

Paul Tsongas

May 22, 1979

I thought, when I arranged to spend today with Paul that I'd sit in on an orderly set of office interviews. No luck. I got there around noon to see how I could hook up with him. I finally got to gallery while he voted on Turkish aid amendment (He lost to Robert Byrd who has, Al Hunt told me later, a thing about Turkey and who also told Al that he had contacted 51 Senators personally on the amendment.) I went out to steps of Capitol to await a scheduled event with the Girl Scouts of Canton. They didn't show and I stood with ~~Chris~~^{Chris} Briand a long time. Then, back to gallery and when Paul left I went to meeting with Bob Straus. (He's great "I'm going to be around this town a long time and the only way to survive is not to promise when you can't deliver." To Congressman Shannon: You'll be around a lot longer than I God willing and the voters of your district. Shannon quipped back: "You have them in reverse order.")

Paul and Bill Cohen were at the meeting on the shoe industry. Ted K was there too and said nothing. It was an interesting juxtaposition of cattle men (Dole, Bentsen, Wallop) and the shoe people (Cohen, Tsongas, Kennedy, Shannon, ~~Mar~~^{Mar}roules, Donnelly). Consensus seemed to be (Strauss and Bergland there) that cattle herds would have to grow again for there to be more hides and that subsidies might be needed to tide the shoe industry over. Even then, when hides grow plentiful, foreign countries will buy them and our shoe industries will still be in trouble. Talk about getting Japanese and Argentines to restrict sales here in USA. Strauss said he was negotiated out. "I was walking down the street, someone handed me the baton, ^I started marching and here I am."

Anyhow, I jumped outside the room when I saw Paul leaving and I swung in beside him. I said I understood he had a hectic weekend.

"I woke up this morning in the fourth different bed I slept in this weekend." He had gone to N.Y. to meet Joshua Nkomo--unexpectedly.

He was surprised to see I was back.

He stopped in the House floor to grab two candy bars and ate as we walked to energy markup, where--10 minutes after he got there he was offering an amendment (5 million to do a study of needs, capacities, etc. of "away from reactor storage" of nuclear waste.) The point of it was to slow down the headlong rush to start a program of site acquisition.

Then we went to Senate Dining room to have a snack with our former Ambassador from Nigeria about the African situation. He and Paul were extremely sympathetic. Main thing Ambassador said that jarred Paul was that Nigeria is our 2nd largest supplier of oil 1.2 billion gallons a year or something like that (second to Saudi Arabia) and they would cut it off if we lifted sanctions on Rhodesia. The reason is that Nigerians have stuck their necks out in favoring the Anglo-American plan.

Paul said he was thinking of doing a major speech on Angola, accusing the President of the lack of courage. (He says the President is worried about what it would do to SALT, but says Paul "Who the hell gives a damn about Angola.") He asked the Ambassador (Easum) "Off the record" if it could help or hurt to give such a speech. Ambassador said "give it."

They talked about progressive, conditional divestiture program of Paul's in Africa. Easum said he didn't think it would have any effect on South Africa--that nothing would--ever if American companies left South Africa, which is what Africans want them to do. Paul said rather eloquently that "The black South Africans don't want the Sullivan plan; (gradual one) they want their freedom."

Talk about ^{Neto} ~~NATO~~ wanting "alternatives."

The best thing he said was simply "There is no respect for Africa in this place. It's got to change."

He said it wouldn't bother him if Nigeria cut their oil off. "It would teach these guys around here a lesson."

As we went up in the elevator, he met Senator Bensten and told him about the Nigerian possibility. Then he went to floor and I watched him give short impassioned speech against a cut in foreign aid proposed by Harry Byrd. He mentioned Nigeria in that speech.

He's very issue oriented about Africa and his discussion with the Ambassador (who had learned of his views and sought him out) ^{i.e.} "I said to myself, this is someone I've got to meet." Was good ex. of a policy network.

People seek him out---that's the important thing. That is mark of issue-oriented congressman.

We had no conversation at all today, really. Chris spoke of how his weekend ^{had} tired him out. Deborah asked me (when I ran into her on Pa. Avenue near the store) if Paul ever relaxed with me. I said no and she said he never let his hair down with the staff. "You know him but you don't know him."

In the Energy markup it was Domenici who offered a compromise amendment that broke log jam and incorporated Paul's amendment. So they do work together. (I think they are in the same prayer group, too.)

On Paul's amendment for a study, because of conflicting facts from various reports, GAO, EOE and Environmental Policy group, he kept saying it was the same as the Sharp amendment in the House and kept saying Dingall supported it. When staff chief was asked what he thought about the amendment, he said, "The only thing that bothers me about the Tsongas Amendment is that it is exactly the

same as the Sharp amendment adopted in the House; and it will tie us up tight in conference. What offends me is that we won't have any wiggling room when we get to conference." Paul laughed and said he could think of a lot of reasons for opposing the amendment other than that one. Later, he referred to "wiggling room."