

Primary Elections

Super Tuesday was on 2nd March 2004 – primaries were held in California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island and Vermont – the most number of primaries held on any one day in the 2004 elections.

The **Californian primary** was on 2nd March 2004 – commonly referred to as “Super Tuesday” because of the number of primaries held on that day.

Incumbent **President Bush** spent \$256,077,640.06 on his presidential campaign, while Democrat candidate John Kerry spent \$195,738,854.87.

Advantages of primaries:

- Ordinary voters can participate more in the whole process of presidential elections.
- There are more candidates to choose from.
- Politicians without reputations find it easier to compete in the process rather than through the old system, which required majority support by a party and a well-built reputation.
- The process is more open and democratic, and doesn't involve as much corruption as before.
- The hectic schedule can be seen as a test of a candidate's resilience and ability to lead the nation.

Disadvantages of primaries:

- Just like the real elections, apathy can set in, especially when there are many candidates and elections.
- Too much emphasis is placed on the media and to photogenic and oratorical qualities rather than the ability to lead a country.
- It is too easy for primaries to turn into personal battles and spats between candidates.
- Because nearly anyone can get into primaries without having majority support or a reputation, it is easy to miss the testing of qualities required for being a president
- Primaries are very expensive to participate in, therefore limiting people who may have excellent qualities but small funds. Also, this means that candidates are more open to “favours” and donations towards their funds, leading to problems with pressure groups “buying out” candidates.

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