

Today's primaries decisive

NEW CARROLTON, Md. — Maryland and Colorado may play kingmakers Tuesday in anointing one of the Democratic presidential contenders a national candidate.

With former Massachusetts Sen. Paul Tsongas showing strength in late polls in both states, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton on Monday was looking beyond Tuesday's primaries even as he tried to generate enthusiasm for a last-minute surge in Maryland.

Tsongas' outlook in Colorado and Maryland improved after his win in the leadoff New Hampshire primary. His pro-business economic message plays well among the more affluent, suburban voters found in large numbers in both states.



The two states are among seven that hold primaries or caucuses Tuesday, with 383 Democratic delegates at stake.

Tsongas is counting on a strong Tuesday to propel him into the South, where Clinton is expecting to get a needed psychological boost.

"The criticism against me has been that my ideas are regional and that's why the Maryland and Colorado elections are important, to show you can compete in other parts of the country," Tsongas told voters in Greenbelt, Md., on Monday.

"I am a prisoner of your expectations and judgments," he said. "I have to do well here."

Clinton promises a win in Georgia on Tuesday but says he may have gotten his stride back too late to overcome Tsongas in Colorado and Mary-

land. The other contests, in Washington, Minnesota, Idaho and Utah, are unpredictable, he says.

Clinton said Monday as he campaigned in Maryland, "I think we'll see a real turnaround in this election."

"In the aftermath of New Hampshire, my economic message was totally wiped away," Clinton said because he said he was forced to defend himself against unsubstantiated allegations of infidelity and suggestions he manipulated a deferment to avoid the Vietnam draft.

"People are beginning to get back to the issues and are listening to my message again."

Maryland and Colorado are significant not only because they are the first major tests of the Democrats outside their home regions, but both are considered bellweathers of Democratic chances in the fall.

Reports reflect better economy

WASHINGTON — Two hard-hit sectors of the economy got upbeat news Monday as a key manufacturing barometer climbed out of recession territory in February and the construction industry enjoyed its best showing since last spring.

The Commerce Department reported that consumers boosted their spending a lackluster 0.2 percent in January, while their incomes actually fell by 0.1 percent.

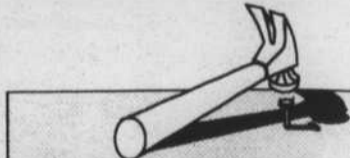
Private economists said the mixed reports were typical of an economy at a turning point with some sectors doing better than others and supported the prevailing view that the country should be launched into a sustained recovery sometime during the spring.

Analysts were particularly impressed with the increase in the National Association of Purchasing Management's monthly index, which jumped to 52.4 percent, up from 47.4 percent the month before.

A reading below 50 percent is viewed as indicating a recession in manufacturing while a reading above 50 percent signals an expanding manufacturing sector. It marked the first time the index has been above the 50 percent mark since last November.

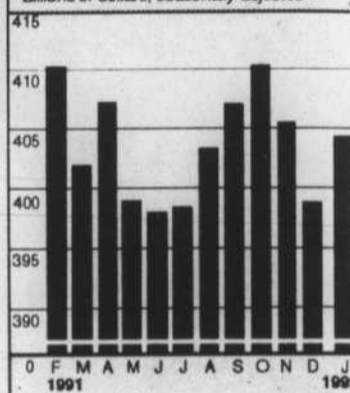
Economists said the closely watched manufacturing survey was good news for the one-fifth of the economy engaged in manufacturing, a sector that had appeared to be leading the country out of recession last spring only to falter during the summer.

In a separate report, the Commerce Department said that construction spending increased 1.3 percent in January, the first advance since October and the strongest gain since last April. The strength was centered in residential construction, a sector considered crucial to leading the country out of recession.



Construction spending

Billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted



Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce AP

Court rejects ban on TV indecency

Justices let FCC regulate material only during day

WASHINGTON — The government's bid to banish "indecency" from the airwaves 24 hours a day was derailed in the Supreme Court on Monday. The justices left intact a ruling that such a round-the-clock ban violates freedom of expression.

The Bush administration and ad-

vocacy groups had asked the court to revive the ban to protect children as well as the privacy of all listeners and viewers.

Indecent material is legally defined as describing "sexual or excretory activities or organs" in terms "patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium."

Legally obscene material has no constitutional protection, but material that is merely indecent does.

Only Justices Byron R. White and Sandra Day O'Connor voted to hear arguments in the case, but four votes

are needed to grant such review.

