

Democratic Party leaders engineer Biden victory in most Super Tuesday states

Patrick Martin
4 March 2020

Former Vice President Joe Biden won the majority of the “Super Tuesday” states yesterday, capturing nine of the 14 states outright—Alabama, Arkansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders won outright victories only in Colorado, Utah and Vermont. He had a significant lead in the largest state, California, but in Texas, the second largest state, his lead in the early vote disappeared as vote counting continued into the night. Biden also took a narrow lead in Maine, but the state was too close to call.

The vote pattern in Texas was typical of many of the Super Tuesday states, in that Biden performed poorly in the early votes, but did much better in the votes actually cast at the polls on Tuesday. This reflects the impact of the campaign by the Democratic Party leadership over the past week to unite behind Biden as the right-wing anti-Sanders candidate.

How the 1,350 delegates from the 14 states are to be divided will not be known for several days. California and Texas account for half of these delegates, and mail ballots in California could be delivered as late as Friday. But it seems possible that Biden will take the lead in convention delegates, as opposed to the projections as recently as last week that Sanders would emerge from Super Tuesday with a lead of several hundred.

Sanders told a primary night crowd in Burlington, Vermont that he was doing well and expected to win the Democratic presidential nomination and defeat President Trump in November, but he made his appearance earlier than Biden, the traditional position for the election night loser.

The outcome was a rebuff to Sanders’ claims that his campaign can transform the Democratic Party into an

instrument for “political revolution” or significant social reform. Instead, the results demonstrate the opposite: the Democratic Party is a right-wing political formation, one of the twin parties of the American capitalist class, unbreakably tied to Wall Street and American imperialism.

Rather than bow to Sanders’ apparent momentum after caucuses in Iowa and Nevada and the New Hampshire primary, the Democratic Party leadership intervened massively to bolster the faltering campaign of the most right-wing of the main contenders for the Democratic presidential nomination.

The first step was delivering Biden a victory in the South Carolina primary on Saturday, where the endorsement of black Congressman James Clyburn, the third-ranking Democrat in the House, played a critical role. This provided the template for Biden’s victories Tuesday in the six states across the South, where he rolled up large majorities among African American voters, as high as 72 percent in Alabama.

The next step was to induce two of Biden’s rivals, Senator Amy Klobuchar and former South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg to drop out. Former President Barack Obama called Buttigieg and former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid called Klobuchar before each made their decision to endorse Biden on the eve of Super Tuesday.

Klobuchar’s withdrawal helped deliver her home state of Minnesota to Biden, and the endorsements by Klobuchar, Buttigieg, Beto O’Rourke and a slew of other Democratic Party leaders boosted Biden in Massachusetts, Texas and the whole range of Super Tuesday states.

This campaign to consolidate the Democratic Party behind Biden also had an effect on the campaigns of the remaining non-Sanders candidates. Billionaire Michael

Bloomberg, despite spending \$500 million, failed to break the 15 percent threshold to obtain delegates in half the states that voted on Super Tuesday, although he did cross the threshold in California and Texas.

Senator Elizabeth Warren had a particularly poor showing, finishing third in her home state of Massachusetts and qualifying for delegates in a half dozen smaller states, but apparently falling short in both Texas and California.

Both Warren and Bloomberg were said to be discussing with campaign aides whether they should continue in the race.

While no overall vote totals are available for all 14 states, given the long delays in California, voter turnout was high, an indication of the growing politicization of the American population and the widespread popular opposition to the right-wing policies of the Trump administration.

Voter turnout in North Carolina, for example, rose significantly compared to 2016, when Sanders ran against Hillary Clinton, from under 1.1 million to more than 1.3 million. In Virginia, 1.2 million voted compared to only 781,000 in 2016. There were anecdotal accounts of long lines at polling places, both in areas where there was massive support for Sanders and in inner-city neighborhoods, where Biden won the bulk of the vote.

But within the framework of the Democratic Party, the opposition to Trump is being diverted in a right-wing, pro-imperialist direction. The Democratic leadership wants to run the 2020 campaign as an extension of the Mueller investigation and the impeachment drive, portraying Trump as a Russian stooge and appealing for the support of Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus for Trump's removal.

Identity politics is playing the most pernicious role in this process, as Clyburn and other leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus, representing a layer of upper-middle class and bourgeois blacks and directing their appeals to millions of poor working class blacks through the medium of the black churches, mobilized opposition to Sanders on the basis of racial solidarity (emphasizing Biden's association with Barack Obama) and hostility to socialism.

This is an indictment of pseudoleft organizations, such as the Democratic Socialists of America, the most

fervent supporters of both Sanders and identity politics. They have been hoisted on their own petard. They glorify racial politics and uphold the authority of the black Democratic Party politicians, only to see them torpedo Sanders and throw their support behind former Vice President Biden.

The *New York Times* wrote Tuesday in its analysis of the campaign, "Top Democrats now believe that there are only two realistic paths forward in the presidential race: a dominant victory on Tuesday by Mr. Sanders that gives him a wide lead in the delegate count, or a battle for delegates over months of primary elections, that might allow Mr. Biden to pull ahead or force the nomination to be decided at the Milwaukee convention in July."

It now appears that Biden will go into the next two weeks of primaries, in large states like Michigan, Florida, Ohio and Illinois, with a lead in delegates and the full support of the Democratic Party apparatus in those states, as well as a flood of campaign cash from big money Democratic donors who have been holding back, waiting for the emergence of a single right-wing candidate.

The author also recommends:

On the eve of "Super Tuesday" primaries:
Democratic Party goes to war against Sanders
[3 March 2020]

Race vs. class in the South Carolina primary
[2 March 2020]

Joe Biden: A familiar face, a deeply reactionary record
[23 September 2019]



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact