

The election eye . . .

# Modest George Bush beginning to emerge

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The emergence of boyish-looking George W. Bush, former Texas oil tycoon and banker, and one of the top Republican presidential contenders, should be no great surprise to Idaho Republican leaders.

Bush has appeared in Idaho a number of times, but his talk to the Eastern Idaho Lincoln Day Association in Idaho Falls Feb. 17, 1978, was most impressive.

**Bush, now 55, is a welcome change from so many politicians who have an air of braggadocio and deep partisanship that leaves most citizens unimpressed. Epitomizing such irksome traits are such contenders as John Connally, Sens. Ted Kennedy and Howard Baker and Rep. Philip Crane.**

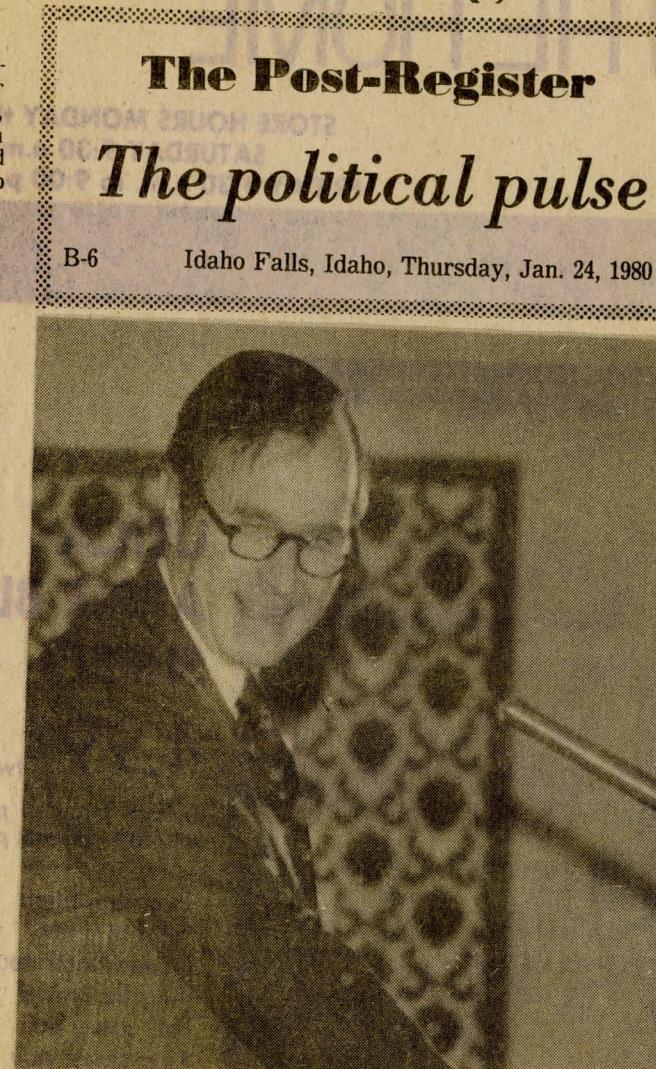
In fact, Bush is so modest and unassuming that many of his supporters have urged that he use a more dynamic style. He has been seen acting more vigorous lately, but it isn't like him.

Perhaps Americans can do without the arm waving of John and Ted Kennedy, Richard Nixon and Connally.

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Right now, Bush is the hottest news item in American politics and promises to eclipse the erstwhile front runner, the sturdy Ronald Reagan.

Reagan has followed a policy of low profile, to avoid any split in the Republican Party but the Iowa results may now influence him to come out fighting, with gloves off. His refusal to debate his Republican opponents and his lack of appearance in Iowa did not help him, obviously.



Post-Register/Robert Bower

## At Idaho Falls dinner

GEORGE W. BUSH, now a leading Republican presidential contender, addressed the East Idaho Lincoln Day Association dinner in Idaho Falls two years ago. Bush beat Ronald Reagan in the Iowa caucus Tuesday to assume a formidable position for the nomination.

Bush doesn't disappoint the crowd, repeating his phrase "I'm absolutely confident that I would be a better president than any others. I am the only candidate who started a business from scratch and built it. I know what it is to make a payroll" and that's an effective point.

He then comments, "I am sick and tired of people tearing down this country, always pointing to our weaknesses."

**Bush carried this sort of philosophy when in Idaho Falls two years ago in an appearance which was seen as an opening wedge for the presidential nomination.**

This writer then remarked that Bush was following the footsteps of John Kennedy and President Carter in coming to Idaho and other states two years ahead of the election, to lay an effective grassroots organization.

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**When in Idaho Falls, Bush, a former CIA director, admitted there were some CIA and FBI excesses, but some were badly distorted, and he commented they now have been corrected.**

He said there were some ill effects from Watergate but that the Republican Party was then on the road to recovery — and indeed it was.

He expressed concern over giving up the Panama Canal, but said it must be viewed from the overall global impact and sharply criticized Carter on his foreign, energy and domestic policy.

He shied away from admitting he was a candidate, but acknowledged it was an option, but behind the scene it was well known he was building groundwork for his present bid, just as John Kennedy and Carter had done.

His talk to some 300 party faithfuls centered on a plea for resurgence of the Republican Party and to forget its past fights. He then sharply criticized some Democratic policies.

Bush said he resented news media reference that he was an oil baron, pointing out he had divested himself of all his oil interests years before.

He is director of five large companies, and board chairman of a Houston bank.

Sen. James A. McClure also attended that dinner but McClure, apparently impressed by Reagan's voting strength in

Idaho in the 1976 presidential elections, has formally endorsed Reagan as his choice. He hastens to add he can warmly support all of the Republican candidates with the possible exception of Baker.

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Bush is a tireless campaigner and last year traveled 206,000 miles through 38 states in 27 days.

Reports said that in Iowa the Bush organization meticulously constructed a grass-roots organization and a get-out-the-vote operation so impressive that even his opponents grudgingly acknowledged it to have been the best of any Republican contender. It showed up in the Iowa vote Tuesday when he attracted some 31,000 votes to 25,000 for Reagan who was expected to lead.

**The campaign, however, is just starting and it can be expected that Reagan will come out fighting. Bush may not win the nomination but he is a force to be reckoned with and there are many who believe he would be Carter's toughest Republican adversary.**