomberg News and Chair of the National Press Club Speaker's Committee; skipping over our speaker for just a moment, Andrea Stone, senior Washington correspondent for AOL News and the Speakers Committee member who organized today's event. Thank you very much, Andrea; Judi Marmel, Levity Entertainment and Jeff's manager; Marc Raimondi of Harrah's Corporation; Jamila Bey of NPR and a freelance writer; and Tommy Burr of the *Salt Lake Tribune*. (Applause)

"Silence, I kill you!" Oh, that is amazingly effective, that is better than the gavel. But that, dear guests, is the signature line of one of our speakers tonight, Achmed the Dead Terrorist. Achmed is here with his friend, Jeff Dunham, who stars in the "Jeff Dunham Show," which debuts October 22<sup>nd</sup> on Comedy Central. A ventriloquist, Dunham became an internet sensation when a clip from his 2007 "Spark of Insanity" DVD in which Achmed discusses suicide bombings and other fun stuff, became one of the most watched clips in YouTube history, 90 million clicks. With the politically incorrect help of Achmed and other friends such as Walter, the grumpy retiree, Bubba J, the beer-swilling NASCAR devotee and Jose Jalapeno from South of the Border, Dunham has logged, in all, more than 360 million views on YouTube and sold four million DVDs.

Dunham is a native of Dallas, and he's a frequent guest on late night TV. His DVDs, tours and other projects have made him the third highest earning comedian in America after Jerry Seinfeld and Chris Rock. Please help me in welcoming to the National Press Club Jeff Dunham and his friends. (Applause)

**MR. DUNHAM:** Thank you very much, thanks to the Press Club and Donna, thank you very much for that introduction. I guess my favorite part was the fact that you said the majority of the audience never laughs, that's perfect so I'm ready to go. Most comedians like an audience that's been warmed up and thank you for whipping this crowd into a comedic frenzy. The energy in here is unbelievable. All right.

Well, Donna kept using the word "speech," and I'm not used to the word "speech," but I got the idea that this was going to be a little different than most of the shows that I do. For example, there's a head table and you guys are like looking at them, judging whether they laugh or not. So that's perfect, thank you. Little scorecards, thanks for that, that's awesome.

But I thought what I'd do is tell a little bit, but first before I pull these little guys out of the box is I tell a little bit about what the heck it is that I do. And for those of you who don't know, I guess some of you do, I do have little people in boxes and I've been a ventriloquist since a little bitty kid, I was eight years old. And this career has taken this unbelievable turn in the last few months, the last couple of years, and there have been a few surprises along the way.

I want to tell you a story, though. By the way, we went to Walter Reed Hospital this morning and this afternoon and went around. (Applause) Yeah, that was great. And

got to speak and visit with these young men and women, and some of them not so young, actually, who have served our country and have been injured, most of them very seriously. And we were able to walk around and talk to these guys and take some pictures, and it was just great.

But with that Achmed clip that you mentioned, Donna, that's going on the web, a lot of those clicks are not coming from within the borders of the U.S. A lot of those are coming from our troops, they're also coming from folks in all different countries. And that's been one of the-- There have been three things that have dumbfounded me about what it is that I'm doing right now. Number one is this foreign aspect. I have been doing this for many, many years. Started when I was a little bitty kid, when I was eight years old doing ventriloquism, grew up doing shows in elementary school, junior high, high school, then on into college. And then in 1988, I finally moved from Dallas, Texas, where I grew up, to Los Angeles. Started doing comedy clubs in 1988.

And I had this dream of keeping going as far and as high as I possibly could in this profession. And my idea was to do theaters and that would be great, to be doing two and three thousand seat houses. And so, now an overnight success 21 years later, here we are. But I had many, many years of doing comedy clubs including right here at Washington, D.C. at the Improv that's been there for a long time.

But the three things that have surprised me about what it is that I do is number one, the international piece of it all. Comedy Central, the specials that we had on television, the three DVDs, launched the career here in the United States to an unbelievable level. We started doing big theaters. And then the YouTube clip of Achmed hit and then there was this international piece of it. This past spring, we just did a tour of European countries and to be in Helsinki, Finland and have people yelling out the lines from my DVDs was very strange. And these were ravenous crowds of eight, nine, ten thousand folks whose English was their second language. And they love Achmed the Dead Terrorist and go figure. So that international thing, we're getting ready to do a tour in Australia and it sold out pretty quickly. So this is one thing that I never considered, never dreamed of, never prayed for, it's an unbelievable thing.

The other piece of it is that things have just gone so crazy and it's thanks to YouTube and Comedy Central that now we're doing not theaters here, but arenas of nine, ten, eleven, twelve thousand folks, and that's just crazy.

But the third part that's the most important to me, doing all this stuff, I have three daughters and I'm actually cool. (Laughter) So, I never in a million years did I think that was going to happen.

But I want to tell you a little story that happened not long ago, and this is another one of those wacky things. Usually, I fly commercial but every once in a while people who represent me decide it's time to get on a private jet because we can't get to where we're supposed to be. And private jets are great because I don't have to answer to

taxpayers. All right, that's one of those barometer laughs, and that's not good. All right, I know where I can't go, all right.

So, we were on a private jet going from New York City and we had to go to a place called Medford frickin' Oregon, and it actually says that on the map, "Medford frickin' Oregon. Why the hell you coming here?" But we took off from-- They're handing you questions and I'm a little frightened on them, but they're handing-- Right over here to the left. Yeah, right there. Okay, it's good. Thanks, Andréa, was that from you? Well, great, perfect. Fashion questions, I love those. Anyway, I'm wearing a wrinkled leather jacket, it was a small joke.

So, we're flying across the country, me and one other guy, a guy that opens for me. And we're flying across the country all night, come in very late. We're coming in for a landing at Medford frickin' Oregon and we're only about 800 feet off the deck and suddenly the landing gear goes back up [mouth noise], we had to go somewhere else. Apparently, the entire airport was covered in fog. So we diverted to a place called Klamath Falls, Oregon and this is all a true story. Apparently, our pilots hadn't done their research, they didn't know much about Klamath Falls. But apparently, the Klamath Falls airport is an uncontrolled airport at nighttime. And in case you don't know, that means nobody's in the tower, good luck!

