

The Presidential Race Thus Far

BY JOE NARON

The most contentious presidential nominating race of modern politics has now entered its final stage. Super Tuesday, Junior Super Tuesday, and all of the contests in between are concluded. The nominating contests of eight states and two territories remain to be held; beginning with Pennsylvania on April 22 and ending with South Dakota on June 3. For the Republicans, the race was all but concluded in the aftermath of Super Tuesday completing the comeback of Senator John McCain who subsequently clinched the nomination with decisive wins in Texas and Ohio on March 4. For the Democrats, the delegate and popular vote counts favor Senator Barack Obama. However, neither he nor Senator Hillary Clinton will be able to achieve the majority of delegates necessary in order to win the nomination. Inevitably, the Democratic candidate will be chosen by the party's "superdelegates," unpledged delegates that aren't bound by either primaries or caucuses who are Democratic officeholders and party officials that vote on the basis of political strategy. The challenge ahead for Democratic leaders is avoiding a nomination battle leading up to the party's convention in August, which could split the party and damage its prospects for electoral success.

The real story out of the Republican nominating race was the erosion of the party's base of voters that has held since the Goldwater campaign of 1964. The Republican coalition since that realignment year has consisted of fiscal conservatives (favoring less federal government spending on entitlement programs and less regulation), national defense conservatives (advocating a large US military presence), and social/religious conservatives (who generally oppose abortion, gay marriage, etc.). Rather than one candidate embodying all three parts of the coalition, it was divided amongst three. Mike Huckabee drew his support from the social conservatives, Senator McCain represented the foreign policy wing, and Mitt Romney the fiscal conservatives. McCain was able to use his natural base within the

party as well as his reputation as a political moderate and "maverick" independent to win the larger, more moderate states in the primary process, thus securing the nomination.

McCain is now tasked with reuniting the Republican Party around his candidacy. He is faced with two choices. He can either attempt to reassemble the old coalition or run to the political center, challenging the Democrats in states such as Pennsylvania where he polls favorable against his potential challengers. Completing the Republican ticket with a vice presidential nominee is also crucial to McCain's current efforts. Speculation has centered around

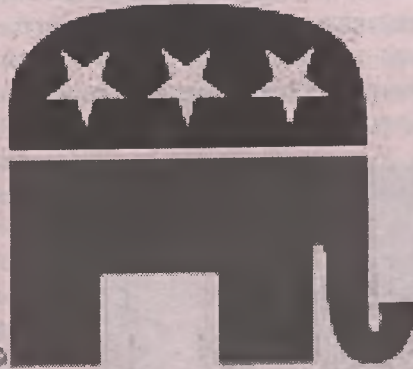
several Republican governors, Mark Sanford of South Carolina, Charlie Crist of Florida (whose endorsement of McCain in his state's primary allowed McCain to win the state and knock Rudy Giuliani out of the race), and Matt Blunt of Missouri. Both Missouri and Florida are crucial battleground states, and picking a nominee from either state could help tilt it in McCain's favor. Recently, McCain has set out on a multi-country tour of the Middle East, and has largely remained out of the media since his securing of the nomination.

On the Democratic side, the cumulative popular vote and delegate counts favor Senator Obama, however recent controversies have allowed Senator Clinton to remain insurgent. Clinton is expected to win the April 22 Pennsylvania primaries, with the RealClearPolitics.com poll average in that state favoring her by 16.6%. With the Obama campaign successfully lowering expectations for his performance in Pennsylvania, the race will continue to early June. The nominee is likely to be chosen as the result of two factors, who is perceived to have momentum coming

out of the final primaries and who appears stronger against McCain in the general election. Regardless of who wins the Democratic nomination, but especially if the eventual nominee has less popular votes or pledged delegates than the loser, he or she will be tasked with pulling the party back together for the general election. In 9 of the past 10 election cycles, the party who chose its nominee first won the general election. The protracted nomination battle the Democrats are engaged in does not bode well for them in November.

The importance of North Carolina's primary on May 6 cannot be underplayed. The state should be an easy win for Obama; with large college towns, a large black population, and a higher than average income for a southern state. He currently leads Clinton 5.4% in the most recent RealClearPolitics.com average. However, in the latest poll since the Reverend Wright controversy, Obama leads by only 1%, a statistical tie. North Carolina Senator John Edwards, who has withheld his endorsement, could play a crucial role in the state's primary. If Clinton manages a win in North Carolina, she could make a convincing argument that she has successfully broken Obama's base of voters and would be the stronger candidate in November. For the first time in years, North Carolina is not an afterthought in the presidential contest.

So where does this primary season leave us? A McCain-Obama race in November would be a realignment battle, with Obama competing in the red states of the southeast and Midwest, and McCain having a chance in the blue states of Pennsylvania and into the northeast. The race would be less policy oriented and based more on overarching themes of generation changing and the role of race in American politics. A McCain-Clinton contest harkens back to the past several electoral cycles, with the battlegrounds in Ohio and Pennsylvania and dialogue anchored in policy. If the primary season is at all representative of the general election, it will be the most defining election since 1968, a similar circumstance in which a war weary nation sought a new path.



Resolved: The United States Shall Establish a Universal Healthcare System

BY WILLIAM CONDON

BY CALEB HORTON AND ELLIOT CAVE

Everyone agrees our healthcare system can be improved. However we must ensure that improvements don't make things worse. Our system is working well enough that since 2006 Ontario hospitals have transferred 157 patients to America. Foreign celebrities and dictators also choose American healthcare.

Some people say that, because healthcare is necessary for life, the government should give it to everyone. Food is necessary for life, but should the government manage and distribute crops? The Soviet Union tried this on collective farms, and it failed. Small private plots, less than 3% of farmland, ended up producing over 30% of the Soviet food supply (Coleman 1996). The lesson is clear—even if something is necessary for life, the government shouldn't always provide it.

Government healthcare works no better in Canada, Europe, or New Zealand. The breast cancer mortality rate is 25% in America, 28% in Canada, and 46% in Britain and New Zealand. The prostate cancer mortality rate is 19% in America, 25% in Canada, 49% in France, and 57% in Britain (JBS Society). On average, Canadians wait 17 weeks for major treatment, while many wait over a year. In 2005, over 782,936 Canadians were on waiting lists (Fox News). The Canadian Supreme Court only permitted private health insurance in 2005 after George Zeliotis sued Quebec for denying his right to life. Now, 65% of Canadians, despite their public health system, have private insurance (OECD). Canadians only live longer because they are thinner and their homicide rate is lower. The statistics suggest a failure in state managed care.

We can't give everyone everything. If healthcare is free, really sick people are lost in the flood because everyone runs to the doctor at the first sniffle and pays nothing. Our way isn't perfect, but things could be far worse. In Europe, the elderly rarely get antibiotics and new treatments are forbidden by government cost-effectiveness boards. People die on Canada's waiting lists. "It is inevitable that some patients will die if they have to wait," said the Canadian Supreme Court. "Access to a waiting list is not access to health care" (Chaouli v. Quebec).

Our healthcare system isn't perfect. That said, US healthcare policy should not travel down the road of universal healthcare to socialism.

Universal health care means providing care to all Americans, no matter how much or how little they pay for it through taxes. It means, however, that insurance bureaucracies would no longer control the system and make daily decisions about the health of U.S. citizens. It is necessary in America today because the estimated 50 million Americans - 16 percent of the U.S. population—who are forced to live without health care insurance would receive health care. People fear paying higher taxes for this new coverage, but Americans should agree that we can't leave our disadvantaged neighbors to be vulnerable to the increasing cost of health care premiums. In reality, universal healthcare would increase personal income tax by two

percent, which is considerably less than Americans currently pay for coverage. Most Americans don't want to be wealthy. They just want to live a decent, happy life. Without their health, this dream will never be possible.

Insurance companies are intrinsically corrupt. The goal of a corporation is to make a profit. The goal of a sick person is to receive healthcare. Healthcare costs money, which makes it an expense for a corporation. In order to make a maximum profit, expenses must be minimized. This minimizes a person's health. This is capitalism, and capitalism should not control a country's health. Health should be provided unadulterated with contradictory agendas. For example, a corporation hypothetically controls our secondary education system. In order to make profit, they decide to hire people without college degrees as teachers. They also decide to not buy any books for the students. Sure, they make a great deal of profit, but children are taught very little. Not to say our secondary education system is perfect, but everyone who wants an education receives it for free in



America.

All other Western nations have a national healthcare system, but in America, we're sadly behind the curve. However, we have a responsibility to each other and to the values of freedom and equality that we were taught growing up. We see that allowing people to suffer because they don't have enough money is unfair and inherently selfish. Often, we are told that America is the land of the free, yet we have one of the lowest life expectancies of an industrialized country. This is a sad moment in the history of a country that was borne in ideals which denounced tyranny. Now, tyranny controls the health of our people, and it should be stopped.