

1110/79
Tsongas - 1779

Day with Paul Tsongas

Reminded by
"Lorell"
11
a strange
short
who was
back to
Lorell

has just caught her first glimpse of Ted Kennedy ("I couldn't even look at him. He can put his slippers under my bed anytime.")

It was a stroke of good luck (which I deserve after all my trouble) that as I was leaving the elevator having gone twice to the Tsongas office without finding anyone, I bumped into Paul getting on the elevator. He said "Are you going my way?" I said "yes." He said "I didn't know you were coming down here." I said "I mentioned it to you last week, but it was at the end of the interview and things were pretty confusing. I wanted to come down and tag along with you for a day." He seemed to nod with approval and I asked him when he got down. "Yesterday. I froze my ass off, I drove down with the dog and two cats. My wife flew down with the kids."

I then asked him if he had a parking space. "Yes, I kept driving around the building looking for the entrance."

When we got off the elevator on the 4th floor, he stopped, started one way, then another, "Let me get my bearings here." Wasn't sure what direction his office was.

When we got in the office, he said "Wednesday would be a good day." and that settled it.

Day with Paul Tsongas - 1/10/79

On Wednesday, I sat in PTs office while he went through a series of office appointments--see attached sheet.

Three NAM officials, including the President (a former U.S. Steel official) came in to make a "courtesy call" and "to dispel some mythology" about the NAM.

PT didn't let them say much before he said. "Let me tell you where we're coming from. We will have six people on our staff involved in economic development.

Missy Grealy, here, will be in charge of that staff. My first love is bringing back the downtowns of our cities and my second interest is in high technology energy sources. I'm a liberal, even by Massachusetts standards. But in my campaign I had a great deal of support from businessmen from my district, because I had done more than any recent congressman for business in the district. I will be actively involved with your members in the state. I'm going to do work days in the state, working at ordinary jobs, some of them in business. On the issues, I am "pragmatic and not hide bound--to the extent that I disagree with you. I'll fight you. When I'm persuadable, I'll work with you. An example of that was DISC in the last congress. I changed my mind and worked with business on that. I'm prepared to be persuaded, not pressured. Letter campaigns mean nothing to me. But I'm open to your visits."

That set the tone. The NAM men tried to picture themselves as flexible and as moderating the older positions, having a younger staff. "We have a lot of progressive young people people who can be sound, honest, useful sources of information for you."

He said: "I'll disagree with you more than most."

They said: "I hope you won't have any preconceptions."

He said: "When I agree with you, you'll appreciate it instead of taking it for granted."

Their legislative liaison guy (who had worked for Harry Byrd, Jr. for a long time and seemed pretty savvy) said that whereas 6 or 8 years ago the average age of their staff was 56.9, now it was 32.1 years. He said that "We have policy people who have spent time in the Peace Corps just like you did."

Whereupon Paul said "It sounds like too agile a group to deal with."

Smilingly, he parried most of their thrusts.

The president said a couple of times "We are more enlightened than we used to be." Talked of some speech Adlai Stevenson gave that was critical of labor. "The only thing I'm a reactionary on is" subject of labor law reform.

He went on at too great length--whereupon the liaison guy said "We don't want to bother you, we want your blessing, holy water, for our young people to come and talk with you staff. When you hear from us, you'll hear from the businessmen in your constituency and how it affects them."

To which Paul said "That's fair."

✓ The he added, "As long as you know where we're coming from, so we won't expect a love feast. In some cases, what you work for is best for the country.... I wouldn't have run for what looked like a hopeless seat if I had felt so enamored of being a public official. So I'm here to do the best I can and get out. I don't look forward to being here for 30 years."

A bit later, PT commented "The more you keep people off base "and be unpredictable, the more important you will be."

They replied by saying "We were for lobbying by reform in the last session. If some of our old members could have seen that, they would roll over in their graves."

✓ Paul ended meeting by saying "We're open. Convince me. I'm open. Pressure me, and you put me in a corner."

Put me in a corner!