So we came in for a landing at Klamath Falls, everything was fine. They taxied over to the taxiway and the pilots turned to us and they go, "Look, we don't know anything about this airport. There's nobody in the tower, nobody in the radio. We don't know where to go or what to do, so we're just going to taxi over to that big, dark corner next to the big, dark hangar of the airport and just sit there until we figure out what to do." My buddy and I are like, "Fine, whatever."

So they taxi over to the big, dark corner of the airport, absolutely true. As they're shutting down the engines, suddenly four military Humvees come roaring up, surround the airplane. They turn on the floodlights and we hear on a bullhorn, "All occupants of the aircraft, you must now exit the aircraft with your hands in the air 50 meters apart, one at a time." I turn to my buddy and I go, "How far is 50 meters?" This is all true. And now I'm thinking we're being punked. Any minute, we're going to look out the window and that Ashton Kutcher guy is going to jump out of the bushes, "Ahhh!" Oh, you know Ashton Kutcher. You guys are hip, that's very nice, I don't know. Never mind what I said about the other joke.

All right, so but we're standing there and realize this is legit when our pilot, the captain, he stands up and he starts walking towards us and he's like-- So he comes walking towards us, he put down the stairs, he goes outside. He puts his hands in the air. When he looks around, he starts shaking more. I'm like, "Holy crap." Now the copilot stands up-- Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you. The pilot, the first guy, he knew who I was, he knew what I did for a living, he knew the characters. Copilot, new guy. Keep that in mind, all right?

So the copilot stands up, he's walking towards us, he's shaking. He gets to the bottom of the stairs with his hands in the air. When he looks around, he starts shaking more. I'm like, "Good Lord, see you later, buddy." I walk to the bottom of the stairs with my hands in the air. When I look around, now I see why they're shaking more. Surrounding us, no joke, about 40 Marines, M4 rifles pointed at our heads. Oh yeah, apparently we had taxied over next to some areas 51 secret, highly classified alien government hangar. I don't know what dumb ass aliens are circling Klamath Falls, it's like, "Oh look, strawberries." (Laughter)

So we're standing there like this, and now we see my buddy, he's a musician. We see him coming down the gangway there, the steps, and I almost burst out laughing. His name is Brian. Apparently, he had been through something like this before, because the two pilots and I are standing there like this. Apparently, Brian had been through this because he was coming down the stairs like this. Yeah. We're in a western, he's on "Cops." So he's coming down the stairs, we're all standing there, the guy gets back on the bullhorn, he goes, "All right, who's in command here?" And I'm thinking, "I paid for the trip. But no, the guy in the hat, talk to him, he landed."

So the pilot goes forward, he's talking to the guy, we're all standing there like this and I'm thinking, "Well, this is just some horrible misunderstanding. How can I get us out of this?" And I'm thinking, "All right, this has to work." So we're all standing there like this, and I go-- my buddy's name is Brian-- I go, "Psst, Brian. I have an idea." And then honest to God, I'm thinking, "Why am I talking like that? I'm a ventriloquist." Right. But then Brian goes, "Ah ah ah ah." And then I realize, "I have a skill that he does not." And I go, "Ha ha, you can't do it." He's like, "Ah ah ah ah." And I'm like, "I can't understand you." Remember, copilot, no idea. This is all true.

So I'm standing there thinking, "This has to work." So I go like this, I go, "Excuse me, gentlemen." All the rifles, right at me. "Do you guys know Achmed the Terrorist?" That's when the copilot pissed in his pants. Then there's this awkward silence. Brian starts going, "Ah ah ah, crap." There's awkward silence. The only thing I could hear is pee running off the guy's shoe. And they're honestly-- One guy over here goes, "Yeah? We watched him on TV last week, he's funnier than hell." I go, "You guys, that's me." Another guy goes, "You're the puppet dude. We bagged Achmed the Dead Terrorist." That's when the copilot fainted, we had to shake hands and take pictures, and that's the story. So there you go, all right? There we go, thank you. (Applause)

Anyway, that's my little story, but before I use up too much time, before questions, I want to introduce a couple of guys. The first guy I'd like to introduce I think audiences enjoy because everyone knows someone like this. You know somebody like this in your own family or where you work. Please help me welcome my old friend, Walter. (Applause)

**WALTER:** Oh my Lord, where the hell are we now? Who the hell are you?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Walter, do you know where we are?

**WALTER:** No, and I don't care.

**MR. DUNHAM:** I wrote it down for you.

**WALTER:** What?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I wrote it down for you.

**WALTER:** Okay. The National Press Club's Speakers Forum. That's it?

**MR. DUNHAM:** That's it.

**WALTER:** I think our career has peaked. You know, I was saying to myself just the other day, we've been on the "Tonight Show," we've had specials on Comedy Central, but we've never done a show for the National Press Club. We getting paid for this gig, cash? None of that barter crap, is it? I'm not going to get like a lifetime subscription to *USA To-frickin'-day*, are we?

**MS. LEINWAND:** No, we don't give those out for free.

**WALTER:** That would be great because I love reading the paper on the weekends. You get it?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I get it.

**WALTER:** They don't print on the weekends. So what the hell is this group?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I wrote it down right there.

**WALTER:** It's the world's leading professional organization for journalists. Well, la-di-frickin'-da.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You know, this organization was founded in 1908. Did you know that?

**WALTER:** Oh, yes. I saw it on the History Channel. It's fantastic.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Do you know it's the headquarters right here, and do you know why it's located right here between the White House and the Capitol? Do you know why?

**WALTER:** Someone lost a bet?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I think you should have a little more respect for the organization.

**WALTER:** I don't care. What was your name, Donna?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Donna's the president.

