

Opinion: Jeff Bell is back

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IN 1940, author Thomas Wolfe told the world
"You Can't Go Home Again."

On June 3, 2014, Jeff Bell responded "The hell
I can't."

Thirty-six years after he stunned New Jersey's
political establishment by upsetting U. S. Sen.
Clifford P. Case in the Republican primary
election and 74 years after the posthumous
publication of Wolfe's novel, Bell is once again
the party's candidate for the U.S. Senate.

With just under 30 percent of the vote, Bell
defeated three others whose statewide name
recognition was confined to their immediate
families, neighbors and those on their holiday
greeting card mailing list.

The overwhelming consensus, of course, is that
Bell is again embarked on a quixotic venture
and that incumbent Democratic Sen. Cory

million Twitter followers.

The issues

Booker issued the obligatory congratulatory statement after Bell's victory, expressing the
hope the campaign will stick to discussion of issues of importance to the state and nation.

Promises of issue-oriented campaigns are pret

His style was exposed with disturbing clarity in last year's special election to fill the unexpired term of the late Se

History as well as an overwhelming edge in voter registration are on his side and, in the unlikely event he encounters trouble, the national party will bail him out.

If reelected, he'll follow Democratic Party orthodoxy and be a reliable ally of President Obama and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. If Democrats lose control of the Senate, Booker will simply move to a back bench.

Bell understands his position and is cognizant that his history identifies him as too conservative to appeal to independent voters and cross-over Democrats. He may hold out hope that dissatisfaction with the Obama administration and with Congress generally will produce an anti-incumbent mindset sufficiently powerful to turn back more than 40 years of Republican frustration and failure — to allow him to “go home again.”