

PAUL TSONGAS STAFF

July 11, 1983

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I went to Boston to look at PT clips for a while (before ball game). The whole staff was up there for two days of budget meetings. I asked Dennis: Do you feel like you're in a campaign? "Yes, we had a budget meeting yesterday. Our big worry is ^aprimary. There are lots of rumors, but no candidates--yet." They assume Shamie will run in the general. But, says Dennis "We aren't even thinking about the general. All we're thinking about is a primary. We don't want a primary." I mention Paul's 71% favorability rating and says it hasn't changed since the beginning--and Dennis agrees. "It looks pretty good" he says.

I see Rich later. "Our target date now is February of '83. That's when the caucuses meet to choose delegates to the state convention in June. You can't run in the primary unless you get 15% of the vote at the convention. Our main strategy now is to organize the caucuses and control the convention. We don't want a primary. Not that we're afraid of it. But it's the costs we want to avoid."

I mention Kevin White. "There was a newspaper story saying that White had gone on vacation and was considering a run at Tsongas. When he came back, Paul went to see him. He told Paul, 'Not only am I not going to run, but I think you're great.' He'd be crazy to run against as popular a candidate as Paul. The same goes for Ed King. What possible good would it do him? Or why would any Republican take it on? Shamie will run, because he's willing to spend his own money. People keep mentioning Elliott Richardson. He won't do it. Why should he run against a strong Democrat in this state?"

The assumption is that Paul is strong. I think, when put against the others, he looks senatorial, too. The issues emphasis he has goes over very

well in Mass. It's a highly educated electorate and used to Senators who are good on issues.

Debra says "The women are made at Paul over the ERA thing. Of course they never wanted Paul to lead the fight anyway. They wanted Kennedy. He's meeting with leaders of the Mass. women's groups this afternoon. We'll see how upset they are."

Rich - "We went through a terrible June. The first two weeks in June were the worst two weeks we've ever had from the press." The ERA flap mostly plus Barnicle plus Will, plus the Glenn endorsement.

Re Barnicle. "He's never even met Paul. When the article came out, Paul did a typically Paul Tsongas thing. He invited him to go to Nicaragua with him next month." When I said to Debra, Toby and Rich (each one separately, that Barnicle was the blue collar columnist, they all said "That's what he wants you to think. But he lives in Lincoln and drives a BMW (or Porsche) (or Mercedes)." They each had a different car! But the Hatch thing was what did it. I think the problem was that it ran counter to Paul's image as an issues man. That's why it shook people up. They mentioned George Will, too. Toby said he was hoping I hadn't seen Mike Barnicle!

Dennis asked me what I thought of the John Glenn announcement. I said I had been for Glenn all ^{along} ~~day~~! I think the Glenn announcement also was part of the press flap. That, too, didn't seem to square with Paul's liberal image. But, it does square with Paul's independent image.

Chris Briand says that they have a "campaign plan" that includes scheduling changes. He'll do fewer town meetings and more events that will buy him into contact with "targeted groups" in the state. He'll do fewer things like his Nicaragua trips this summer--which the staff sort of rolls

its eyes about. They want him to ~~stay~~ home. But they know they can't stop him! But they want him to hit a variety of groups he's been a bit out of touch with. She said they are screening his appointments now so that he'll see "fewer ambassadors and more people from Massachusetts." She agreed when I said I wondered if state people didn't escalate their demands on him when they know he's running for reelection. But they're in a campaign frame, now. He's not going to do a town meeting on the Cape this summer. I would guess town meetings will be cut drastically--if not out altogether. They are catchalls and not "targeted" at all.

A nice thing to look for on the schedule. The flow of town meetings.