**WALTER:** Oh well, la-di-da.

**MR. DUNHAM:** It's very prestigious.

**WALTER:** Oh, is it? Yeah, it's great. Great for you, good, good.

**MR. DUNHAM:** It is prestigious because it wasn't up until 1971 that women were actually allowed in this room.

**WALTER:** So what the hell happened? I'm kidding, it's a joke.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Walter, I had some notes here and I wanted to talk about a few things before we take some questions.

**WALTER:** Okay, fantastic. I don't care. You say it's not an open bar? It's a cash bar? So it's a cheap-ass organization. Press Club? It does look more like an AA meeting. Have you noticed that? You can tell it's a Press Club and they all have digital voice recorders, laptops and frickin' flasks. Have you seen that? Anything better? I don't know.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Did you know that we're speaking to the same people that every president since Theodore Roosevelt has spoken to? Do you know what that means?

**WALTER:** Jon Stewart canceled on them? I'm sorry, I'm just a little depressed, Donna. I was hoping I'd come here and see my first wife. Is Helen Thomas here tonight? She is hot, hot, hot. I think this is just fantastic. I mean, you come here, you do this and you got a guy making another guy talk. How ironic we're doing this in Washington, D.C.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You mean people make other people talk here?

**WALTER:** I'll say two words: Press Secretary. The only difference between me and the Press Secretary is when I lie, my nose grows. See, that's a D.C. joke. I thought that would frickin' kill. Knock-knock?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why don't we change the subject.

**WALTER:** Good idea.

**MR. DUNHAM:** How's your wife?

**WALTER:** Well, better than Letterman's wife, I'll tell you that much. Oh, now I see what kind of cruel, ugly crowd this is. You know, when I heard that a producer from "48 Hours" allegedly tried to blackmail Letterman, I was shocked.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why?

**WALTER:** I had no idea “48 Hours” was still on the air. That was good, they liked that one, Donna. They don’t care. Are you married, Lady Donna? Oh, you’re not? That’s good for you, yeah. You know, when they say ‘til death do us part? Later, you realize you’re actually setting a goal. The Press Club, this is fantastic. Is this on television?

**MR. DUNHAM:** C-SPAN.

**WALTER:** What?

**MR. DUNHAM:** We’re live on C-SPAN right now.

**WALTER:** Like I said, your career is zooming! Next week we’ll be in Potomac opening a waffle house. C-SPAN? Nobody’s watching us.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Sure they are.

**WALTER:** Oh come on, ten, a hundred thousand porn sites, you think anybody’s watching this crap? I’m kidding, I love C-SPAN. Did you know that C-SPAN has a new slogan, Donna? Did you know that, Donna?

**MS. LEINWAND:** No.

**WALTER:** Yeah, it’s, “C-SPAN, we show the crap no one else will.” How about this, “Watch C-SPAN. Please.” I got one for you, Donna. Did you know the Obamas have commissioned an artist to paint an oil painting of the family, a portrait? Did you know that?

**MS. LEINWAND:** No, I didn’t.

**WALTER:** Yes, it’s fantastic. Apparently A&E is going to show the actual creation of the portrait and C-SPAN will show the paint drying. (Laughter) I wrote that, that’s funny as crap. I like that one, that’s a good one. Well, I don’t know. I was watching C-SPAN for a few hours last week. My TiVo actually killed itself. I’m not kidding. Joe Lieberman got up to speak and the TiVo scooted itself to the edge of the counter and dove into the bathtub.

**MR. DUNHAM:** That’s not nice.

**WALTER:** That’s why it was funny. So this is really the Washington Press Club? I thought we were getting that Nobel thing. For a couple of days now, honestly, I’ve been trying to-- I’ve been watching the news trying to figure out exactly why they gave it to Obama.



**MR. DUNHAM:** Right.

**WALTER:** The Nobel. Then I figured it out.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why?

**WALTER:** The only thing I could come up with was that it was because he got a white guy and a black guy to drink beer together. And then I started to think, “Wait a minute. I drink beer every day in my house with a she-wolf, where's my frickin' trophy?”

**MR. DUNHAM:** Well, Walter, there you go. So you had some good jokes in there.

**WALTER:** Oh, thank you very much. So Donna, this is just lovely being here. Should we take a few questions from these lovely folks?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Absolutely, Walter.

**WALTER:** Okay. Have you ever been married?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Have I?

**WALTER:** I'm looking the hell right at you. Aren't I?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I think so.

**WALTER:** Fix my eyes, ass.

**MS. LEINWAND:** I got a question for you, Walter.

**WALTER:** Oh, you have a question? Okay, good.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Are you concerned that the death panels could deny you essential health care? For example, you may need emergency wood filler or splinter removal, but could be viewed as too old.

**WALTER:** Let's go back to the crap you wrote. I guess that was a yes or no question? No.

**MS. LEINWAND:** I got another one for you, Walter.

**WALTER:** Okay, good.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Is it strange being in D.C. after your unsuccessful run for president in 2008? And do you have any plans to run again in 2012?

**WALTER:** Oh, my Lord. All I can say is I hate coming to D.C. because everyone thinks I'm Joe Lieberman. I'm not kidding. Then they see my wife and they go, "Wow, Jill has let herself go." So, I didn't answer the question, did I? I'm like a politician. You asked a question and I just kind of tap danced and made a joke and now we're on to something else. [singing] Way to go.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Thanks a lot.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Well, Walter, somebody's asking you for advice.

**WALTER:** Okay, good.

**MS. LEINWAND:** I'm getting married on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October. Any last minute advice?

**WALTER:** Oh Lord, marriage advice? Run!

**MR. DUNHAM:** How long you been married?

**WALTER:** Forty-seven years.

**MR. DUNHAM:** What was the happiest moment of your life?

**WALTER:** Forty-eight years ago. That joke used to kill. Now it's too close to home for all these folks, I guess.

**MS. LEINWAND:** All right, so what's the dumbest question you've ever been asked?

**WALTER:** "Should I get married?"

**MS. LEINWAND:** And what was your answer?

**WALTER:** I just did it.

**MR. DUNHAM:** That was for marriage advice.

**WALTER:** We're already to the next one, no one cares. So what do you do when you're not doing this, Donna? Do you have another job?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Yeah, I'm a reporter for *USA Today*. I cover crime.