✓ They wish him luck with Massachusetts and comment that the Massachusetts economy is getting bad. "I disagree. I travelled from one end of the state to the other and I noticed a change from the time I first came to Congress. The kind of industries that are coming in, like ^{high} Wayne Laboratories are creating a high technology, pleasing industry. It will be all right... But if you take mIT away, we'll secede." (MIT is his polestar--not Harvard.)

Paul left the office and the 3 men tried to lobby Missy Grealy on change in the filibuster rule. She said she didn't know anything about it and the conversation was quite confusing. They were against change.

After they left, Missy said to me, "How old do you think they thought I am. I'm 29. This is old line lobbying that probably won't be around in a few years. The other day we went to lunch with a bunch of spiffy wheelers and dealers in the export business. Paul said to them, "Let's face it. I think you are fascists and you think I'm a pinko." I just shrunk into my tomato juice."

Paul had tried to make the office look nice, and it's clear he takes an interest in his furnishings, pictures, plants, arrangements, etc. There was a framed poster announcing a Conference in Lowell, a number of African artifacts and souvenirs, a 3 cornered patriot hat, lots of plants, a picture of a Lowell factory that had been converted into a home for senior citizens, pictures of the kids. He would periodically rearrange some of these things. (The contrast with Pryor whose office was absolutely bare, was striking.)

The next guy that came in was Larry Brown who wants to be head of the Peace Corps. With him, there was obviously much more rapport. They mentioned mutual friends "Sam" (Brown), "Hubie" (Jones) and others.

Paul asked "Where is the Peace Corps going?" And Brown spoke of how PC did well in the 50s and that things had changed, new nations, growing nationalism, power of 3rd world. Spoke of need to get away from "donor-recipient" relationship, the need for "a partnership" instead. He spoke of need for contact and not just rhetoric, that the 3rd World has changed, is filled with eloquent people - he thinks the efforts we undertook were right but that assistance in areas like health, agriculture and fisheries is most needed and we should "set priorities."

It was a general go around on problems in dealing with a situation

different than the one in which PC was started.

Paul said to him "The problems you have are political. You have so much internal strife that the Peace Corps has gotten a bad image. It reeks. I want to take the Peace Corps and turn it into a private group. Jesus, it's really bad. Your contacts on the hill (me) are being lobbied from both sides. You get so you just want it to go away."

Paul had done a public service ad for the Peace Corps and this fellow thanked him. He said that if anyone had told him he'd be working for federal government he'd have told them they were crazy. He seemed to think that would link him with Paul. I don't think it did. But the man was clearly part of the anti Viet Nam generation.

Between visits--"I'm going to move my desk into the corner to get rid of this looming presence. Senator Inouye has a little desk in the corner and when you come in it looks like someone's living room. It's very nice." That is just what he did in Boston. Again, the concern with the furnishings. (Inouye must be on the Steering Committee!!!)

Reporter from Christian Science Monitor came in: She asked: "How do you like D.C.?" He said, "I worked hard enough to get here. So I'd like it even if I didn't like it."

"I will hold town meetings like I did as a congressman--20 a year. I'll also do 'work days'--spend a day doing what people do for a living. My wife will go back once a month and go around meeting people and giving speeches."

"The major difference between this and my congressional office is the Economic Development Section. We will be actively involved in downtown revitalization and industrial growth."

"We went to Greenfield the other day and toured downtown and talked about how we could be involved in the revitalization of downtown. That comes out of

our experience in Lowell. We find that mayors and selectmen are looking for us to help. And we made suggestions--about building facades and sign regulations. Not that we have the answers, but that we come in with credibility. We are prepared to expend our capital to produce change. There are 15 large older cities and a like number of smaller old communities. Lowell is looked upon as a prototype."

Will also go around and meet industrial leaders and bankers, he said.

He stressed 6 people in state and 3 in D.C.

"Cities is our number one issue, then energy, then third world and environment is number four."

When asked whether these issues were liberal or conservative, he said he didn't think they felt that way. Closest is the cities.

