
Pennsylvania: Big Win for Hillary; Bigger Win for the Nation

by Debra Hanania Freeman

Hillary Clinton certainly deserves congratulations for her decisive ten-point victory over Barack Obama in the April 22 Pennsylvania Democratic primary. It was a big win for her, but in truth, it was a bigger win for the nation.

In the days leading up to the primary, there was a growing drumbeat coming from a group of Democrats with very questionable credentials and allegiances, calling on Clinton to be gracious and drop out of the race. Ironically, the cast of characters was very similar to those who came together in a 1998 Labor Day weekend plot designed to force then-President Bill Clinton's resignation over the Monica Lewinsky scandal. That effort was thwarted, in large part, by the formation of the Committee to Save the Presidency by a group of state and local elected officials and trade unionists, who were gathered that same weekend at a LaRouche-sponsored national conference in Northern Virginia, and who catalyzed a groundswell of popular support for the President.

Press reports have begrudgingly admitted that Hillary Clinton took the popular vote in Pennsylvania by a whopping ten percentage points. A closer look shows a far more decisive win among the key constituencies that any Democrat will have to win if he or she is to win the Presidency. As expected, Obama, who spent a little over three times as much money in

the state as Clinton, when soft money is included in the total, garnered a very strong showing among black voters (89%), the affluent (those earning over \$150,000 per year), and voters under age 30 (61%).

But, despite a six-day bus tour through blue-collar Pennsylvania, and a media blitz in which he outspent Clinton by a 6-to-1 margin, there is nothing in the actual returns to suggest that Obama has expanded his support beyond those who have been attracted to his candidacy since the day that he entered the race.

To Clinton's credit, she ignored all the chatter, and stuck to what she has done since New Hampshire: She took her campaign to the lower 80% of the population and put the economic crisis front and center. She insisted that *any* political leader, Presidential candidate or not, had to do more than make empty promises about the change that he or she might bring about next year, and address the critical, and in many cases existential, problems that people are facing right now.

Bill Clinton's Strategy Worked

In one example of just how clueless (at best) most of the campaign coverage has been, the news media claimed that, after his supposed gaffes in South Carolina, the former Presi-



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Hillary Clinton, shown here at a campaign event in April, leads Barack Obama in the popular vote, with a landslide victory in Pennsylvania among key Democratic constituencies.

dent had been “exiled to can-you-find-it-on-the-map” places like Wilkes-Barre and Altoona, Pennsylvania. But, President Clinton’s schedule was part of a coherent strategy to talk hard-core policy to core constituencies who are demanding nothing less. It was no accident that his appearances, which drew record crowds in places rarely visited by a President or Presidential candidate, virtually mirrored the smaller cities, especially in Central Pennsylvania, that had already voted in favor of Lyndon LaRouche’s Homeowners and Bank Protection Act.

When the votes were counted, Clinton trounced Obama among the Party’s must-win constituencies. She led Obama by 30% among blue-collar men. Sen. Bob Casey, who endorsed Obama, couldn’t deliver critical votes from heavily Catholic areas in the western part of the state, or even in his own hometown of Scranton, where the Casey family has reigned as political royalty for over a century. In fact, Casey voters around the state voted for Clinton, 70-30%, and in Scranton itself, Hillary won with 75%.

Obama’s only chance of winning the state was to win big in the Philadelphia suburbs, and he suffered a stunning defeat there. Clinton clobbered Obama by a 2-1 ratio in Bucks County and even carried Montgomery County. Although he won in affluent Main Line communities like Lower Merion and Radnor, as well as in Rose Valley and Doylestown, he lost in the Newtown townships and also in Upper and Lower Makefield. Clinton meantime racked up solid majorities in almost all of the post-World War II suburbs, including Bensalem, Bristol Township, Warminster and Warrington, Upper and Lower Southampton, and Springfield.

Overall, Catholics favored Clinton by 72-28%. Late de-

ciders, who made up 23% of Pennsylvania Democrats—decided whom to vote for in the hours just prior to the election. The vast majority made their decision after the Pennsylvania debate, and they went overwhelmingly for Clinton (68%), citing the fact that they felt she was the only one prepared to address the economic crisis in concrete terms. Hillary even started to cut into Obama’s support among those under 25, in the final days. She was endorsed by the University of Pennsylvania’s *Daily Pennsylvanian* newspaper, and appeared before 8,000 students at the Palestra basketball arena there the night before the primary; a crowd that was bigger, younger, more male and less white than any her campaign had seen in quite some time.

And, despite claims by people like House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Democratic National Committee chair

Howard Dean that Democrats have grown weary of the contest, and want the Democratic nominee to be chosen now, the turnout statewide proved that that was a fiction: an impressive 54% of eligible voters went to the polls, which may end up matching the previous state record of just under 55%, set in 1980. The failing economy was identified as the key issue that brought voters to the polls, and 98% of those who voted for Clinton said they did so because they believed she was the only candidate, Democrat or Republican, who was addressing the economic issues.

