

NATIONAL REVIEW

Jeb Deploys ‘W.’ in Dynastic Double-Down

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Jeb Bush will rally in Charleston, S. C., tonight with a free-spending, bureaucracy-building, big-government statist who implemented the public ownership of the means of production. Has Jeb joined forces with Bernie Sanders? Nope. He’s campaigning with America’s most compassionate “conservative” — his older brother, W.

Former president G.W. Bush reportedly remains popular in the veteran-rich, armed-forces-friendly Palmetto State. Appearing with him there might be an effective tactic for Jeb, in advance of Saturday’s Republican presidential primary.

However, for conservatives across America, W.’s groundhog-like emergence from his subterranean existence in Texas offers a groan-inducing reminder of so much that they have struggled to forget about Obama’s predecessor and his entire family of Brooks Bros. socialists.

For a quick, painful glimpse of the rampant collectivism that defined the mitigated disaster that was W.’s tenure, consider the nearby charts from Cato Institute fiscal-policy analyst Chris Edwards. (The G.W. Bush years would have been an *unmitigated* disaster, absent the lack of a major terror attack after September 11, his tax-rate cuts, and his approval of the Washington, D.C. voucher program.) Believe it or not, they demonstrate that G.W. Bush actually expanded the federal bureaucracy more rapidly than that avowed leftist, Barack Obama.

After perusing the hiring forecasts in Obama’s latest budget proposal, Edwards discovered that under G.W. Bush, the number of federal non-defense employees swelled by 17.2 percent over eight years. The equivalent figure for Obama: 10.1 percent.

And W. was thrilled to pay these people lavishly with other people’s money — specifically, yours. When G.W. Bush arrived in Washington in 2001, 83,532 federal employees earned salaries exceeding \$100,000. By the time Bush jetted back to his ranch in 2009, that number stood at 389,828 — a staggering 367 percent increase in federal workers who enjoyed six-digit compensation. Meanwhile, the earnings of rank-and-file taxpayers barely wheezed forward.

Under Obama, meanwhile, such employees expanded from 389,828, at his 2009 inauguration, to 509,025 in 2015 — a 31 percent hike. Did Obama secretly read Milton Friedman between holes of golf? Not quite.

“In the wake of the 2010 GOP landslide, Obama was on the defensive, and the GOP pushed him to sign a partial federal pay freeze, which ultimately lasted three years,” Edwards explains. “Federal wage growth slowed, and taxpayers saved billions of dollars,” he adds. “But after that,

and the 2011 budget agreement that put in place the caps, the GOP began caving in time after time. Their constant cave-ins emboldened Obama after 2011.”

Atop the unwelcome opportunity for conservatives to reacquaint themselves with the dismal G.W. Bush years, Jeb’s latest move reeks of desperation. When his campaign began, he crowed: “I am my own man.” That claim is in flames, what with Jeb campaigning in New Hampshire on February 4 with his mother and, this evening, his brother.

All of this smacks of dynasticism, and of the lowest order. The Bushes insist on fashioning themselves into a Republican Kennedy family. Alas, they are less like Martha’s Vineyard and more like malaria: Just when conservatives think they finally are rid of the Bushes, once and for all, back they spring. And night sweats suddenly explode on the right.

As if Thomas Jefferson never were born, and King George III never died, the Bushes barely can contain their sense of genetic entitlement to America’s instruments of power. Apparently it is not enough to have had Prescott Bush in the U.S. Senate, G.H.W. Bush in the White House, and G.W. Bush there as well. Now Jeb slouches toward the Oval Office. And his son, George P., oozes up through the ground, like tar, as Texas Land Commissioner.

Even worse, if Republicans must endure an un-republican royal family that will not take a hint and go away, couldn’t it at least be a royal family that epitomizes free-market ideals? If Jeb were the third Reagan approaching the White House, it might be worth withstanding the grating clank of orbs and scepters. If Steve Forbes had been elected president, and one of his five daughters were poised to flatten the income tax from 17 percent down to 10, it might be worth it for Republicans to learn how to bow and curtsy.

Instead, the third “GOP Kennedy” aims to build upon his father’s self-shattered “Read my lips, no new taxes” pledge, his Americans with Disabilities Act, his approval of the disparate-impact-expanding Civil Rights Act of 1991, and his signature of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992, which got the ball rolling on domestic and international policy against “global warming.”

Presumably, Jeb would prop himself up with one leg on his father’s junk pile and another on his brother’s ash heap. The latter features W.’s Medicare drug entitlement, his Bridge to Nowhere and other pork projects; his 5.6 percent inflation-adjusted, average, annual growth in non-interest spending (exceeded since World War II only by Lyndon Baines Johnson’s 5.7 percent); and his equatorial bailouts and nationalizations of AIG, Chrysler, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, General Motors, and other enterprises during the 2007–’08 financial meltdown.

Jeb, his brother, father, and the rest of the Bushes offer the worst of all worlds: monarchy with disrespect for markets.

Daddy Bush spent eight years riding shotgun atop Ronald Reagan’s stagecoach; he will be great! Or so conservatives were told in 1988. Alas, Daddy Bush learned nothing and, far worse, showed supposedly dim-witted conservatives how smart he and the Bushies were by purging Reaganites from the federal government as soon as Reagan’s departing helicopter cleared the

horizon. After four years of “brilliant” misrule and his own tax-hike-driven recession, this Olympic-class ingrate lost the White House to a southern governor making his first bid for the presidency.

Baby Bush will be unlike his father; he will govern like Reagan’s grandson. That’s the bill of goods that conservatives were sold in 2000. As demonstrated above, Baby Bush’s philosophy resembled that of LBJ. As Baby Bush said on Labor Day 2003: “We have a responsibility that when somebody hurts, Government has got to move.” True to his word, Bush partied like it was 1965. Such were the wages of “compassion.”

Brother Bush won’t be like his brother or his dad; he’s the real conservative in the family. Yeah, right. Fool me once. Shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. Fool me thrice, shoot me now.

The current *dauphin* embraces Common Core. He calls illegal immigration “an act of love.” He boosted Florida’s general-fund spending by 57 percent while governor, or 7.1 percent on average, annually. After early positive marks, he earned a C on Cato’s *Report Card on America’s Governors* in 2006. These are ominous signs. Obsessed with rehabilitating his family’s soiled name, a President Jeb likely will channel his lucky sperm and show that the Bushes “care” by launching a brand-new, super-compassionate spree of borrowing, spending, and regulating.

Tonight, Republicans and conservatives should fill the streets of Charleston and just scream, “No!” to the House of Bush.