"It's going to be tough. The federal government is very important. There's a problem out there. It better be dealt with or it will be dealt with on its own terms."

He describes the 3rd world issue as "a ^{final} generalization issue. The difference is on how you view it."

"I know more about Africa than anyone in the Senate, by sheer dint of having lived there for two years. No matter what my committee assignment is, my priorities will remain the same. Eventually, my committees will be Energy and Foreign Relations. The only question is 'when'?"

Re Lowell. "Ninety percent of it is private. What the National Park did was to get people to believe in something that was already there. Our argument was that there was a chance there for revitalization irrespective of the Park. But the development was not credible without the National Park. Now we say, 'look at the change in attitude, and without spending any Park money. The problem was attitudinal."

N There is a genuine enthusiasm and a caring that comes through here--that tells you something about PT that is not merely a reelection idea.

Asked about Senate activism, he said, "There just isn't a group. In the House, we had our own constituency. We thought the same way. There are 20 new members of Congress. Five are the same as those who went in in the 94th Congress--Bradley, Baucus, Levin, myself and--I think there's another."

(Later, he said to someone else "I could only think of four activists.")

Re reform. "There isn't the same obvious need for rules changes over here. Even if there were, with the 20 of us, I'm not sure what we'd end up doing."

He was asked about his campaign promise of "accessibility, and what he meant by that." Not only to be the Senator from Massachusetts, but one who is involved in the state. I was more involved in my district than any congressman ever from the 5th District. So it's nothing more than an extension of what I'm into already. I'm comfortable with it and I think it will work."

"If you imagine the amount of time I spent with a businessman in my district, now divide by 12 and you can see I won't have as much time. That's why staff is most important."

✓ "A congressman comes in to a city with a constituency larger than that city. He can take the heat. If he had to get elected in that city, he couldn't do some of the things he does. Besides, he brings credibility with his office. One of the boiler plate assumptions is that a congressman does not get involved in local matters. But the larger your constituency, the easier it is to get involved in a local constituency. I was able to walk down the street in Greenfield and say 'you ought to change this.' Because I'm a Senator, people will listen to me. People ask me 'what do you want to accomplish in

six years?" I want the people of the older cities to know that I've been around. And you can't do that from Washington."

ya. 1) "I can be good on those four issues because I'm interested in them. I'd be interested in them if I were in private life."

"It's like the Perils of Pauline trying to get on the Foreign Relations Committee. One day it's yes; one day it's no. There are two slots. Senator Muskie has one slot. If it weren't for the geographical argument, that it's overloaded with easterners, there's no question but what I'd get it."

He kept saying all day. "If someone like Moynihan wants it, he'll blow me out of the water."

As the Monitor reporter was leaving she said "I don't have a regular beat." Paul said, "You mean you cover incoming Senators and other police blotter cases."

Between this interview and the next, he went over to punch at the calculator on table next to his desk and found it was broken. He called Rich in and said his daughter had been in there the other day punching the keys and had broken it. Rich took it out to Mitch Tyson to fix on grounds that he was an MIT undergraduate."

Then Marsha came in and said he could go pick out office furniture some place, that he could have black or green. "Can I go and look at it myself?" "Yes."

"Well, I want to do that." (Then to me:) "I'd really rather be picking out furniture instead of doing this issues stuff" (same comment as Pryor!)

Peter ~~S~~keeper of Lowell Sun slipped in next, and PT talked about politics.

✓ "There's no difference between local politics and national politics. It's interpersonal relations and how you get along with people whether you're in Lowell City Council or in the United States Senate. I've often said the best experience I ever had was on the Lowell City Council. Once you realize that

people are the same, that they are just people who got here, it makes it easier....
You aren't awed by Senators are you?"

✓ When asked what lessons he learned on City Council, Paul said "When you disagree don't go after the person, go after the issue. The first year on the Council I called the City Council members scorpions in a bottle. It made for great reading, but it didn't help me to influence the City Council. To the extent that you differ on issues, to the extent that you expend capital going after a person, you waste your capital."

