



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 20, 2016

Trump Takes New York, Closer to Shutting the Door on Cruz

As expected, both leading candidates in the Republican and Democratic primaries in New York on Tuesday [extended their leads](#) over their rivals. Hillary Clinton took 135 delegates to Sanders' 104, all but cementing into place her nomination at the Democrat convention in July. Donald Trump extended his lead over his nearest rival, Ted Cruz, by running the board, taking 89 delegates to none for Cruz.



What was unexpected was the margin of Trump's victory, beating the polls by seven percent with 60.5 percent of the vote, compared to 25 percent for John Kasich and 14.5 percent for Ted Cruz.

Trump's victory speech was short and to the point. Filled with the glittering generalities that have endeared him to his supporters, Trump exclaimed: "We're going to use our great business people to negotiate unbelievable trade deals so we bring our jobs back and we don't let our companies go to Mexico and all of these other countries anymore. We're going to keep the jobs here.... We're going to build our military bigger, better, stronger than ever before. Nobody is going to mess with us, that I can tell you."

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He added that, for all intents and purposes, the Republican primary is over, and he has won: "Senator Cruz is just about mathematically eliminated.... We've won millions more votes than Senator Cruz. Millions and millions more votes than Governor Kasich. We've won, especially after tonight, close to 300 delegates more than Senator Cruz. We're really, really rocking."

Trump has made significant changes to his campaign staff, pointing toward the July convention in Cleveland and the general election after that. Trump's new convention manager, Paul Manafort, who has advised the presidential campaigns of Republicans Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bob Dole, George W. Bush, and John McCain, said "We're expanding [Trump's] campaign. He is recognizing this is a phase we have to go through. The convention is another phase, and [then] we get to the general election. It's a whole different phase."

The *Financial Times* looked at the numbers following Trump's victory on Tuesday night and said he's got it locked up: "Mr. Trump effectively closed off the path for Mr. Cruz to win the 1,237 delegates needed for the nomination on the first ballot in Cleveland."

And then added a caveat: "But the better than expected result [in New York] does not significantly alter the trajectory of the Republican race, which is still more likely than not to end with a contested convention."

Translation: Trump has it sewed up. Or maybe not.

Polling prognosticators Nate Silver and Mish Shedlock have been slugging it out over the matter and both have concluded that it's going to be close. In Cleveland, Trump will be short by either 78 delegates



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(Silver) or 13 (Shedlock). But, says Shedlock, “There are 125 uncommitted delegates. 13 is not a lot to ask, and Trump is likely to get that number from Pennsylvania alone.” For the record, there are 71 delegates up for grabs in Pennsylvania next week, where Trump leads Cruz by 45 percent to 24 percent in current polling.

There’s also Indiana, which doesn’t allow polling prior to the primary on May 3, leaving pollsters such as Silver and Shedlock in the dark. With 57 delegates on the block there, however, Silver originally projected that Trump would capture 37 of them. But he has just reduced his projection to nine, while Shedlock has kept his prediction at 45. Said Shedlock, “Indiana may very well determine the outcome of this race. If Trump wins Indiana, it’s likely all over.”

Eugene Robinson, writing for the liberal *Washington Post*, thinks that close is close enough, that the GOP establishment has been so unnerved over Trump’s success that they’re likely just to let the convention make the final call without trying to manipulate it in smoke-filled rooms. Wrote Robinson, “If Trump gets anywhere close to a delegate majority [1,237 delegates], the party leadership caves and he gets the nomination.”

Most commentators think that such a victory for Trump in Cleveland guarantees a victory for Hillary Clinton in November. Every poll taken (so far) shows Trump losing to Clinton by between six and 15 percentage points.

But Wesley Pruden’s probe of electoral history reveals that “there’s a long list of inevitable presidents who never saw the inside of the White House unless they got there on the congressional tour, and even then they never got upstairs.”

He summarized his findings:

Thomas E. Dewey was so inevitable in 1948 that Gallup quit polling a month before the election, figuring it was a waste of money to keep asking the same question and getting the same answer. Harry S. Truman was finished.

Michael Dukakis was measuring the draperies for the Oval Office in 1998 when George Bush the Elder dispatched him to the tank.

John Kerry could smell the coffee at the White House mess when George Bush the Younger sent his not-so-swift dream boat to the bottom, Purple Hearts and all.

And then there’s always the unexpected: God and the FBI. Wrote Pruden: “God and the FBI may have an indictment in store to roil the campaign, but even if not, Benghazi and the top-secret emails she opened to hackers will dog Hillary all the way to November. Her coughing fits — she suffered another on Monday that cut short an important radio interview in Manhattan — continue to raise concerns about her health.”

All of this is so interesting that, for entertainment value, the primaries this season have few rivals. As measured in the freedom fight, however, the White House is not where the action is, but the House of Representatives, as it has always been. House members are the closest to the electorate, being forced every two years to go back to them for permission to continue to represent them. And they are, as a result (and thanks to the Constitution) also closest to their wallets.

Photo: AP Images

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