

Bush Takes Aim at Trump

U.S. Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush offered his most direct assault on Donald Trump to date on Tuesday, retaliating for a series of personal insults with a review of his front-running rival's past record of supporting Democratic causes.

In a video, the Bush campaign used Trump's own words in support of Democrat Hillary Clinton and for a universal healthcare system, higher taxes and partial-birth abortion to make the case that he is not a conservative.

Asked by a TV interviewer whether he was a Republican or a Democrat, Trump is seen on the video saying: "You'd be shocked if I said that in many cases I probably identify more as a Democrat."

Bush, 62, is among the Republican presidential candidates whose standing has been damaged by Trump's summer rise. An average of recent opinion polls by Real Clear Politics puts Bush in third place with 9.5 percent, behind Trump at 26.5 percent and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson at 12 percent for the November 2016 presidential election.

The video and other comments by the former Florida governor suggest Bush is willing to take on Trump in a way other Republicans have thus far avoided, raising the possibility of fireworks at the next Republican debate on Sept. 16 in California.

The Bush video came the day after the Trump organization issued a video that attacked Bush's belief that immigration is an "act of love" by showing mug shots of three illegal immigrants either convicted or suspected of murder.

Asked by reporters in Miami on Tuesday about the Trump attack, Bush said he considered much of the criticism from his rival

to be personal in nature.

The Bush video shows Trump praising Clinton, the former secretary of state and favorite for the Democratic presidential nomination, as a good negotiator on Iran at a time when Republicans are denouncing the Obama administration's proposed nuclear deal with Tehran.

"If you look at the record of what (Trump) believes, he supports Democrats," Bush told reporters in Miami. " ... This is not a guy who is a conservative.

"And using his own words is not a mischaracterization. It came out of his own mouth."

Trump acknowledged in a CNN interview on Tuesday that "at one point, I was a Democrat for a period of time," saying that in New York City, "everybody was a Democrat practically."

"Over the years as Ronald Reagan changed, I also changed," Trump added, noting that the late Republican president had also once been a Democrat. "I became much more conservative. I also became a Republican."

In a set of tweets about the Bush attack, Trump said: "Yet another weak hit by a candidate with a failing campaign. Will Jeb sink as low in the polls as the others who have gone after me?"

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