

**Op-Ed** JUNE 9, 2015

# As he throws hat into crowded ring



GETTING READY: Jeb Bush and his wife, Columba, walk across the bridge over Biscayne Boulevard at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts to attend a luncheon honoring arts scholarship winners last week. | **CHARLES TRAINOR JR - MIAMI HERALD STAFF**

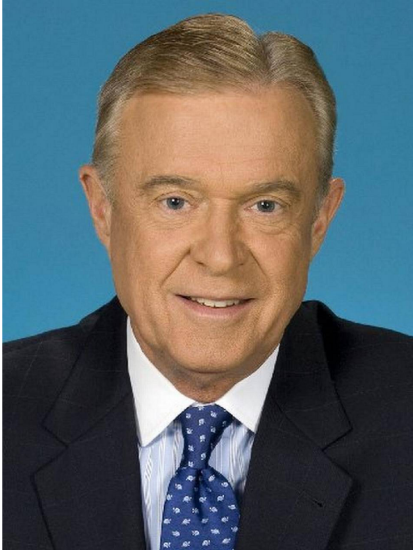
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*Early draft of the speech Jeb Bush should give next Monday.*

Thank you. Good afternoon, *buenas tardes a todos*. It's a great pleasure to be here today at Miami Dade College, a proud institution of learning that has given many generations of

Miamians the right to rise.



PUTNEY

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That's a fundamental American right enshrined in our Constitution and woven into the fabric of the American dream. Everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity or the family into which they're born, should have the right to rise to his or her full potential. The right to become their best and highest self.

Sadly, the right to rise has been sharply curtailed over the last eight years. The reasons are intrusive government regulation, an incompetent bureaucracy and failed political leadership. The American people were hoodwinked by a politician who promised hope and change and instead gave us hopelessness and stagnation. But that era is ending, not a moment too soon, and a new one is on the horizon. A brighter and genuinely hopeful horizon. I know we can reach that horizon together and reclaim the American dream. We not only can, we must That's why today I'm

asking for your support , and your prayers as I announce that I am a candidate for president of the United States.

It's an awesome job. I know because my father and brother have been presidents of our great country. I love them both and thank them for their service. I also know there are some people out there who think the last thing America needs is another Bush in the White House. I confess there have been times when I wondered if it was the right course of action for me and our beloved country. You may remember that after my brother left the White House our mom said she hoped I wouldn't run for president, that a third Bush in the White House was one too many.

Well, I'm glad to report that several months ago my mom had a change of heart. She's totally behind me in this quest and I hope you will be, too. Her initial doubts weren't a vote of no confidence in me as much as a sign of the pain she felt after hearing unfair and often mean-spirited criticism of my brother, George.

Let me frank with you about my brother. I'm not him. While I love George dearly, I'm my own person. With my own singular history and experiences. I'd walk through fire for my brother. I absolutely don't want to relitigate the eight years of his presidency, but there were some things that happened on his watch that I disagree with. The government spent way too much money, ran up too much debt. We fought a war in Iraq based on faulty intelligence. We put precious American lives in harm's way and spent our treasure on people and countries that

have no concept of democracy.

They'd rather live in tribal societies from the far distant past rather than in a democratic 21st Century. The result is a life-and-death struggle between the forces of modernity and religious fanatics who seek a return to narrow theocracies. They think non-believers who stand in the way can be punished or killed. They're ready to punish or kill even those of the same religion, but of different sects.

America over the last two decades has tried to stabilize a world of competing religious zealots and jihadists and for our troubles we've seen some of the world come apart. Libya, Yemen, Syria are among the casualties along with untold thousands of their peoples who've died. Questionable foreign policy decisions by past administrations were compounded by worse ones made by the current president, who doesn't see American power as a force for good.

He is a secular humanist who apologizes for who and what America is and embraces European-style socialism. And how's that working out for Europe? Bottom line: Our friends don't trust us and our enemies don't fear us. If I'm elected president that will change. Our friends will know we've got their back and our enemies will think twice before challenging our power.

America can't be the world's policeman, but we can and must be the arbiter of what is fair and just, humane and right. If I'm elected president America will step in whenever and wherever our

national interests are threatened. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "The arc of moral history is long, but it bends towards justice." On my watch, I will try to make sure it does.

The presidential campaign I'm going to wage will be about ideas, not platitudes. And it won't be personal if I can help it. I understand very well that running for president is a tough business. This isn't musical chairs. There will be bumps and bruises along the way. I know most of my Republican competitors and respect them. Marco Rubio was an outstanding state lawmaker in Tallahassee when I was governor and he's been a good senator. We were and will remain friends. But he's not ready to be president. I am. Other candidates appear to be motivated by ego and ambition or a set of rigid beliefs. I will call them out if I need to. It's part of America's great rough-and-tumble political tradition.

And if Hillary Clinton turns out to be the Democratic presidential nominee, all I can say is great. I'll look forward to debating her as the Republican nominee. A Bush-Clinton race again? Been there, done that and we may do it again. But whoever the Democratic nominee is I'm ready to show that my ideas and vision are what our country needs now. I'm ready to explain why the Common Core curriculum is the right way to improve our kids' education. I'm also ready to explain why the 11 million undocumented people in the U.S. need to find a way to come out of the shadows. I once said most immigrants came here out of love — love for their families and the dream of a better life. I

believe that. Those undocumented folks who have worked hard, paid taxes and obeyed the law should be allowed to remain here legally. And some should even get a shot at citizenship.

We live in exciting and challenging times. I'm a realist, but I'm also an optimist. The best days for America are ahead. I'm humbled and excited to be a candidate for president. Together we can win. America can win. *Vamos a ganar!*



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