

George HW Bush critical of son's handling of 9-11

06/11/2015 16:54 by admin

Washington: In the midst of a presidential campaign by his second son, former President George HW Bush has criticised two top aides of his first son saying they ill served him after the Sep 11, 2001 terror attacks.

But even as he criticised former vice president Richard B. Cheney and former defence secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, the elder Bush did not fully absolve his son George Bush for some of what took place saying, "The buck stops there" in the Oval Office.

The critiques of Cheney and Rumsfeld are contained in a new biography "Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush" by Jon Meacham. In interviews to Meacham, the elder Bush, who served as the 41st president, called Cheney an "iron-ass" and labelled Rumsfeld "an arrogant fellow."

Bush told Meacham he thought that the famously influential vice president carved out "his own empire" in the White House "and marched to his own drummer."

Bush felt that Cheney, who served as defence secretary during his own administration, had changed as vice president. Cheney grew "very hard line" and in response to the terrorist attacks of 9-11.

Bush also charged that Rumsfeld "served the president badly" and was an "arrogant fellow."

But Bush also directed some criticism toward his son as well. He told Meacham that he still supports his son's decision to invade Iraq, calling the ouster and capture of Saddam Hussein "proud moments."

But he said in interviews that he does "worry about some of the rhetoric that was out there" and suggested that "hot rhetoric is pretty easy to get headlines, but it doesn't necessarily solve the diplomatic problem."

Bush referenced in particular the introduction of the phrase "axis of evil" in the 2002 State of the Union address, saying "I think that might be historically proved to be not benefiting anything."

George W. Bush told Meacham that he disagreed with the suggestion that Cheney possessed outsize influence in his administration, arguing that "I made the decisions. This was my philosophy."

Asked about his father's critiques of Cheney and Rumsfeld, Jeb Bush, whose own presidential campaign has not gained much traction, told MSNBC Thursday, "My brother's a big boy."

"His administration was shaped by his thinking, his reaction to the attack on 9/11. I think my dad, like a lot of people that love George, want to try to create - a different narrative perhaps ... just 'cause that's natural to do, right?"

Bush family name has been a mixed blessing for Jeb in his presidential campaign - while there is lot of public goodwill for his father, his brother's record is another story.

- IANS