✓ Re Senate and Lowell. "In terms of politics, there is no difference. Everybody here is from Lowell--or, Lowell's counterpart in the country. You just didn't meet them there. I've met them after they've gotten here. I'm sure people who knew them like the people who knew me are bemused by the rise and are not impressed by it."

✓ "Lowell politics is tough. If you can survive Lowell politics, you can survive politics here. Building a coalition to get John Sullivan as building commissioner is no different from building a coalition to pass the National Park Bill."

Reform is not the issue; issues are the issue."

"We'll spend first 3 or 4 months learning. I don't see ^{submitting serious} ~~senior~~ legislation, ^{in the} first 2 months. Main image I want to convey around here is to be credible on things I talk about. That means sitting down and thinking instead of making a speech from day one. I also want to be person in the senate that all opposition people in these counties get to know. So if you had a ^{coup in Gabon}, ^{Dick Clark} ~~he~~ was person around here likely to know who these people were.

Energy - interest in high technology alternatives.

✓ "There's nothing inherently wrong with cities any more. Things become

self fulfilling propheses. The problem is wholly attitudinal. Those people who invested in downtown Lowell are looking for more building. The capital is there. This is true for middle sized cities; I'm not sure about the NYs. I think most of the legislation is in place. We can be a catalyst. I'm going to stay involved. I'm flying up to Lowell for the commission. Lowell is very important to me. It's a prototype. If Lowell falls through how can you convince anyone that other cities will work."

"I still expect to be criticized for meddling in downtown Lowell. That is a certainty:"

"The 4 issues I'm into are long-term issues. My heart is not into things like welfare reform. I'll vote on it but that's not where I'm at. I'm younger than most people here and I have kids that will not know what the world is like for 15 years."

Family - acting up "behavioral problems" at end of campaign. Now fine. *Spent time with*
~~what did I do? what do I do with what do I do with you when you are acting up spend~~ *time with you.* "Then

"Personal contact is a pain in the ass; but it works."

Ref FR committee. R. Byrd says he wants it, Paul calls Church to expand committee; Byrd says he doesn't want it; "As of now, if no one else materializes, it's mine. If someone like Moynihan decides he wants it, I'm dead."

What do you think our relations with Ethiopia should be? Why did we go 18 months without ambassador? "I assume you don't favor getting out of the ball park and expecting to influence things from outside?" If Ethiopians ask you why we support a racist government in South Africa, what do you say to them? "If you were in my place on the Foreign Relations Committee for the sake of argument, what would you do?" (Angola) What is second thing you would do? (help South Africans to run themselves - development).

"They say the Senate is the next step up from the House. For Christ's sake, you can't even get a sandwich." The lunch with Allan Hoben and his friend did not materialize, because it never came.

Indexing. "I'm locked into that because of the campaign."

Lubick: "When are you supposed to find out about Committee choices?"

Guzzi and Brooke - Rich E.

"It's our weakest area. Re the tax matters. It's the kind of issue that falls between the cracks. Now we've hired someone to buoy up on those issues." Conversation with Don Lubick and friend. Quite hasty - they ran a lot of issues past him. None seemed very important. His main questions were "How about indexing?" "You don't expect another major tax bill this year, do you?" Gossip about committee assignments - Paul trying to find out what they know.

Telephone conversation about his effort to get on FR. "Basically, I just outworked them." Others "like Baucus who wanted it." "We're walking on eggshells."

Interview. "The Senate is different; it's not a collective group. It seems to have a lot of *flexibility* but I'm not sure how you fit into things.

"There's a lot of emphasis on personality. I think the main difference is credibility, I hope that's the difference.

When you're in House people ask when you are going to run for the Senate.

✓ When you're in Senate, the question people ask you is enormous. That's too much. I don't know how things work. I think there's too much deference paid to Senators. When I see this difference in the way people treat me now, there's no need for it."