Obama: Losing in the Big States

No matter how you frame it, despite an overwhelming money advantage and the support of much of the Democratic establishment, Obama cannot win over large blocs of Democratic voters, especially among the white working class. As a result, he keeps losing in the big states. In fact, the only must-win state for the Democrats in the general election where he has done well has been his home state of Illinois. He hasn’t won a major primary since he took Wisconsin on Feb. 22.

According to Obama’s Bombers, as they’re called, it’s all Hillary’s fault. *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman made fun of them in a recent op-ed piece, quipping, “If she hadn’t launched all those vile, negative attacks on our hero—if she had just gone away like she was supposed to—Barack Obama’s aura would be intact, and his mission of unifying America still on track...”

How negative has the Clinton campaign been, really? Yes, it ran an ad that included Osama bin Laden, but it did so in a montage of crisis images that also included the Great Depression and Hurricane Katrina. Obama has put far more energy

into attacking Clinton. During the closing days of the Pennsylvania primary fight, the Obama campaign ran a TV ad repeating what it knew to be a dishonest charge, that the Clinton health-care plan would force people to buy health insurance they couldn't afford. It was as negative as any ad the Clinton camp has run. More importantly, though, it was fear-mongering aimed at people who don't think they need insurance, rather than reassurance for families who are trying to get coverage or are afraid of losing it. Is it any wonder, then, that this base continues to favor Hillary Clinton?

As many have pointed out, the attacks on Obama from the Clinton campaign have been a game of badminton compared with the hardball the Republicans will play this Fall. If what has occurred so far is enough to knock Obama off his pedestal, what possible hope is there that he could stay on it through a general election fight? Well, perhaps Obama staying on his pedestal was never the plan after all. Remember the warning that LaRouche issued months ago, that the Obama campaign was designed to self-destruct by sometime around May-June, to pave the way for a possible third-way candidacy, like that of New York's oddball fascist Mayor Michael Bloomberg. But, for that scenario, hatched by agents of the Anglo-Dutch Liberal establishment, like Felix Rohatyn and George Soros, to succeed, Clinton would have had to already be driven out of the race. This isn't the way things were supposed to play out.

Clinton Has the Popular Vote

Although it is true that, because of Democratic Party rule mandating proportional representation, Clinton cannot statistically catch up to Obama's 164-delegate lead from the primaries and caucuses. But the popular vote—contrary to the Obama camp's expectations—may be a different matter. Counting the votes cast in Michigan and Florida, Hillary has received 15,095,663 votes to Obama's 14,973,720, a margin of more than 120,000 votes. It's expected that she will build on that lead in the upcoming primaries in Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, and especially Puerto Rico, whose 2 million voters have strong ties to New York. And, despite all the scorn heaped on the institution of superdelegates (795 Party leaders who go to the convention automatically without pledging to a candidate in the primaries or caucuses), the fact is that *Obama, mathematically, cannot come close to reaching the majority needed for nomination without a significant boost from these political free agents either.*

Until now, Rohatyn mouthpieces like Pelosi have been blathering about how the Democrats had to avoid a brokered convention; that the superdelegates should be bound by the popular vote in their states. Ironically, if the superdelegates were to do that, then Hillary would have a lock on the nomination. Yet, that simple reality has not stopped the triumvirate of Harry Reid, the Senate Majority Leader; House Speaker Pelosi; and DNC chair Dean, all of whom, despite their professed neutrality, are in the Obama camp, to announce, just

two days after Clinton's decisive Pennsylvania win, that they would wait until June 2—the day of the last primary—but that once that primary takes place, they intend to press the superdelegates to make their endorsements public, and select a nominee—months before a single elected delegate lands in Denver!

It is a strategy that will be *very* hard to pull off, especially if Clinton continues to focus on those issues that voters care about—housing, health care, and the economy in general. So far, she has presented herself as the representative of the party that created Social Security and Medicare, and defended those programs against Republican attacks; of the party that can bring assured health coverage and housing and education to all Americans. Obama's message is one of "change," but these are principles that the vast majority of Americans do not want changed.

When former President Clinton was asked to comment on the fact that even her decisive victory in Pennsylvania hadn't stopped the continued calls from the likes of Pelosi, Dean, and Reid for Hillary to withdraw, he chuckled and said: "Okay, I'm about to commit candor. If somebody tells you you oughta quit, it's because they're afraid you won't. And if somebody tells you, you can't win, it's because they're scared you can." Very few question the former President's political instincts.

Axelrod: Obama Doesn't Need the Working Class

Following Barack Obama's defeat in the Pennsylvania Democratic primary April 22, National Public Radio interviewed Obama's chief campaign strategist, David Axelrod on April 25, about Hillary Clinton's advantage with working class voters. Axelrod responded, "The white working class has gone to the Republican nominee for many elections, going back even to the Clinton years. This is not new that Democratic candidates don't rely solely on those votes."

Perhaps Axelrod has forgotten that ignoring the white working class vote, is a major reason why we've had the string of Republican Presidents we've had.

ABC News reported former President Bill Clinton's reaction to Axelrod, as he campaigned for Hillary among voters in North Carolina: "Today her opponent's campaign strategist said, 'well, we don't really need these working class people to win, half the time they vote for Republicans anyways.' And I will tell you something: America needs you to win, and therefore Hillary wants your support."