

Tolerating Another Bush? Jeb, the GOP and the Presidency

By [Dr. Binoy Kampmark](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Can the United States, and the world, for that matter, tolerate another Bush in the White House? Jeb Bush is placing his toes in the contesting waters, and suggesting that he just might be in it. As David Freedlander declared in the Daily Beast (Dec 16), the two-time governor of Florida was “considered a White House hopeful since back in the days when his brother was still thought of as an alcoholic oil man destined to play out his Freudian fights with his father in a Kennebunkport backyard.”[1]

The candidacy for the Presidential office is already taking a populist, and absurd shape, and while many contenders are bound to fall on their ill-directed swords in due course, a few have already deserved their short entries in the political who’s who. Vermin Supreme, a seemingly permanent campaigner, deserves his spot as lunatic supreme, or eccentricity divine, with his suggestion that every American receive a pony – gratis.

Showing that a good deal of mirth can be found amidst the serious undermining of the American political process, Supreme has suggested an amendment that will involve, “A well regulated Pony Militia, being necessary to the security of a free Pony State”. Whether doing so will enable “this country to bite back”, as he suggested in an address filled with dental metaphors, is quite another thing.[2] Better that, perhaps, than the insatiable, and heavily fanged military industrial complex.

Then came tentative Jeb Bush, not so much roaring from the fold as moving underneath it by means of a Facebook post, suggesting that he would “actively explore the possibility of running for President of the United States” after Thanksgiving chatter with friends and family. A leadership PAC is being proposed, one that “will be to support leaders, ideas and policies that will expand opportunity and prosperity for all Americans”.

While the language of Jeb shows a few contortionist hallmarks of his brother (“thinking about” running for office and “actively exploring” running for office comes close), it has had its stirring effect. At most, it will have the potential to unhinge others in the GOP running pack, who have heard nothing so much as a squeak from the Bush dynasts over candidature prospects.

The public relations specialists have had to say otherwise, but establishment conservatives such as New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and the failed previous candidate Mitt Romney will be looking over shoulders and backs. The populists will also have to take note. Everyone’s knives are going to be sharpened even as they count their donor dollars.

Several matters on the Jeb platform are deemed troubling for any chances. Common core curricula will be a grand saddling weight, a policy platform endorsed by his troubled non-profit, the Foundation for Excellence in Education, and by such moves as joining the group

Conservatives for Higher Standards.

Conservative activists, such as the enduring octogenarian Phyllis Schlafly of the religious right, have warned against adopting the Common Core, seen as having the centralist evils of the standard mongers. Senators Ted Cruz (R-Tex.) and Rand Paul (R-Ky.) have openly declared their position against it, asking for an immediate cessation of federal funding. They might just as well as smirked at the idea that anything involving Jeb Bush and appropriate standards of excellence was misguided.

The continuing narrative of the local being the good continues. The usual sovereignty-clipping measures are put forth by the antagonists. Common Core will see the internationalist, UN-backed agenda infiltrate US schools with standards, not to mention such conventions as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Agenda 21, and the UN Law of the Sea Treaty (*Mother Jones*, Apr 18).

Suspicious of elitism also prevail – the Common Core scheme was cooked up by two Rhodes scholars, the classicist David Coleman and physicist Jason Zimba, suggesting an Oxford taint and a rude pointer against philistinism.[3] Then come the funding incentives from the US Department of Education, with a sweetener of \$4.35 billion in cash from the Race to the Top program, and money from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Whether the Common Core factor actually cuts into a Jeb Bush electoral performance is something else. He has little to worry about, suggests the latest number crunching of Nate Silver, given that most Republican voters are either ignorant about it, nor find it so reprehensible. Besides, Bush's own Foundation for Excellent in Education has been found wanting by the IRS for disguising travel payments as "scholarships", while appointed officials have been caught improving upon test scores and inflating grades. Standard curriculums can easily fall into standard practices of corruption.

Bush's opponents will also find much to have a good hack at. They are the old foibles as a prep schooler at Andover, featuring pot and a brief membership of the socialist club.[4] There is the heavily wearing family legacy – George W's own is stifling and the sons dysfunctional.

Then come those, and these are but a sampling, shady dealings with Camilo Padreda, a former counterintelligence officer of Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista regarding financing of buildings with money from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development-backed loans (*Mother Jones*, Sep 9); and the successful lobbying of father Bush in 1989 to release Cuban terrorist Orlando Bosch, alleged to be behind the bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1976 that killed 73 people.[5]

On others, Bush is entirely in step with the frightened core of the GOP shell. Women's liberation has yet to enter his argot. The 1994 campaign saw the contender argue that women on welfare "should be able to get their life together and find a husband."

Climate change will receive its usual dismissive sneers. Giving the impression of being a Socratic explorer of the fine questions of the age, Jeb B has declared himself to be sceptic. In 2009, he told *Esquire* that he thought "science has been politicised. I would be very wary of hollowing out our industrial base even further." [6]

As for the rest, the un-anointed, and the near irrelevant voting constituency who have

become spectral in the political contest behind the Presidency, Jeb will be another hollow man meditating over God, the threatened country and wars of sanctimonious deliverance. The pony state protected by constitutional amendment looks deludingly comforting.

Dr. Binoy Kampmark was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne. Email: bkampmark@gmail.com

Notes

- [1] <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/12/16/how-a-jeb-bush-candidacy-would-hurt--chris-christie-and-shake-up-the-2016-gop-field.html>
- [2] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4d_FvgQ1csE
- [3] <http://coreconcerns.weebly.com/whos-behind-common-core>
- [4] <http://nymag.com/news/politics/elections-2012/jeb-bush-2012-10/index3.html>
- [5] <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/09/23-reasons-why-jeb-bush-shouldnt-run-president>
- [6] <http://grist.org/article/2009-jeb-bush-still-skeptical-about-clim/>

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