**WALTER:** Oh, crime? Okay, good. Well, we didn't step in anything there, that's good. How long you had that gig?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Oh, about five years.

**WALTER:** Okay, good. It's fantastic.

**MS. LEINWAND:** How's the crime problem where you're from?

**WALTER:** Gee, I live in a case.

**MS. LEINWAND:** So Walter, have you ever hooked up with a Muppet from the "Muppet Show?"

**WALTER:** Oh, my God. All I'm saying is Miss Piggy smelled like a frog.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yikes. I'm sorry about that.

**WALTER:** Oh, blame it on me. Way to go.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right.

**MS. LEINWAND:** I've got some questions for you, Jeff.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Oh, for me? Okay.

**WALTER:** I'll just sit here. Are these more serious questions that he's going to get?

**MS. LEINWAND:** These are very serious.

**WALTER:** Okay, good. We'll let him sit there and sweat.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Describe to me your life as a comic before YouTube and then after YouTube?

**WALTER:** Okay, now you're going to hear stations all over the country clicking over to something more exciting. Like the paint drying channel.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Before YouTube, I do say this is kind of a serious question because the career has, like I said earlier, has taken a really unbelievable turn. And a big part of that is YouTube. I think that what got, to use an analogy, what got the career off the launch pad, I've been doing the comedy clubs for years and years and have been farming that audience for many, many years, much like Leno did before he got "The Tonight Show." And I think what happened was, after doing all those theaters and doing all that farming, we got on Comedy Central and I think the analogy is that's when the smoke started billowing around the bottom of the rocket. And that was the first special, "Arguing with Myself," the first DVD. And that was in the spring of '06.

And then in the fall of '07, we came out with "Spark of Insanity," Achmed the Dead Terrorist was on that, and we taped that one right here at the Warner Theater just down the street here. So, with Achmed being on that, then that's when the rocket really took off and put us in the atmosphere.

And then when the YouTube clips started going worldwide, that's when it launched it off into the stratosphere. I mean, it's gone crazy. And I take all this knowing that you never know how long your 15 minutes is going to last and how many athletes, how many musical artists, anybody, whatever kind of business, you just never know how long it's going to stay there. I treat it like a business, and we try and give the consumer what they want. And what I do on stage is much like a musical act. You have to get up there and do some of your greatest hits. At the same time, to satisfy the audience, at the same time you have to keep coming out with new material to keep them interested.

So, it's an interesting balance that we've been handling for the last few years. I don't take it for granted. You never know how long it's going to last, for whatever reason, so--

**WALTER:** You're done.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Well, the Press Club, at least, we give you an hour.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Oh, that's nice, thank you.

**WALTER:** Holy crap, I thought I was almost finished. Can I get a drink on credit? I got nothing on me.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Yeah, we don't do credit here that the Press Club, sorry. It has been said that Paul Fusco, who performs Alf, has at times been jealous of his character's fame and his own anonymity. Are you afraid that Walter will become more famous than you?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Hmm. Well, let's see.

**WALTER:** Anonymity, that's a tough one to say without moving your lips.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You know what? I actually know Paul and he's a nice guy. He's a little nuts, but he's a nice guy.

**WALTER:** Well, welcome to the club. Except for the nice guy part.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Right. Anyway, before all this stuff hit the last year or so, it was an interesting kind of fame because I was at the top of my game in the comedy clubs for years and getting top dollar in the club business and things were going great. I couldn't have been happier there at the clubs. I always felt like, though I was stuck

beneath some kind of ice and I couldn't break through. I mean, Foxworthy was doing what he was doing, Larry the Cable Guy, obviously the Seinfeld, Ray Romano. And I kept thinking, "How in the world do I have to break up through that ice?" So--

**WALTER:** Did you forget the question?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yeah.

**WALTER:** Oddly, I don't remember it, either.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Remind me where I was going, I forgot.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Are you worried that Walter will be more famous than you?

**WALTER:** You should never do crack before a show.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Okay, so know, with Fusco, okay. Sorry about that. Anyway, you know what? And so before all that hit, it was like the characters were famous and I wasn't so much. And so it was great. You could walk around wherever and nobody would know me. But the minute one of the little guys was introduced or talked about, then they would recognize me. So now it's getting a little tougher to go to Disneyland, or wherever, without being noticed.

**WALTER:** Whatever. Three months, tops, you're done.

**MS. LEINWAND:** So do you have any new friends to bring to the act with you in the future?

**MR. DUNHAM:** We're toying with the idea, on the television show that we have starting--

**WALTER:** Oh by the way, I was very impressed, Donna, when this thing started out and the camera came on and we went nationwide, or worldwide, or whatever. The first thing you did was do a commercial for your stinking website. Fantastic.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So go ahead and do what I was going to do?

**WALTER:** Yes. What was I going to do?

**MR. DUNHAM:** You were about to talk about the television show.

**WALTER:** Oh, the television show, yeah. And the question was, remind me again there, remind me again the question? You don't know.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Do you have any new friends you're going to bring?

**WALTER:** Yes, new friends, because the television show is coming out on what is it?

**MR. DUNHAM:** October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**WALTER:** October 22<sup>nd</sup>, which is a week from Thursday, or whatever. Do you repeat these dang things?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Do you want me to?

**WALTER:** No, no, not the question, the shows?

**MS. LEINWAND:** The show? October 22<sup>nd</sup>--

**WALTER:** No, no, do you repeat the damn C-SPAN crap, or they throw it away after one airing?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Over and over again. You can watch this one again.

**WALTER:** Over and over again?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Uh-huh.

**WALTER:** Okay, fantastic. Well, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, if you're watching this and it's 2012, no one else took this damn gig.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Anyway.

