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EXTRA

HOWARD DEAN ENDS HIS CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT

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Following disappointing losses in almost all of the state primaries thus far, former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean bows out of the presidential race.

Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean ended his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination on Wednesday -- one day after a disappointing third-place finish in the Wisconsin primary.

Though he will no longer campaign, Dean's name will remain on the ballot in states with scheduled primary elections. He also vowed to use his political clout and support to campaign against President Bush and to help Democrats take back control of Congress.

"I am no longer actively pursuing the presidency," Dean told his supporters on Wednesday. "We will however continue to build our grassroots network in order to continue to change the Democratic Party and to change the country."

A grassroots campaign

Though Dean failed to win a state primary or caucus, he has been credited with attracting more liberal voters -- many of whom felt that Democrats had become too much like Republicans in their beliefs. He also rallied more young voters and more money to the Democratic Party. His grass roots Internet campaign broke fund-raising records and raised more money than any other candidate.

On Wednesday, Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, who narrowly beat North Carolina Sen. John Edwards in Tuesday's Wisconsin primary, applauded his former rival's efforts.

"[Dean] has done an extraordinary job of invigorating a whole group of people who were divorced from the political process," Kerry said. "Whatever happens, it's impossible not to express general admiration and respect for the campaign he's put together."

Dean's rise and fall

In 2003 Dean stunned the Democratic political establishment by rocketing to the top of public opinion polls nationwide with a message that was harshly critical of President Bush for taking the nation to war in Iraq.

His campaign was fueled by an innovative grassroots fund-raising and organizing effort that effectively used the Internet to solidify what seemed to be broad, nationwide support.

Dean said 300,000 people gave small donations to his campaign and that one-quarter of those who contributed were under 30 years of age.

Despite his early strength, his support eroded due to several factors. When the media began to describe Dean as the front-runner, his fellow candidates began to campaign aggressively against him. In addition, once voters began to pay attention to the former governor, many were put off by his hard-charging style. He was also criticized for his reaction to the capture of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, which, he said, did not make America any safer.

He attempted to re-energize supporters after a defeat in the Iowa primary with an election night speech delivered in a fiery tone. The speech, which analysts called "unpresidential," became a political joke and was lampooned by political satirists and late night talk show hosts.

After Iowa, the campaign never regained its footing, but instead fell into organizational turmoil when his campaign manager resigned and Dean revealed that he had used up almost all of the \$40 million in campaign money he had raised and couldn't pay his staff.

By Online NewsHour

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