He has unleashed his rants on Saturday Night Live, Monday Night Football and his own HBO series. On Jan. 26, Dennis Miller will launch a one-hour daily talk show on CNBC in prime time. TIME’s Rebecca Winters finds out why the Emmy Award-winning comedian has changed his political stripes, whom he likes on SNL and what's got him all riled up now.

Why do we need another talk show? Maybe we don't. This one, just when you think it's gonna be a topical news show, it'll be a humor show. And just when you think it's gonna be a humor show, it'll be a news show. We're not trying to blur the line; we're trying to obliterate it.

Your politics have drifted right in recent years. How come? I'm left on a lot of things. If two gay guys want to get married, I could care less. If a nut case from overseas wants to blow up their wedding, that's when I'm right. (Sept. 11) was a big thing for me. I was saying to liberal America, "Well, what are you offering?" And they said, "Well, we're not going to protect you, and we want some more money." That didn't interest me.

Who in politics inspires you? George Bush. He's been dealt an amazingly heavy hand of cards here, and I think he's doing his best ... Bush had the balls to start something that's not gonna be finished in his lifetime. The liquidation of terrorism is not gonna happen for a long time. But to take the first step? Ballsy.

Explain how the war in Iraq makes sense to you as a response to 9/11. Like there's no chance that the secular state of Iraq and Islamic fundamentalists cohabitate? They both think we're Satan. How about that as a nice point of departure for them car-pooling? I wish there was a country called al-Qaeda that we could have invaded, but there wasn't. (Saddam was) the only one who had a home address.

A lot of California Republicans want you to run for Senate. Will you? At some point that involves moving to Washington, D.C., sitting in a room all day with a moron like Barbara Boxer. I'm just not interested. I like open minds, and I think in Washington right now, we might as well start painting those people red and blue.

Should we be worried that the country seems increasingly polarized politically? I'm not worried. Most Americans will let liberals and conservatives play their games because most Americans don't pay attention. They're out there earning a living, trying to bounce their kids on their laps and watch Trista and Ryan's wedding.

What were your parents' politics? I didn't know my Dad—he moved out early. And my mom's politics were kind of hardscrabble. She didn't think about Democrats or Republicans. She thought about who made sense. I've been both in my life. Somebody can say they don't understand why somebody drifts. But I've always found people who drift interesting, 'cause it shows me the game's not stagnant in their own head. They're thinking.

Do you like Tina Fey and Jimmy Fallon's take on your old Saturday Night Live gig? Tina Fey might be the best "Weekend Update" anchor who ever did it. She writes the funniest jokes. Jimmy Fallon's forte is the sketches. He's got the pre-emptively disheveled haircut. There's too much artifice happening there.

What's more fun, pretending to be a journalist or pretending to be a sportscaster? I had fun pretending to be a sportscaster. People always think that was a down thing for me. I had the best job in sports broadcasting for two years. And I had never been to a football game. I felt like the guy in Catch Me If You Can.

Do you rant at home? No. I talk to my wife and kids about politics, but I try to make it less professorial. I will say this, I feel more politically engaged than I've ever felt in my life because I do think we live in dangerous times, and anybody who looks at the world and says this is the time to be a wuss—I can't buy that anymore.