**WALTER:** Yeah, so the new characters.

**MR. DUNHAM:** New characters, yeah. So, on the television show there's a couple of characters that were kind of minor in the DVDs, Sweet Daddy D, he's an African-American character.

**WALTER:** Black guy.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Right. And Bubba J, white trash trailer guy. Those two guys in the television show, the writers and I just had a great time with those guys and we're going to go nuts with those guys as well. By the way, the merchandise stuff, if people want to look at our website--

**WALTER:** [Jeffdunham.com](http://Jeffdunham.com). Or [ventriloquist.com](http://ventriloquist.com), but no one can spell it. However, you did use the word anonymity, so apparently they can. Where the hell are you going? We're not done, sit the hell down. (Laughter) Don't you feel bad sitting next to him? You got that big ponytail. You see the guy you're sitting next to? He's got to feel

awful, nothing on his head. You ought to give him a little, for God's sakes. Anyway, I'm sorry, go on.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Anyway, so those two characters.

**WALTER:** Yeah, we got lots of merchandise. We have dolls of me that we sell, Achmed dolls, Bubba J dolls, Peanut dolls, we're not stupid. That's the only reason we're on C-SPAN, to sell crap.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Well, what's the show going to be like?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Well, basically--

**WALTER:** Oh great, another serious answer. Keep drinking.

**MR. DUNHAM:** The folks who have been fans for a number of years have seen us on stage, they've seen us on the DVDs and in the specials. And it's only been me and the little guys on stage talking together. And I noticed in some of the specials that some of the things that the audience would laugh most about would be when the little guys and I would talk about our lives off of the stage, when we weren't there. Things we would do out in the real world, and we would paint these little scenarios, or scenes in people's heads and make jokes about them and it would get easy, huge laughs. So, when Comedy Central came to us after the ratings that we got on the specials-- Oh yeah, you're going to throw that commercial in.

**WALTER:** Oh, yes, we had a-- How did I read your mind? We had a Christmas special this year. Did you know the big-ass numbers that did? It was the largest ratings Comedy Central ever had in their entire history which has been what, eight months? Fantastic.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So anyway, after those specials we thought, "Well, let's show the audience what they've never seen." So what we do in the television show, we take the little guys out in the real world, real life, real situations and we let them interact with real people in their real jobs and there's a few lines that we write down, a lot of it is ad lib and a lot of it is the characters without me even being in it. And some of these situations are just nuts. Let's see, for example we actually took Achmed to Camp Pendleton. (Laughter) Yeah, I actually ran him through the thing. Man, it was just all wrong, it was great. And those drill instructors, those guys were great. They were yelling at him like he was an actual recruit. We had all the guys lined up and he was trying to do the things they were doing, it was great.

**WALTER:** He had a little accident with some explosives, it was fantastic.

**MS. LEINWAND:** I've heard you had to take Walter to the psychiatrist. What was that like?

**MR. DUNHAM:** The way we set it up was Comedy Central felt that our relationship wasn't good, we were arguing too much. And so we actually went to an actual family therapist and the guy-- These people were great. People do anything to be on TV.

**WALTER:** Yeah, look at us now.

**MR. DUNHAM:** But he actually went through an entire session. Walter and I actually had to look at each other.

**WALTER:** When you say this, I feel-- You know, that kind of crap. You have to use "I" statements a lot. If you're not married, you don't understand.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Right. But the worst one, Achmed had never had-- We use all the characters, but I've mentioned Achmed twice. But Achmed had never had a funeral, so he wanted to have an actual funeral. We went to an actual funeral home, we talked to the funeral home director. Oh, yeah. But then some of these things are the characters talking to these people when I'm not there. Well, in a couple of the shots and scenes, you see Achmed-- He wanted to try out the caskets. So you see Achmed laying in an actual casket, sitting up, talking to the guy, laying back down. You know how caskets are divided in two, so there's the lower half and the upper half. Upper half was open, he's lying back and forth.

So you watch this and you go, "How the hell did that--?" Well, I was in a fetal position closed up in the bottom half of the casket operating Achmed from there with a flashlight and a headset. So, I got to tell you, caskets are not comfortable.

**MS. LEINWAND:** So whatever happened to Peanut?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Oh, Peanut is one of the big characters in the show. In the live show, he's actually probably the most popular and I think merchandise he does-- He's starting to do almost better than Achmed.

**WALTER:** Hey, I got an idea. Can I go-- Keep going, but can we do something else here for a second?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Whatever you want, Walter.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So this is the idea that I had.

**WALTER:** Why are you doing this now?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I felt it was dragging.

**WALTER:** Oh, good.



**MR. DUNHAM:** So we're actually doing Leno on Thursday night, and I haven't practiced the set too much.

**WALTER:** And we figure we're on C-SPAN, who cares? Can we practice?  
(Laughter)

**MS. LEINWAND:** Absolutely.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So you have to understand, it's NBC primetime, so Achmed can't do all the stuff he would normally do. But I have a few jokes right here, and can we try them out on you guys? Is that all right? All right, here we go. (Applause) So Walter, you get to go back in the case there.

**WALTER:** I can go back in the case and sit there and do kind of whatever, okay? So very nice meeting you, thanks for laughing, whatever. (Applause)

**MR. DUNHAM:** The next guy I'd like to introduce, it wasn't long ago that I met a terrorist. And apparently, this guy was not an accomplished terrorist. In fact, I don't know if he ever managed to do anything that he set out to do. The only thing I do know that he managed to do was to blow himself up. Please help me welcome Achmed the Dead Terrorist. (Applause)

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Greetings, infidels!

**MR. DUNHAM:** How are you, Achmed?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** I'm fine. Good to see you, Infidel Number one and-- Woo, she's not covered.

**MR. DUNHAM:** No, we don't cover our women.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** You don't?

**MR. DUNHAM:** No.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** You just don't do it?

**MR. DUNHAM:** You do?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Of course.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why do you cover your women?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Have you seen our women? What is her name?