✓ "Younger man has more sensitivity to family - brought families with them.

If you neglect them you children grow up without a father and don't care

about him. I'm not going to fall into that pattern. They think of themselves as having another career. I don't intend to make a career of the Senate.

✓ I don't intend to run for office all my life." Might work in law or international law.

1979 - Most important is SALT and energy "by far the most important issues facing the country" - will be a crisis down the road that will startle American people - we persist with lifestyle.

"The ^{conservation} conversation that's running against the cities is a devil ^{take the} hindmost attitude. It's an attitude that will come to roost. I hope we don't have to go through what we went through in the 60s every 10 years."

"Nobody more poll crazy than the House and Senate" re fact that Congress will follow Carter if Carter is perceived as being President to 1984.

✓ "The theory is that people elect politicians or politicians who don't come across as politicians. People in Massachusetts continue to be amazed that I get elected to anything."

"We desperately wanted to be in this building because we like the style of it better." When I was in the House, I was in Cannon which was more like this one--the same style we were used to."

! ✓ Any change for family. "We put in a garbage disposal unit. That's our change in life style."

"There are three parts of the job. What you do here, your state, and your family. The question is which do you put first. For me, "here" comes last. ✓ I put my state and my family before them. I don't come in 'as early as a lot of people. I don't come in till 9:30 or ten. I see my children in the morning. Some people come in here at 6:00. I don't understand that. Perhaps they don't

delegate as well and want to do it all themselves. And I don't go out at night. I see my family at night. The first 2 months I was in Congress I went to every event there was. Then I stopped. I found out it didn't matter. If you went they thought you weren't there. If you didn't go, they thought you were there."

To reporter Peter Sleeper of Lowell Sun.

PT: "After the election the kids were acting up and we were worried. They are fine now."

PS: What did you to make them fine?

PT. "Paid attention to them. What do I do when you are acting up to make you feel better--pay attention to you."

Paul went to House gym for a swim. "Someday I'll have to find out where the Senate gym is." I walked over with Bill Ichord (a law intern from Washington University) and Paul wanted Bill to help him put in his first bill--on public financing of congressional and senate races. "The Helms and the Texas things are so awful that they should have created a constituency for this legislation." "I'm not cast in concrete on the exact form it should take." Paul outlined some of his ideas--matching funds, lower contribution limits for PACS.

I asked Paul if it was a typical day and he said yes except that when Congress is in session, he'd do a lot of it off the floor. Then I asked if there wasn't more media. "Oh yes, ABC was never in my congressional office." He had just had interview for "Good Morning America."

"Personal contact is a pain in the ass. But it works. That's how we all got here."

Story re Kennedy and Brooke. "That's when I told Kennedy I was thinking of running vs. Brooke. It's when I laid my doubts to rest about Kennedy. I

"Brooke told 'em what they wanted to hear and Kennedy let 'em have it."

Something about insurance industry.

"How many new people have you met?" "None. I didn't go to the introductory sessions."

Israeli group - talk re Foreign Relations. Zerinsky has promise for Byrd.

"We've a resource you can draw on for facts or positions regarding the Jewish community and Israel."

"I assume you won't lack for things to deluge us with." "We try to be brief. Most of our service to you is on ask basis."

"By the way, where is the Foreign Relations Committee." They explain about two different committee rooms--one for meetings, one for hearings.

"My first love is energy. Eventually I'll be on Foreign Relations and Energy. The only thing that makes sense is to stay with the issues you come with. Anything else is a god damned waste of time."

"Life Magazine wants to do a picture story of all the new Senators jogging. That's ridiculous. I'm probably as devoted a jogger as anyone here; but I don't think I'll do it. We jump to the media around here."

When I left Paul he said he hoped it had been helpful. Then I said I'd be back in May and he said "Maybe you can look at the Committee." - meaning Foreign Relations--which he wants desperately.) Then he said "And you should follow me in Massachusetts. The difference between then and now will be tremendous." I said I'd like to go to Lowell - (could see Peter Sleeper).