

## Democratic Race Could Be Wide Open After Super Tuesday

Posted on Tuesday 5th February 2008

Super Tuesday could see the Democratic candidate contest blown wide open, in today's primaries, says the University of Birmingham's Professor Scott Lucas.

Prof Lucas says: "If Hillary Clinton takes California, as well as New York, you could write her into the nomination. The race would still be mathematically open, but symbolically this would be the moment of anointment.

"However, if Obama runs away with California, then he gets the inside track with the media – and the race is wide open."

But, says Prof Lucas, there are other factors in play here too. "A high turnout tomorrow will favour Obama: last minute voters who do not normally come out and vote. Obama is doing better with the rural vote too, the electorate outside the cities in the South and Mid West like him. People distrust Clinton; they still associate her with Bill Clinton's Administration."

"And what about the Super Delegates?" The actions of the super delegates, whose support candidates work tirelessly for because they aren't allied to anybody, could prove decisive. "These people have 10% of the vote! If they want to jump on Obama's bandwagon, then their vote could swing it for his campaign."

The withdrawal of John Edwards is another consideration. The man with distinctive policies and a social message - he was the only candidate to call for a complete withdrawal of troops from Iraq - was supported by activist voters, says Prof Lucas: "These are people who are concerned with politics rather than personal image. They are people who are more likely to vote in the primaries, because they are issues led. And they are more likely to turn out."

Whatever happens today, the race is still impossible to call, says Prof Lucas. "Because the Democrats do not have a winner-take-all system but award delegates in proportion to votes received, the rough distribution across the 22 contests is likely to leave Clinton and Obama numerically very close."

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### Further Media Information

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### Notes to Editors

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