**MR. DUNHAM:** This is Donna.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, good to see you, Donna. Thank you for standing next to us doing the show.

**MS. LEINWAND:** It's nice to see you, Achmed.

**MR. DUNHAM:** She's the president of the organization.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, that's fantastic and congratulations and whatever. What am I doing here?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Well, you know, we're going to be on the Jay Leno show on Thursday night. So, I have some cheat notes here, and I thought we would go through a few of the jokes and see what they think.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Okay. Did you say we were on C-SPAN?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yes.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** So does that mean I'm worldwide right now? Donna?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Probably not.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, not? Just in the United States?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Yes.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** So if I wanted to send some messages, I could? (Laughter)

**MR. DUNHAM:** So anyway, Achmed, how--

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Okay, start over. You sucked on that line.

**MR. DUNHAM:** How are you?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Actually, today, Donna, I will tell you this, I am very upset.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Walter played a trick on me and signed me to be on an organ donor's list. It's not funny, I kill you.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So is everything else okay?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** I don't know.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You've lived in Los Angeles for a while now.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, that is a corrupt city. Washington, D.C. is Disneyland compared to Los Angeles.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Really?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** The only virgins left in Los Angeles are the Jonas Brothers.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Well, is there anything you do like about our country?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** The Cheesecake Factory and Joan Rivers.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Joan Rivers?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** She cracks me up.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** I haven't seen that much plastic surgery on a white woman since Michael Jackson. What, too soon?

**MR. DUNHAM:** So Achmed, you've gotten pretty famous here lately, haven't you?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Yes, I've been getting very famous and I think that soon, I should have my own posse and call you my bi-atch.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Did you just call me a bi-atch?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** It means bitch. I'm sorry, I've been watching "Tent My Camel." (Laughter)

**MR. DUNHAM:** Can I tell everybody what happened to you last week?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, go ahead.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Achmed got arrested again.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Yes.

**MR. DUNHAM:** For what?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** For trying to blow up a store. It's not my fault. The sign said, "Everything must go." They did not say how.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So where did you learn to be a terrorist?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** In my home town of Kakspool (sic).

**MR. DUNHAM:** Kakaspool?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** You know, not far from Snakusbutt (sic). I learned from my father. He wasn't a very good suicide bomber, though.

**MR. DUNHAM:** He wasn't?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** No. For my eighth birthday, my mother gave me a puppy. She asked my father to go out and blow up some party balloons, that's how I got a dog with no legs.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You had a dog with no legs?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Yes, but he was a great little puppy. I had him for many years.

**MR. DUNHAM:** What did you call him?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Seriously? You're a comedian, right?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yeah.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** I had a dog with no legs.

**MR. DUNHAM:** What'd you call him?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Doesn't matter what I called him because he could never come. It's not funny!

**MR. DUNHAM:** Achmed, that's like the oldest joke ever.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Yes, but in my case it was true. Thanks a lot.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Could he do any tricks?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** He could roll over. It's not funny, because if there was any kind of an incline, he couldn't stop himself. He looked like a runaway can of pinto beans going downhill. It's the only time I ever saw a cat actually laugh. "Meow-ha, meow-ha."

**MR. DUNHAM:** What happened?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** I killed the effing cat.

**MR. DUNHAM:** And that would be Achmed on Leno, there we go. (Applause)

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Did you hear how I did that? I said "effing," did you hear that? I didn't say the actual word, so that's fantastic. Isn't it freaking? I don't lie. I kill you.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So did you have any questions for Achmed, Donna?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Well, sure, Achmed, you're a pretty provocative character. How do you deal--

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Why, thank you. You're not married, are you? You know, I'm all bone. It's C-SPAN, they're not governed by the FCC.

**MS. LEINWAND:** You're real hot stuff, Achmed.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, thank you so much. Yes, you could fit into the suitcase, I know that you could.

**MS. LEINWAND:** So how do you deal with the criticism you get for being such a controversial character?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Uh-oh.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right, do you want me to answer that?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Yeah, I don't care.

**MR. DUNHAM:** There has been, obviously, some controversy with Achmed. I do make it a point every time we use Achmed, go ahead. Just do the little bit there.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh yes, okay. You ask me.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Okay. So Achmed, if you're a suicide bomber, you're obviously Muslim?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** No.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You're not?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** No, look at my ass. It says, "Made in China."

**WALTER:** They're going to recall you.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** What is he talking? I don't want to go back to China. I hate Chinese food.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** It goes right through me. Silence! I already said it.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So yeah, there's obviously been-- We do make it a point every time to say that and there are certain lines you can cross and certain lines you can't. I'll tell you the real story behind Achmed. It was a year after 9/11 and Letterman and Leno were-- Obviously, 9/11, nothing funny, never will be. But Leno and Letterman were making fun of "those guys," and we hadn't found Osama bin-Laden. And I got to thinking, how could I be a little topical, on the verge of being a little controversial, but at the same time obviously respectful of what happened? What can I do here to push the edge a little bit? And I thought, "You know what? We hadn't found Osama, so what I'll do is" and this was a year after 9/11. I thought, "I know where Osama's been. He's dead, and he's actually been hiding out in the trunk with all my little guys."

So, I went to the store and I bought this big, plastic skeleton, had a big head. It looked like something from South Park, and I made this plastic Halloween decoration into the dead Osama. And I thought, "If I'm going to do this, obviously very careful jokes that I write and the material that I write." And I put some stuff together that I thought would be okay. I imagined if there was a family sitting in front of me who had been directly affected lost a loved one, what can I say that would still make them laugh a year later?

And so I wrote material in that way, making fun of those guys and Osama and I thought, "If I'm going to do this, then I'm going to have to test it out where it needs to be tested." So I went to a club in New York City and it was almost exactly a year later, a little over a year, and did the jokes and I mean, those folks were ready to laugh. They were ready to have some humor back in their lives. And I knew if it would work there, it would work anywhere. So I used the dead Osama for, I guess, a couple of years and then put him away for a while.