Justice Clarence Thomas did not participate in considering the appeals. He was a member of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia when it said prohibiting indecent material 24 hours a day goes too far.

The court's refusal to review the broadcast indecency case was hailed by free-speech advocates.

On the other side, Bush administration lawyers had said only a blanket FCC broadcast ban on indecent material would protect young people.

Senator rejects calls for resignation

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Democrats scrambled to save Sen. Brock Adams' seat Monday after he dropped his reelection bid amid allegations he sexually harassed eight women.

Washington Gov. Booth Gardner said he wouldn't decide whether to run for more than a week.

Adams resisted continued calls for his resignation from Democrats and Republicans alike.

Gardner told a news conference he wouldn't decide whether to seek

Adams' seat until after the state Legislature adjourns March 12.

Gardner also declined to immediately call for Adams' resignation.

"I think... he can make the judgment as to whether he is, in fact, serving effectively and if he is not, I think he'll be the first to know," Gardner said. "But on speculation that he doesn't see that and others of us do, then I would talk with him by private phone before making a public statement."

Asked if he believed the allegations against Adams, Gardner replied, "I'm not going to make any judgment."

Adams dropped his bid for a second term Sunday, hours after The Seattle Times published accounts from unidentified former employees and associates. One woman said Adams drugged and raped her.

Adams, 65, told reporters: "I have a job to do and I'm not resigning this office."

9 countries join United Nations

UNITED NATIONS — Eight newly independent Soviet republics and tiny San Marino today joined the United Nations, bringing the world body's roster to 175.

The nine new members represented the biggest single group admission since the United Nations was formed in 1945 with 51 members.

Admission requires recommendation of the 15-member Security Council and a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly. The

formal vote usually is waived in favor of acclamation, as was done today.

With admission of Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Krygyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, all former Soviet republics except Georgia will have joined the world body. Georgia is not a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States.



Jury selected in police beating trial

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. — A jury with no blacks was seated Monday in the assault trial of four white Los Angeles police officers accused of beating a black motorist a year ago this week.

Most of those selected said they had seen the widely broadcast videotape of a crowd of officers beating Rodney King, but all promised to put aside preconceptions and look at the case anew.

"We believe they are going to be fair and impartial," said the prosecutor, Deputy District Attorney Terry White, who is black.

"I'm not surprised by the makeup of our jury," said defense attorney Michael Stone, who denied there was any defense plan to exclude blacks from the jury.

Jurors include one Asian and one Hispanic. The seven men and five women are middle aged and included a computer programmer, a housekeeper, an intensive care nurse and a park ranger. One man has a brother who is a retired police sergeant.



Grant

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We can meet students' needs most of the time.

Beacon NU director of scholarships and financial aid

Beacon said he was not sure if the Senate bill would lead to a significant increase in the number of Pell grants, but he said other provisions in the bill would increase federal aid to middle-income families.

If the bill passed into law, he said, a Pell grant formula would be used to determine who would be eligible for the increased aid. Until the bill is

passed and that formula is established, Beacon said it would be impossible to know exactly how many more students could receive Pell Grants.

"From what I've seen, I don't think the relief to middle-income families is going to come from the Pell grant program as from other federal programs such as work-study, Perkins loans and State Student Incentive Grants," he said.

Beacon said increased federal funding would help more students attend UNL. But he said financial aid should not be an obstacle to students wishing to attend college.

"We can meet students' needs most of the time," he said. "It may mean they would have more indebtedness than they would like, but we can help them."

Arboretum

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tat, he said.

Ode said the white-fringed orchid was a "shy" plant and more difficult to find, although a population of the plant grows in Nine Mile Prairie.

"It's a very showy orchid, but it's hard to know when they'll bloom, maybe every two or three years," he said. "It's invisible in the grass when it's not in bloom."

"We have stakes and flags to mark it, but even then, you'll find the flowers have moved four or five feet because it has underground runners," he said. "It's tricky."

Ode said he would compare the arboretum's work to a space-backup

system.

"We go and collect viable seeds of a population of endangered species to try and save the gene pool," Ode said. "On a space-shuttle system there is usually a computer, and a backup computer if that fails, and then there's even a third. We're providing nature with a redundancy."

Ode said it was important for Nebraskans to realize endangered species and habitats existed in their state and that all species of plants and animals were worthwhile.

"Species that may have a specific impact on human needs may be ignored until they are studied," he said. "If the properties of a plant are lost, they are forever gone from the pool of life. If it's lost, we'll never know how it could be used."

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