Then the “Spark of Insanity” DVD, we're getting ready to shoot that and I thought, “What was the character that I've used before that was great?” And I thought, “Well, we'll pull the dead Osama out.” But then I thought, “Well, what if we catch Osama, or he dies? Then that material will be dated.” So I thought, “Ah, what the heck, we'll make Achmed. We don't know where he's from exactly, he has a nondescript accent.”

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** It sounds more Italian.

**MR. DUNHAM:** No.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** No?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Okay.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Whatever.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right, so there you go, that's that story.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Achmed, can you tell us about your name?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, yes. Okay, you want the real answer? Okay, Achmed is actually not Middle Eastern. Achmed is actually Russian, did you know that?

**MS. LEINWAND:** I did not.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** So that's another way he gets away with this crap.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yeah. I did research the name that way. So it's Achmed, is actually the Middle Eastern way of saying it with no “ccc” in it.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** That's my line, “ccc” Achmed, “ccc.”

**MR. DUNHAM:** Right.

**MS. LEINWAND:** I think our audience wants you to spell it.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, that? You want us to do the bit. I don't remember it.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You don't? You know, people see these clips, they might have seen it last night. I have not seen that in two years. I have no idea how that material goes.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** You are so sad.

**MR. DUNHAM:** I don't remember.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** He couldn't remember a question ten minutes ago, you think he'll remember that crap?

**MS. LEINWAND:** I'm sure half the audience could do it for you.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yeah, they probably could.

**MS. LEINWAND:** But we'll ask you another question. People would like to know, Achmed, what you think of President Obama?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** President Obama? I think he's doing a fine job. I heard about the Nobel Peace Prize, and I wish I had lots of jokes about Obama, but I don't. I will say this, though. I did go to Ireland and I met a lot of folks that had last names like O'Malley and O'Hare and I think it's fantastic that Obama is a black Irishman.

**MR. DUNHAM:** What? He's not Irish.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Maybe he's half Irish, half African-American. I can't wait to meet Obama. I'm going to walk up to him and go, "Hey, top of the morning to you, dog." How's your health care hanging, yoyo?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Wow, all right.

**MS. LEINWAND:** All right, Achmed, people are very--

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** So there's my Obama jokes.

**MS. LEINWAND:** People are very concerned about your health. They want to know how your poliosis is?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, the poliosis?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yeah, you had to watch the Christmas DVD. Again, you do the material and then you move on and I haven't done that forever. But poliosis happened when Achmed said he had scoliosis and that's why he can't sit up straight. And okay, we were talking about something else, talking about polio. And then it was an actual ad lib on stage where I said that Achmed had poliosis. And so it turned it into this big joke between me and the guitar guy, the guy that works with me, that opens for me and we work together on stage. So we turned it into a whole running bit, the poliosis thing. And then, I found out later that poliosis is an actual thing. (Laughter) Yeah. And Jay Leno has



it. Poliosis is when you have a big color, like all gray hair, and have the one thing of black right in the middle.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** I thought that was Pepe Le Pewitis?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Yeah, so that apparently is poliosis. So I don't know, there you go.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Are you going to mention that on the Jay Leno show?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Am I going to?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I don't think we're doing panel, we're just doing our stand up.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, no. But thank you for asking, Donna.

**MS. LEINWAND:** So how often do you get new material, Achmed?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** What is the question?

**MS. LEINWAND:** How often do you get new material, new jokes?

**MR. DUNHAM:** You know what? We're working on that constantly, because we're constantly trying to come up with new stuff.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** That man snuck up on you, did you see that? That's how you get dates, Donna.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Anyway, new material. So we're always constantly trying out new things and the television show, that's helped out a lot. So yeah, we're constantly coming up with new ideas and new material and new jokes.

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** And we do old crap, too.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Okay, so Achmed, people want to know if you have any advice for foreign relations?

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Oh, use a condom. (Laughter)

**MR. DUNHAM:** You know what? On that note-- So we have like six or seven minutes, right?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Well, actually like three minutes.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Oh, we have three minutes? I was going to show Bubba J.

**MS. LEINWAND:** You have three minutes. So do you have anything you really needed to say?

**MR. DUNHAM:** I was going to show Bubba J, can we do that real quick?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Oh yeah, Bubba J. (Applause)

**ACHMED THE DEAD TERRORIST:** Wait a minute, that hurts.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right, so Bubba J. Tell me when we have 30 seconds left, and then I'll quit.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Oh, you're okay, don't worry.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right, so again, Bubba J is also going to be on "The Tonight Show." So, all right, here we go. The only guy that ever got kicked out of Cub Scouts for drinking beer, please help me welcome Bubba J. (Applause) How you doing, Bubba J?

**BUBBA J:** Oh, actually I'm a little sad.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why are you sad?

**BUBBA J:** Oh, someone drank all my beer last night.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Oh.

**BUBBA J:** And then when I was asleep, someone wet my pants.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Are you sure that wasn't you?

**BUBBA J:** You're a genius. I wish I'd have known that before I called 1-1-9.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You mean 9-1-1?

**BUBBA J:** Oh, no wonder the paramedic wanted phone sex.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Bubba J, have you ever had phone sex?

**BUBBA J:** Yeah, once. I got my wiener caught in the cord. Can I say wiener on C-SPAN? I got my money back--

**MS. LEINWAND:** We have a congressman named Wiener.

**BUBBA J:** What?

**MS. LEINWAND:** We have a congressman named Wiener. So you can definitely say it on C-SPAN.

**BUBBA J:** (Laughter) I hope his middle name isn't Richard.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So Bubba J, where are you originally from?

**BUBBA J:** I don't know.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You don't know?

**BUBBA J:** No.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Well, where were you born?

**BUBBA J:** Exit ramp.

**MR. DUNHAM:** An exit ramp? What was your mother doing?

**BUBBA J:** About 80, she said.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why didn't she slow down?

**BUBBA J:** Apparently when I popped out, I hit the gas.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Why didn't she step on the brake?

**BUBBA J:** She'd a crushed my sister.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Let me ask you about your ancestry.

**BUBBA J:** Oh, there's no ancestry. I don't like my sister.

**MR. DUNHAM:** I mean, are you familiar with your family tree?

**BUBBA J:** It's in our back yard. My dog pees on it. I do, too.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Okay.

**BUBBA J:** My sister tries to, but she can't write nothing. Did you get it, Donna?  
I need a beer.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Didn't you just have one at dinner?

**BUBBA J:** That was over a minute ago.

**MR. DUNHAM:** You ever heard of a 12 step program?

**BUBBA J:** Line dancing sucks. It sucks almost as much as the hokey poker.

**MR. DUNHAM:** The hokey poker?

**BUBBA J:** That's what my mom calls my dad.

**MR. DUNHAM:** So does your wife drink, too?

**BUBBA J:** Uh, it's usually more than two. Usually nine.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Nine?

**BUBBA J:** She has to save three for my dog.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Don't tell me your dog drinks beer?

**BUBBA J:** Okay.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Have you ever quit drinking?

**BUBBA J:** Lots of times. It's fun to quit drinking, because then you get to start up again. And every time it's like Christmas with a good head on it.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right, Bubba J. Would you like to ask some questions? I think we're about done.

**BUBBA J:** Ask?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Answer.

**BUBBA J:** Oh, okay.

**MS. LEINWAND:** We're going to try to not make them too tough.

**BUBBA J:** Oh, good. Thanks a lot, Donna. Is that with one N or two?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Two Ns.

**BUBBA J:** Two? So that's Don-na-na. You're like a Christmas carol, Don-na-na, na, na, na, na, na.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Bubba J seems to have a lot in common with Edgar Bergen's partner, Mortimer Snerd. Are the two related?

**MR. DUNHAM:** You know, actually the first dummy I got when I was a little bitty kid when I was eight years old at Christmas that year was a plastic Mortimer Snerd and Edgar Bergen was who I very much emulated and studied and his form of comedy, how he presented ventriloquism. And so yeah, when I created-- I create all my characters myself, I make them myself. And Bubba J was definitely my nod of thanks to Edgar Bergen. So yeah, there's a lot of similarity there.

**BUBBA J:** Yeah, we don't copy material, though. Never.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Never.

**BUBBA J:** Never. And I did not have sex with that woman. (Applause)

**MS. LEINWAND:** Okay, we are just about out of time. Does Bubba J have any last words for our audience?

**BUBBA J:** Merry Christmas. I heard you repeat this crap.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Well, Bubba J, did you have a good time?

**BUBBA J:** Yeah, I had a good time. I like listening to Walter and Achmed and all that. And Donna, you've been a lovely hostess.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Thank you very much.

**MR. DUNHAM:** And we appreciate very much you guys having this. This has been a lot of fun. I was terrified to come here, but you guys were awesome, so thank you very much. (Applause)

**MS. LEINWAND:** All right, we're almost out of time. All right, we're almost out of time, but before-- I have one more question to ask. Let me remind our members of future speakers. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, which is Thursday, we have Jorma Ollila, who is the incoming Chairman of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and Chairman of Royal Dutch Shell and Nokia. And he'll speak on energy and the need for worldwide action to address climate change in advance of international climate talks in Copenhagen.

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, we have Christopher "Ludacris" Bridges, the hip-hop icon, actor and founder of the Ludacris Foundation and he's going to make a call for individuals to take an active role in community philanthropy. And finally, I would like to present our guest with the traditional and coveted NPC mug.

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right. Oh, this is great. You know why this is great? Because honestly, we have a huge collection on the tour bus of coffee mugs from all over

the country, so this will be an awesomely great addition to the collection. Thank you very much. (Applause)

**MS. LEINWAND:** We're going to do a last question. Do you want to have Bubba out?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Sure, Walter or--?

**MS. LEINWAND:** I don't know, who do you want?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Have we got time to kill, is that the idea?

**MS. LEINWAND:** No, we've got one minute and we always ask one last question. So dummy of choice.

**AUDIENCE:** Peanut!

**MR. DUNHAM:** Peanut isn't here right now.

**WALTER:** Holy crap, I'm short. What happened?

**MR. DUNHAM:** All right, so anything?

**MS. LEINWAND:** Well, I guess our last question for you is do you have a favorite character?

**MR. DUNHAM:** Oh, do I have a favorite character? You know what? I'm kind of-- It's whatever the audience is liking, I like. All these guys are a little part of me somehow, and Walter, by the way, we'll end on this. Walter I created way back in '86, something like that, and the way I did it, clay, you have to sculpt it out of clay first and I had a mirror and a sculpting knife and clay and lots of Dr. Pepper and I just sat there and - Beer wouldn't have worked. And so unfortunately when I get to be Walter's age, it's pretty much-- It's the same face.

**MS. LEINWAND:** All right, and we have one last question for Walter. Walter, how do you feel about Jeff?

**WALTER:** Oh, well you see how he's holding me? Don't ask, don't tell.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Thank you very much.

**MR. DUNHAM:** Thank you all very much.

**MS. LEINWAND:** Thank you all for coming today. I'd also like to thank National Press Club staff members Melinda Cooke, Pat Nelson, Joann Booz for organizing today's dinner. Also, thanks to the NPC library for its research. It's pretty

hard to research dummies. The video archive of today's dinner is provided by the National Press Club's Broadcast Operation Center. Our events are available for free download on iTunes, as well as on our website. You can watch this all over again on C-SPAN. And nonmembers may purchase transcripts, audio and videotapes by calling 202-662-7598 or emailing us at [archives@press.org](mailto:archives@press.org). For more information about the National Press Club, please go to our website at [www.press.org](http://www.press.org). And thank you, we are adjourned. [sounds gavel]

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